Open Doors®
2021
International Scholars
Report on International Educational Exchange

Produced by the
Institute of International Education

In partnership with the
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State

New York, NY | February 10, 2022
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Open Doors is produced by the Institute of International Education with the support of the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.
International Scholars Overview

Who is Surveyed?

Close to 1,700 U.S. higher education institutions hosting international scholars
International Scholars Overview

Individuals on nonimmigrant visas engaged in temporary academic activities and not enrolled as a student at a higher education institution

Who is Counted in 2020/21

- Post-doctoral scholars
- Visiting lecturers/professors/faculty
- Visiting researchers
- Short-term scholars
- Visiting specialists
International Scholars Overview

WHAT

WHO declares COVID-19 a pandemic

Open Doors 2021
International Scholars Survey reporting

Spring 2020 → July 1, 2020 → Fall 2020 → Spring 2021 → June 30, 2021

International scholar appointments and applications affected by COVID-19 pandemic
U.S. higher education institutions hosted 85,538 international scholars in 2020/21. The COVID-19 pandemic contributed to a 31% decrease from the prior year.
20 Years of International Scholars Trends

- 2000/01: 79,651
- 2002/03: 84,281
- 2004/05: 89,634
- 2006/07: 98,239
- 2008/09: 113,494
- 2010/11: 115,313
- 2012/13: 122,059
- 2014/15: 124,861
- 2016/17: 134,379
- 2018/19: 136,563
- 2020/21: 123,508

COVID-19: 85,538
International Scholars in the United States

- 2016/17: 134,379 (+0.3%)
- 2017/18: 135,009 (+0.5%)
- 2018/19: 136,563 (+1%)
- 2019/20: 123,508 (-10%)
- 2020/21: 85,538 (-31%)

% Change year-over-year
Leading Places of Origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of Origin</th>
<th>% change 19/20-20/21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>-39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>-6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>-30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>-12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>-40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
International Scholars by World Region of Origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2016/17</th>
<th>2019/20</th>
<th>2020/21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>78,000</td>
<td>55,000</td>
<td>32,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>21,000</td>
<td>14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America &amp; the Caribbean</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East &amp; North Africa</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% change 19/20-20/21

-31%  -37%  -30%  -23%  -26%  -24%  -28%
International Scholars by Leading State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>2019-2020</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>13,658</td>
<td>-38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>7,694</td>
<td>-31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>5,827</td>
<td>-36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>5,387</td>
<td>-20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>4,850</td>
<td>-33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Three out of four international scholars pursued research activities.
Primary Function of International Scholars

2019/20

- Research: 80%
- Teaching: 9%
- Research & teaching: 6%
- Clinical: 2%
- Other function: 4%

2020/21

- Research: 77%
- Teaching: 9%
- Research & teaching: 7%
- Clinical: 4%
- Other function: 3%
Leading Specializations of International Scholars

81% of international scholars focused their academic activities in STEM fields.

*denotes STEM fields of specialization
Leading Specializations of International Scholars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialization</th>
<th>2016/17</th>
<th>2019/20</th>
<th>2020/21</th>
<th>% change 19/20-20/21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical &amp; life sciences</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>42,000</td>
<td>38,000</td>
<td>-21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>-36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health professions</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>-28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social sciences</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>-43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math and computer science</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>-32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>-34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and management</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>-42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Duration of International Scholar Appointments

- **Long-term**
  - Over 5 years: 7%
  - 3 years up to 5 years: 22%

- **Mid-length**
  - 1 year up to 3 years: 47%

- **Short-term**
  - 6 months up to 1 year: 19%
  - 3 months up to 6 months: 3%
  - Less than 3 months: 3%

2020/2021
Duration of International Scholar Appointments

Duration

- Over 5 years: 5%
- 3 years up to 5 years: 16%
- 1 year up to 3 years: 39%
- 6 months up to 1 year: 22%
- 3 months up to 6 months: 9%
- Less than 3 months: 9%
- 0%
94% of institutions hosting international scholars experienced adverse effects as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>2019/20</th>
<th>2020/21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing updated information to scholars as U.S. policies shift</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully or partially closed facilities</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determining and updating the physical location of the scholar</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically returning to campus to file paperwork for scholars</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freezing new scholar appointments or applications</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
98% of U.S. institutions reported providing support to international scholars during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Support U.S. institutions provided to international scholars amid COVID-19

- Providing communications on health, safety, and well-being: 78% (2019/20) vs. 86% (2020/21)
- Providing communications on travel restrictions and visa regulations, policies, and procedures: 79% (2019/20) vs. 85% (2020/21)
- Providing resources and collaborating virtually: 54% (2019/20) vs. 62% (2020/21)
- Extending the appointments of scholars: 61% (2019/20) vs. 62% (2020/21)
Open Doors Website

Using data to open doors for 85,538 international scholars from around the world and counting...

Learn More About International Scholars... →

Explore Open Doors 2021 data on our new website!

opendoorsdata.org
The Open Doors 2021 Publication has arrived!

Order your copy here: https://www.iie.org/Research-and-Insights/Publications/Open-Doors-2021
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