

## **Survey: Financial Impact of COVID-19 on International Education**

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 cancellations

### **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.

*May 2020*