
NAFSA: Association of International Educators conducted a survey in early April of senior leadership at U.S.-based higher education institutions and international education organizations to gauge the financial impact of COVID-19 on the field of international education.

Results indicate that U.S. higher education overall has potentially lost **nearly $1 billion** due to shortened or canceled study abroad programs and spent approximately **$638 million** in financial support for international students, scholars, faculty and staff who remained on campus when courses moved online. Responses further estimate that U.S. higher education will lose at least **$3 billion** due to anticipated international student enrollment declines for fall 2020. Without Congressional action and financial relief to support international education, it is estimated there will be a loss of **more than $4.5 billion** to U.S. higher education and **tens of thousands of American jobs**.

**Study Abroad**

- 94% of institutions with study abroad programs reported shortened or canceled spring and summer programs, resulting in losses of $115 million; when estimated across all of U.S. higher education, potential losses total nearly **$1 billion**.
- 65% responded that staff positions have already or may be impacted by the cancellation of study abroad programs
- Impacts include reduced hours, furloughs, eliminated positions, hiring freezes, and salary reductions
- 61% expressed uncertainty if study abroad programs will be offered for fall 2020, while 15% anticipated cancelations

**International Students**

- 38% indicated ongoing support for international students who remained on campus, spending nearly $42 million; when extrapolated across all of U.S. higher education, potential spending totals **$418.5 million**
- Types of support include housing, scholarships, food, rent, airfare, and tuition refunds
- 60% reported up to 5 staff positions funded by international student fees
- 78% anticipate enrollment declines for fall 2020, with a loss of $192 million in revenue; when estimated across all of U.S. higher education, potential revenue losses total at least **$3 billion**

**International Scholars, Faculty, Staff**

- 55% host or employ international scholars, faculty and staff, with 77% indicating ongoing support/employment during the crisis
- 36% reported providing additional financial support totaling nearly $6 million; when estimated across all of U.S. higher education, expenditures approximate **$219 million**
➢ 51% responded staff positions would not be impacted by COVID-19, while 24% indicated it was too soon to know, and 21% said positions would be impacted
➢ Impacts include reduced hours, furloughs, eliminated positions, hiring freezes, and salary reductions

Other Negative Financial Impacts

➢ 41% reported additional negative financial impacts, such as loss of grants and contracts, enrollment declines due to the shift to online instruction, and compensation paid for cancelled programs.

Methodology

NAFSA: Association of International Educators distributed a survey from April 7–14, 2020, to individuals in international education leadership positions at U.S.-based institutions and organizations. 346 institutional responses were received representing primarily U.S.-based higher education institutions. Responses by institutional type were: 14% Associate, 16% Baccalaureate, 32% Masters, 34% Research, and 5% Specialized. Financial estimations across U.S. higher education were calculated proportionally by institutional type using the average of dollar ranges selected by survey takers.

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