

NAFSA: Association of International Educators
Updated January 2022

U.S. Department of Education

Below are specific recommendations for advancing international education priorities:

Office of International Affairs

- **Revise and Update the Department’s International Education Strategy in Collaboration with the U.S. Department of State.**

The Department first published its international education strategy, [*Succeeding Globally Through International Education and Engagement*](#) in 2012 and revised it in 2018. The strategy pledges support for international education with the dual goals of advancing U.S. international priorities and strengthening U.S. education. In the next administration, NAFSA encourages the Department to review and develop a more comprehensive strategy with respect to global education and study abroad in collaboration with the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and its USA Study Abroad Branch. A refreshed strategy developed in collaboration with the State Department would help ensure every student has access to a quality education that will prepare them for the global workforce into which they will graduate.

UPDATE: On July 26, 2021, the U.S. Departments of State and Education, with support from the U.S. Departments of Commerce and Homeland Security, released a “[Joint Statement of Principles in Support of International Education](#)”, outlining their shared commitment to promoting international education, and to undertaking actions to support a renewed focus on international education.

Office of Postsecondary Education

- **Expand Allowable Costs for Federal Financial Aid to Cover COVID-19 Costs Related to Study Abroad.**

In accordance with the reality of the pandemic, NAFSA urges the Department to provide explicit policy guidance that costs related to COVID-19 entry and exit requirements of a foreign country such as known requirements to quarantine or test on entry/exit be considered as reasonable expenses in calculation of the ‘Cost of Attendance’. Currently costs such as passport and visa fees are considered allowable costs, but COVID-19 costs are not. This added cost can be a significant burden to students which could be prohibitive to participation in education abroad programs.

- **Support Increased Funding for Title VI Programs.**

NAFSA supports increased financial support for [Title VI programs](#) as authorized under the Higher Education Act and the Fulbright-Hays Act. These programs provide grants

and fellowship opportunities for U.S. students to strengthen foreign language learning and area/international studies, as well as providing critical teaching resources. Title VI programs are the most comprehensive federal program in support of international education and provide infrastructure critical to maintaining international and foreign language learning.

UPDATE: The [FY2022 proposed budget for the Department](#) provides funding at the same level as FY 2021 for Title VI and Fulbright-Hays: \$78.2 million, including \$69.4 million for Title VI and \$8.8 million for Fulbright-Hays. The House of Representatives approved the FY2022 Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations bill on July 29, 2021, including \$79.4 million for Title VI and \$13.8 million for Fulbright-Hays. The Senate Appropriations Committee released its version of the bill on October 18, 2021, which funds Title VI and Fulbright-Hays at lower amounts, \$74.4 million and \$10.8 million respectfully.

Support Legislation

- **Support Robust Aid to U.S. Students and U.S. Higher Education Institutions Impacted by COVID-19.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically impacted U.S. higher education and international education particularly, especially study abroad. Because the academic year 2020-2021 turned into “the year without study abroad,” **it could take years for study abroad to fully recover**; leaving U.S. students with fewer international education opportunities, U.S. higher education institutions with fewer international collaborations, and our country less prepared to tackle global challenges or compete in the global marketplace. To ensure the future of study abroad, NAFSA urges support for new funding in the U.S. Department of Education’s Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) to support innovation in study abroad consistent with the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Program Act. (See below.)

- **Support the [Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Program Act](#).**

Introduced in nearly every Congress since 2006, the bill includes recommendations of the congressionally-appointed [Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program](#) that would create a modest federal program within FIPSE of challenge grants to incentivize U.S. colleges and universities to make study abroad an integral part of higher education. Under this program, higher education institutions could apply for federal grants, individually or in consortium, to help them institute programs that would move the country toward achievement of four national goals:

- One million U.S. college students will study abroad annually for credit;
- Study abroad participants will more closely represent the demographics of the undergraduate population in terms of gender, ethnicity, students with disabilities, income level, and field of study;
- A significantly greater proportion of study abroad will occur in nontraditional destinations outside Western Europe; and
- U.S. higher education institutions will make study abroad a critical component of a quality higher education.

