

C Scoped Enum Enhancements

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1 INTRODUCTION

2 MOTIVATION AND SCOPE

The initial motivation for this proposal was the lack of a good way in the standard library to convert an enum value to a proper string representation. Very often, I have found a need to log an enum for various purposes, and every time I create a new enum type I have to write such a function again. An example:

```
1 enum class GraphicsApiType { none, opengl, vulkan };
2
3 const char* get_api_type_string(GraphicsApiType apiType) {
4     switch (apiType) {
5         case GraphicsApiType::none: return "none";
6         case GraphicsApiType::opengl: return "opengl";
7         case GraphicsApiType::vulkan: return "vulkan";
8         default: return "<unrecognized>";
9     }
10 }
```

This is cumbersome to maintain, for every time a value is added or modified inside the enum type, this other function has to be modified as well. But besides this, a potential *run-time* error may be introduced when an invalid enum is provided.

A session of browsing around sites such as StackOverflow revealed sometimes quite vividly imaginary answers for how to circumvent this limitation in the language:

- (1) <https://stackoverflow.com/questions/11421432/how-can-i-output-the-value-of-an-enum-class-in-c11>
- (2) <https://stackoverflow.com/questions/1390703/enumerate-over-an-enum-in-c>
- (3) <https://stackoverflow.com/questions/6281461/enum-to-string-c>

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(4) <https://stackoverflow.com/questions/201593/is-there-a-simple-way-to-convert-c-enum-to-string>

3 IMPACT ON THE STANDARD

4 DESIGN DECISIONS

5 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

7 REFERENCES