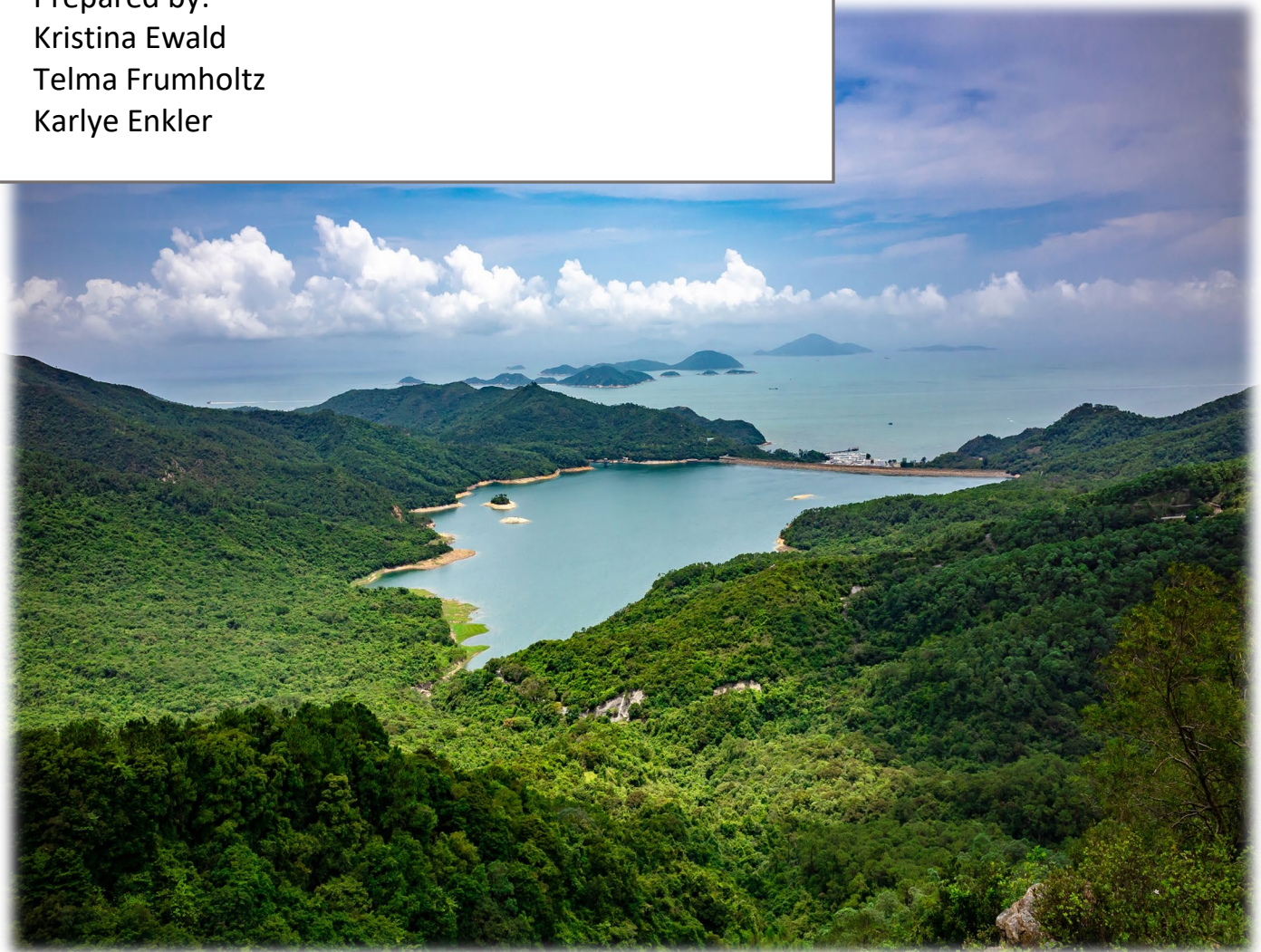


International Affairs 2022-2023 Annual Report

A report on the Summer 2022 through Spring 2023 terms

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Executive Summary

The 2022-2023 Academic Year continued to make recovery efforts from the COVID-19 pandemic. Education Abroad (EA) completed a full year of terms sending close to a pre-pandemic number of students abroad. Significant advances continued to promote and support international students and scholars at UCCS.

Below is a summary of some 2022-2023 Academic Year highlights included in this report:

- The International Affairs (IA) Office and the UCCS community hosted 21 international scholars from 15 countries.
- IA provided programming, immigration support, and a friendly environment to 167 total international students from 57 countries.
- Engineering and computer science continued to serve as the number one degree international students pursue at UCCS.
- EA during the academic year had 124 students participate broken down across all terms and program types.
- The IA office filed with the Federal Government for UCCS redesignation for the J program and received Federal-level approval on the petition; therefore, able to continue to host J-1 international students and scholars.
- EA related procedures and guidelines that align with CU-System schools and best practices were further developed and implemented with the support of senior leadership and international risk management.
- A staff position was filled due to a vacancy to support the continuation of international student and scholar advising.
- A combination of in-person and virtual meetings and programming were continued to support international education efforts.

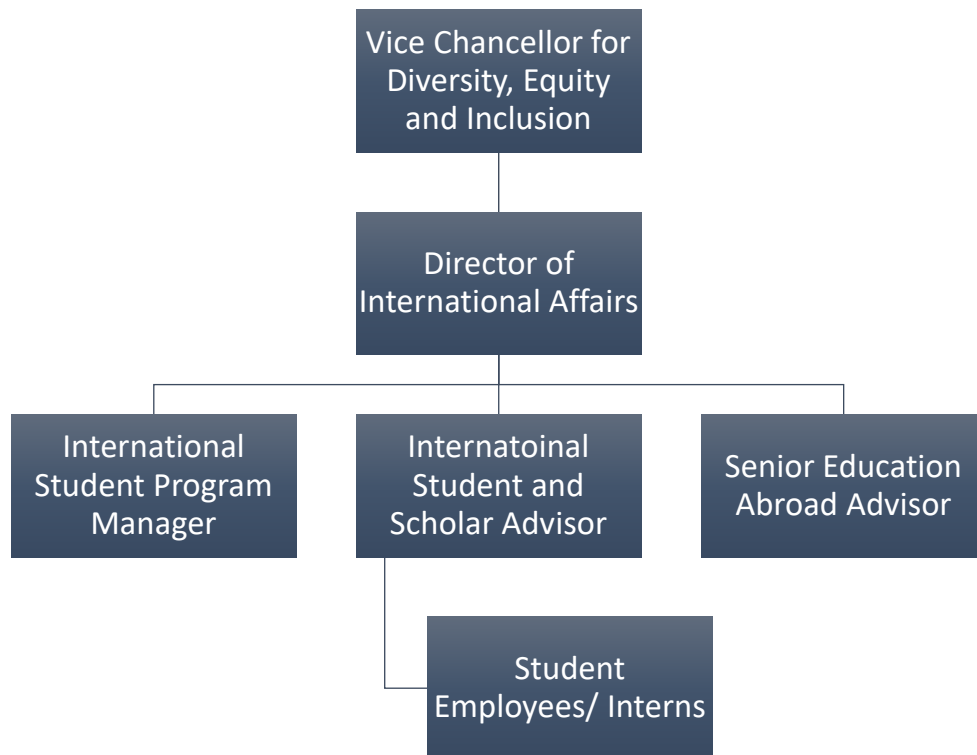
Introduction

The International Affairs Office provides all core international student and scholar advising functions and federal immigration reporting as well as education abroad advising inclusive of risk management abroad. UCCS students continue to be given the utmost attention due to international education expertise and staffing. Annually, campus programming that bolsters internationalization is facilitated in addition to supporting students and sharing of partnership development opportunities with the colleges and schools.

It is essential to recognize that the UCCS IA Office continues to be a young international center within a higher education context. In addition, the office has limited staff in comparison to similar higher education institutions throughout Colorado and the United States of America. The office was established in 2012 as a result of the UCCS 2020 strategic plan, in which Goal 4 focused on internationalization.

International Affairs Office Structure

As of July 1, 2022, International Affairs reorganized to better advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and internationalization. As a result, the division reports to the Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). The organizational chart below displays the chain of command for the International Affairs Office:



The International Student and Scholar Advisor (ISSA) formally supervises the student employees and interns for the office. However, all the IA staff works with every student employee for additional mentorship, training, and direct assistance within their respective areas.

It is important to note that effective November 2022, the previous director of IA left the institution. The position has since remained vacant and will likely remain idle going into the 2023-2024 Academic Year.

Office Visits

The IA Office offers centralized international education services for students and scholars with a focus on education abroad and international student and scholar services. To provide flexibility, IA continued to operate in a hybrid format, allowing for in-person and remote functions and meetings. IA offered 117 workshops and events with a cumulative total of 257 participants from August 2022 to May 2023. A steady rate for international student participation in the virtual workshops and virtual meetings remained. The IA Office had a total of 445 individual in-person visits/meetings from August 2022- May 31, 2023.

Fulbright Student and Scholar Advising

IA continues to uphold Fulbright advising liaison responsibilities that were transitioned to the office in 2016. Fulbright advising is shared with an additional official Fulbright Advisor and Representative at UCCS, specific to faculty advising, Dr. Fred Coolidge. One-on-one student and scholar Fulbright advising is facilitated by the Senior Education Abroad Advisor (SEAA) and the UCCS Faculty Advisor. The SEAA also manages the Fulbright student nomination process. Collaboration with the UCCS Communique to honor UCCS Fulbright participants and support campus-wide promotion of opportunities continued.

Community and International Partnerships

Partnerships further UCCS' profile within the greater community and include delegation visits and collaboration with community organizations to provide international perspectives and opportunities. Below is an outline of such efforts:

- Student Exchange Visitor Program (Regional Representative), International Student and Scholar Overview
- Meetings with international organizations, like EducationUSA and Study Colorado, that explored virtual partnerships and interest
- Participation in state-wide meetings with an international focus as related to education abroad and international student and scholar services (ISSS)
- Several meetings with incoming higher education-focused international mobility and internationalization contractors/providers focused on Saudi Arabia, India, and China

Agreements and Memos of Understanding

The IA Office works with faculty, colleges, and academic units to support the establishment of partnerships that are strategic and sustainable. IA continues to defer to the College of Business on the renewal of several business-focused student exchange agreements to continue to balance the exchanges originating within the college. Additionally, IA has added four new international service provider agreements for short-

term programming support and maintains over 15 Memos of Understanding (MOUs) and Letters of Intent.

International Risk Management and the Chancellor's Appointed International Risk Management Committee

As outlined in the Student International Travel Policy, the International Risk Management Committee reviews student travel to high-risk locations abroad. Appointed by the UCCS Chancellor in the Spring of 2016, and includes the following members:

- Telma Frumholtz, International Affairs, Interim Chair
- Tia Grigg, Legal Counsel
- James Duval, CU Risk Management
- Debi O'Connor, Compliance
- Michele Companion, Faculty
- Curtis Holder, Faculty
- Michael Sanderson, Export Control

This committee was integral to establishing student safety during the pandemic and was proactive with its recommendations for student travel abroad throughout the aftermath. The committee convenes monthly to review student travel to at-risk countries and make recommendations to the Chancellor for their review and final decision.

The SEAA and the CU Risk Manager at UCCS work together and attend CU International Risk Management meetings. Lists of students going abroad with relevant emergency contact details are sent each semester to the CU Risk Manager and the Vice Chancellor for DEI. The protocol is followed in accordance with direction and best practices from the CU System and peer schools.

International Education Programming

The IA Office organizes events and initiatives that bring students together in social, cultural, and educational settings.

IA's programming for international students and scholars is an important facet of fulfilling the mission of the office. Programming has several important functions for the office:

1. It introduces students to important information about the university and the international student compliance requirements (orientation)
2. It connects students to networks that are good sources of support (all types)
3. It keeps students informed along their educational path (workshops)
4. It gives students a chance to experience different facets of U.S. life (events and event collaborations)
5. It gives students a chance to share their cultural backgrounds with the campus and community (events)
6. It helps to internationalize and inform the campus (events, workshops)

Collaborating, specifically in relation to programming, is important for several reasons:

- The legacy of previous international student programming at UCCS requires that IA highly collaborate with other university units. Prior to 2016 there were no international education events out of the IA office.
- There are a multitude of events on campus, and collaboration is needed to ensure that events do not conflict with other programming from other offices, thereby harming each event attempted.
- The limited budget(s) of the offices involved means that collaboration is a better use of programming dollars and can offer the most value.
- Expertise in different among offices, collaborating takes advantage of that.
- Collaboration helps keep stakeholders involved, interested, and motivated on the IA mission and helps to internationalize the UCCS workforce.

Collaboration introduces and shows students the multitude of parties on campus interested in knowing about and contributing to international students' academic, professional, and personal success.

In all these functions, there are common threads of promoting efforts to improve international student success, retention, and engagement with the campus and community. IA offered a variety of hybrid (remote and in-person) programming for the 2022-2023 Academic Year.

International Week 2022

This week is a celebration of campus-wide international programming. The nationally recognized week is designated by the Department of State and Department of Education and celebrated in different ways on each campus across the nation. International Affairs provides daily programming and collaborates with campus partners to highlight international activities and expertise. In addition to advertising across campus, IA promotes its activities for national recognition with the Department of State and with the State of Colorado via StudyColorado.

In 2022, International Education Week events were held from Monday, November 14, to Friday, November 18.

The schedule included EA advising events, Harnessing Your International Experience for

UCCS
International Affairs
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
COLORADO SPRINGS

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK
NOV 14-18

TUESDAY 11/15

Study Abroad Q&A for Marginalized Students
11am at MOASIC and via Teams
A community panel focused on being a person of color, LGBTQ+, and/or living with a disability and navigating going abroad for the first time.

Harnessing your International Experience for Career Success
1-2pm at the Career Center
Stop by the Career Center to get walk-in resume guidance on how to leverage your international education experiences!

Abroad 101
4pm via Teams
Learn about the application process, costs, locations, coursework, travel, program selection, and more.

FRIDAY 11/18

Japan Society for the Promotion of Science Info Session
3pm via Teams
Learn about fellowship opportunities for research in Japan. Open to all faculty, staff and students.

WEDNESDAY 11/16

Abroad 101
12pm via Teams
Learn about the application process, costs, locations, coursework, travel, program selection, and more.

International Student Panel
5:30pm via Teams
Success Stories from recent UCCS Graduates.

THURSDAY 11/17

OPT- Practical Training
10am via Teams
Learn about options if you are interested in applying for U.S. work permission tied to your degree.

Student Returnee Panel
12pm via Teams
Hear from recent students who have gone abroad and learn more about their experiences!

Emergency Contact and Student Q&A
4pm via Teams
We invite our students and their emergency contacts to join us to learn more about the Risk Management Policies for our students going abroad and get any questions answered.

Chill with i-Buddy
5:30pm @ MOSAIC Lounge (UC 110)
Come chill with us; play games, have pizza and win prizes.

EMAIL:
INTERNATIONAL@UCCS.EDU
PHONE:
719-255-5018

SCAN FOR MORE INFO!

Career Success with the T. Rowe Price Career and Innovation Center, an OPT Workshop, and a panel discussion featuring success stories from UCCS international student alumni. Above is a copy of the schedule and descriptions of events.

[International Affairs Strategic Planning and External Review](#)

The 2019-2025 International Affairs Strategic Plan was finalized in 2019. During 2019, IA staff met to identify strengths and opportunities to develop and define goals. Goals were identified, and the plan was developed to align with the divisional plan. Feedback was received from students with experience in each area as well as the Vice Chancellor for Student Success. Implementation efforts commenced in Fall 2019, with the completion of various elements occurring throughout the planning cycle.

The IA Strategic Plan goals:

Goal 1: Strengthen the diversity of education abroad opportunities

Goal 2: Enhance the campus climate for international students and scholars

Goal 3: Enrich opportunities for international partnership and community relations

Goal 4: Implement an assessment plan that measures student and scholar success

Goal 5: Contribute to the Division of Student Success and University's strategic plan

These goals share a common purpose of ensuring a vibrant international experience for students. While some goals and strategies are one-time, many involve ongoing processes. To review the IA strategic plan, please visit uccs.edu/international and click on "About Us."

To continue to highlight the external review conducted for IA in 2021, the summary below highlights some core strengths, opportunities, and recommendations:

Strengths

- Well-respected and knowledgeable team with expertise in international education
- Effectively supports internationalization efforts with minimal staffing (International Risk Management Committee, a Crisis Management Plan, growth in education abroad, and strong support for visiting international scholars and students)
- Collaborates across campus and within the community on international education efforts

Opportunities and Recommendations

- Elevate staff titles to reflect unique areas of responsibility
- Return education abroad funding to base funding
- Consider organizational alignment with academic affairs per national data
- Establish a task force/advisory council (faculty and staff membership with appointment by senior leader(s))
- Provide administrative support for the office
- Fundraise for scholarships for international students and for study abroad
- Ensure risk management compliance also comes from the provost, deans, and department, not just IA
- Consider centralizing all international efforts on campus into IA
- Further the development and support of faculty-led education abroad programs

- Introduce and virtual exchange or collaborative online international learning (COIL) at UCCS

Education Abroad

Education abroad professionals require people skills as well as data management skills. The SEAA role involves nuanced advising for and outreach to students, staff, and faculty across a wide range of fields. With need-to-know information about administrative processes on-campus, as well as the visa requirements of various countries and program details of the many partners. This expansive knowledge base includes an in-depth understanding of world travel, education systems, and other countries.

The Terra Dotta system is used to manage and track EA participation, and risk management data requires the SEAA to have technological savvy, data maintenance knowledge, and report writing skills. Through Terra Dotta, the SEAA creates and maintains lists of students going abroad and relevant emergency contact details for each term, thereby contributing to risk management abroad. Among other duties, the SEAA also creates and updates program information pages, assists students with the application process, and oversees program offerings to ensure a diversity of excellent options for students.

Via orientation and information sessions, the SEAA works to foster greater campus participation in and awareness of the range of education abroad opportunities available at UCCS. The SEAA also uses social media, tabling, and group-specific programming in this effort.

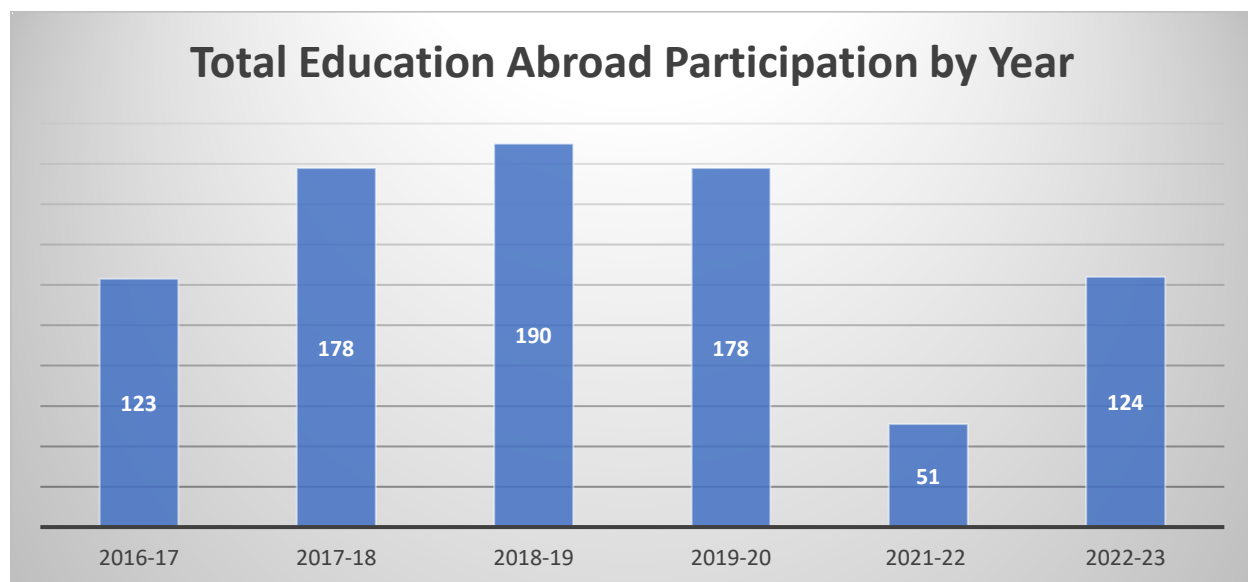
Through all the above, as well as close partnerships with other departments and offices across campus, the SEAA works to incorporate meaningful experiences abroad degrees and learning outcomes to grow interest and participation in education abroad at UCCS. Below is an application and summary report for EA. With the 2022 to 2023 Academic Year being the first full academic year to send students abroad after the pandemic, it is clear that interest in EA continues to grow as programs continue to return. This summary report will be used to set future application and enrolled student goals, and staff anticipate a return to pre-pandemic levels by 2024-2025.

Year-on-Year	Applications	Pending	Accepted	Committed (went abroad)	With-drawn	Applicants Abroad	Accepts Abroad
2022-2023	279	0	124	124	155	44.5%	44.5%
2021-2022	163	0	55	51	108	31.3%	33.7%
2020-2021	256	0	0	0	256	0%	0%
2019-2020	344	0	178	178	166	51.7%	51.7%
2018-2019	416	0	190	190	226	45.7%	45.7%
2017-2018	262	0	178	178	84	67.9%	67.9%
2016-2017	165	0	123	123	42	74.5%	74.5%
Total	1885	0	848	844	1037	44.8%	45.1%

Annual Overview

During the 2022-23 Academic Year, Education Abroad at UCCS saw a steady level of increased participation. International Affairs sent students abroad during every term for the first time since the pandemic. Participation numbers doubled compared to the previous year. According to the Institute of International Education, Open Doors report for 2022, national education abroad participation saw a slight increase from the prior academic year, crediting the uneven return of programs across the nation to the small change. UCCS education abroad increased significantly more than the national average and represents International Affairs' efforts to promote and support education abroad as well as strong UCCS student interest in education abroad opportunities.

It is important to note that in the charts to follow, all terms that sent zero students abroad due to the pandemic have been omitted for better comparison of true terms.

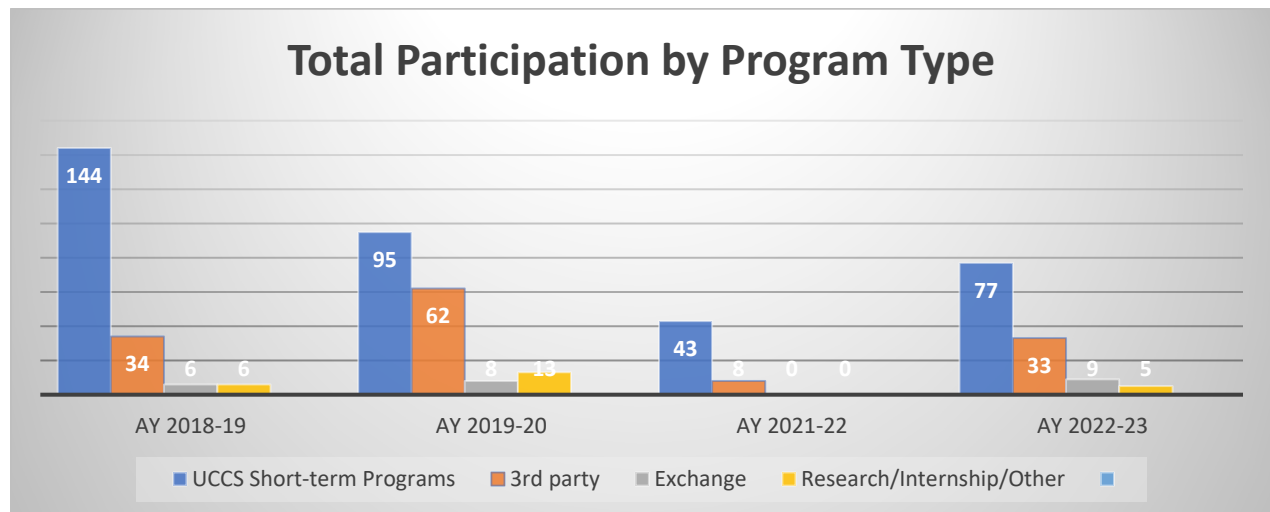


The popularity of summer abroad programming, especially short-term, continues to be the spotlight in EA. Student interest in shorter programs is a growing trend nationally and at UCCS as it allows for students to have an abroad experience while still being able to fulfill responsibilities at home, work, and school.

The chart below details EA applications by program type. Displaying significant growth in third-party programming and in UCCS short-term programs. Third-party programming (provider programs) is education abroad experiences organized by companies or non-profits that partner with universities to provide avenues abroad. These partners are key to UCCS, helping to ensure student support for participants while abroad and helping to mitigate risk management and emergency issues.

Provider programs offer a great variety of countries and areas of study with a high level of student support prior to, during, and after the student's time abroad. Some providers also offer scholarship funding for students. Students pay a "program fee" directly to the

provider, which usually includes tuition and fees, accommodation for the duration of the program, insurance, some excursions, and on-site support.



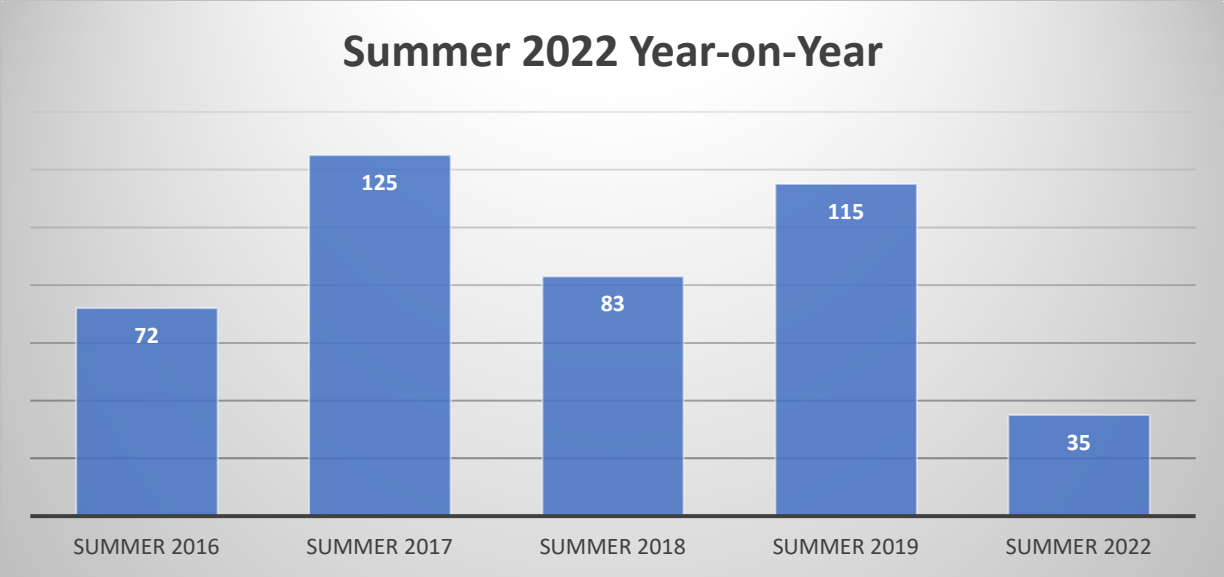
The 2022-23 Academic Year had an increase from 43 participants to 77 in short-term programming. This is a likely result of being the fourth year of a major push to promote UCCS short-term programming on a cyclical schedule. With calls to faculty and staff for program development in the winter and early spring. Requests for proposals and paperwork due April 1 and development of promotional materials prior to the end of the spring semester. This cycle allows program leaders to share their upcoming programs with students earlier and helps students prepare for participation in the next academic year's short-term programs. This method continues to be effective as the office turns its attention to the 2023-24 academic year, garnering 13 anticipated programs. It is important to note this past year's proposal cycle experienced some delays from providers and their proposals. Many are still recovering from the impacts of the pandemic, like working through staffing issues, which resulted in longer timeframes for proposal development.

Education Abroad Participation - Term Overviews

The summaries below provide a semester/term overview of education abroad student mobility and capture the students that went abroad. Each section includes a summary with charts that detail current and historical analysis of education abroad participation by term.

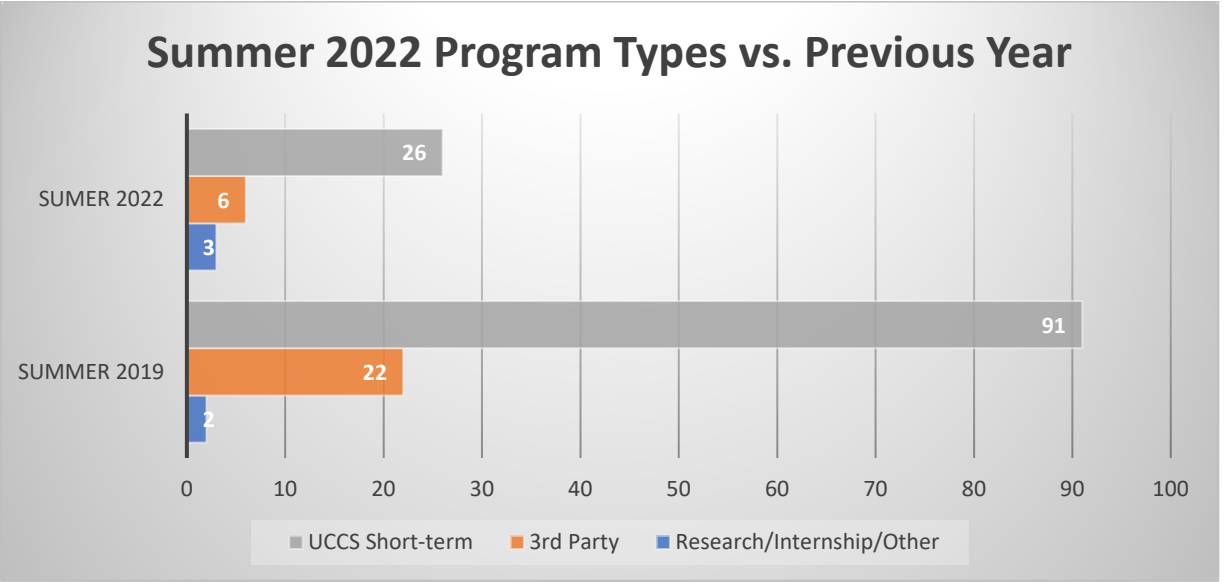
Summer 2022 Overview

Total: 35 Participants



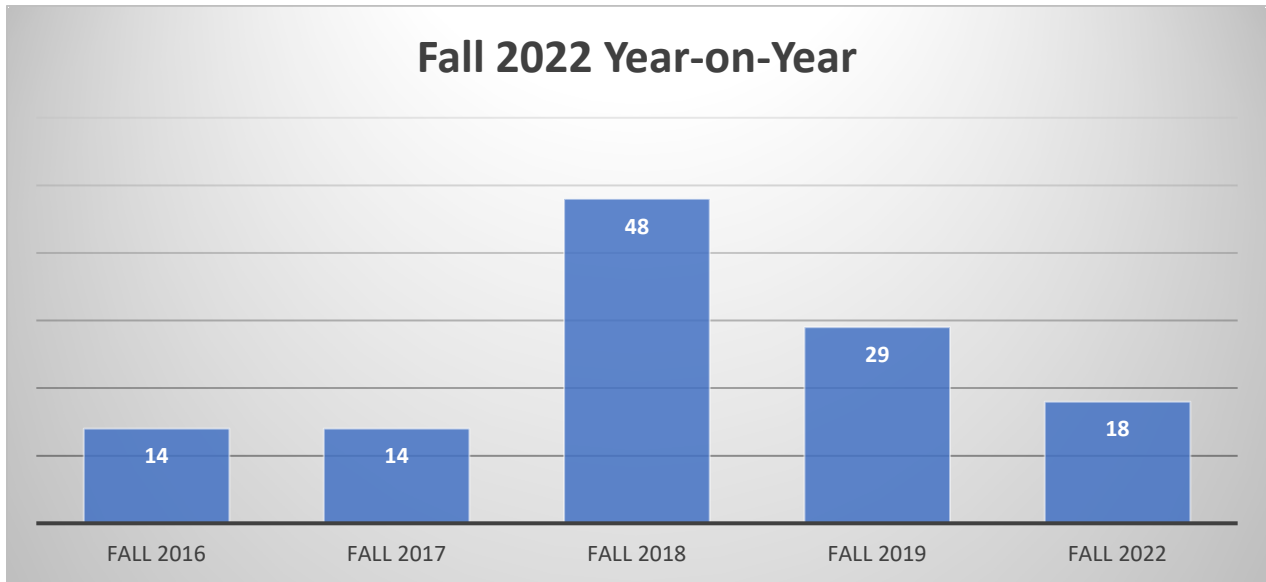
As the chart above demonstrates, a sustained trend has begun emerging, which UCCS continues to build up to with the Summer 2022 numbers due to limited program offerings.

Maintaining focus on summer short-term programming is necessary as it continues to be the most popular option for education abroad experiences. Along with supporting UCCS faculty and staff with short-term programming, a diversity of other summer programs, like student groups, should continue to be encouraged. As more student groups become interested in education abroad programs, there will be larger growth in summer participation. Summer Programs can more readily accommodate school schedules and cost considerations (that tend to be less due to the shorter period of study).

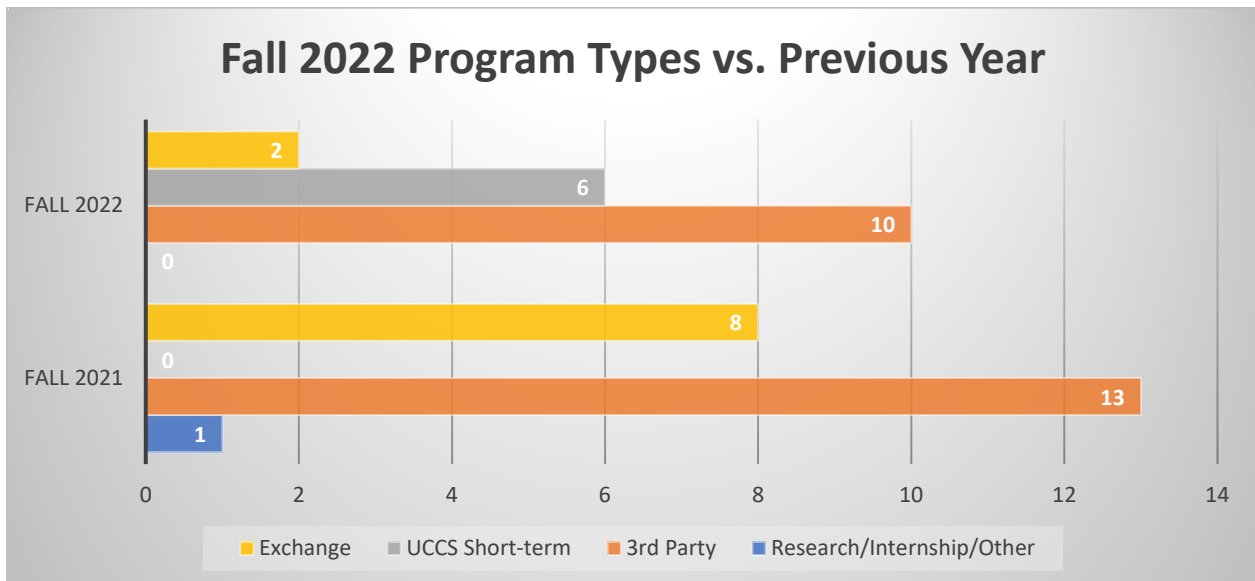


Countries of Destination Summer 2022: United Kingdom, France, Spain.

Fall 2022 Overview
 Total: 18 Participants



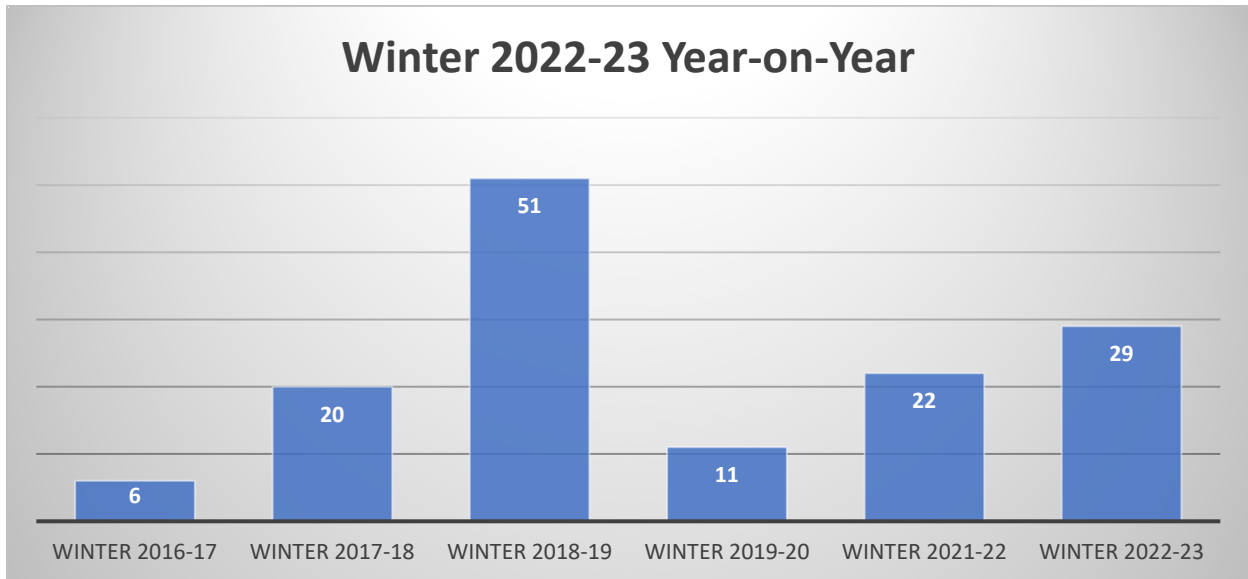
Fall 2022 saw 18 students in EA programs. The spike in Fall 2018 itself enjoyed the highest participation rates due to a rapidly growing interest in third-party providers, with participation increasing 128% over the previous year. The overall increase in program provider participation suggests that interest in more traditional education abroad programming is on the rise for UCCS students. As the first full fall term to go abroad post-pandemic, anticipated numbers for the following year are to continue the growth trend.



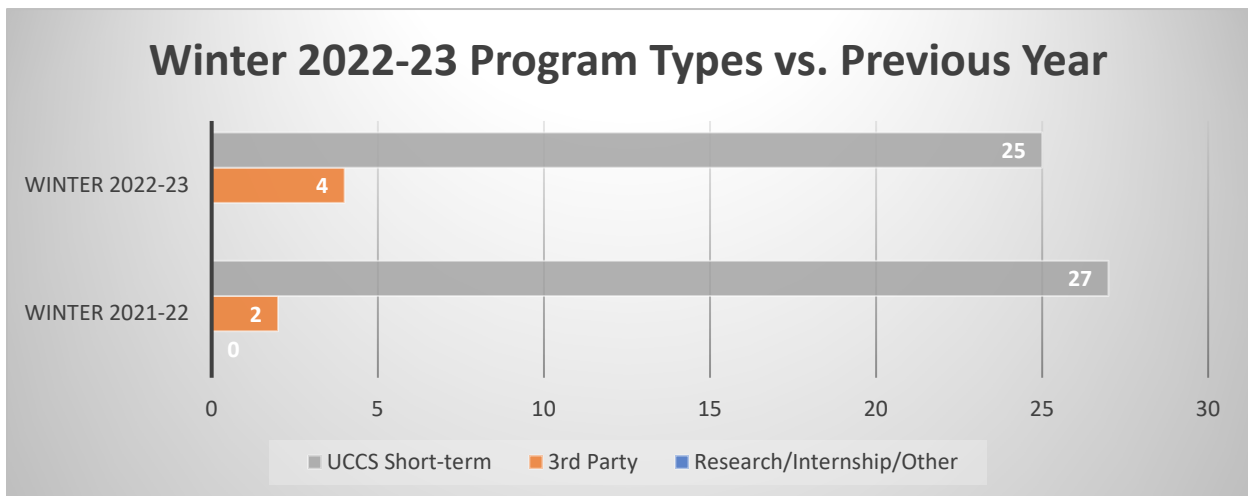
Countries of Destination Fall 2022: Netherlands, United Kingdom, Ireland, Greece, Spain, South Korea, Sweden, Germany, Japan.

Winter 2022-23 Overview

Total: 29 Participants



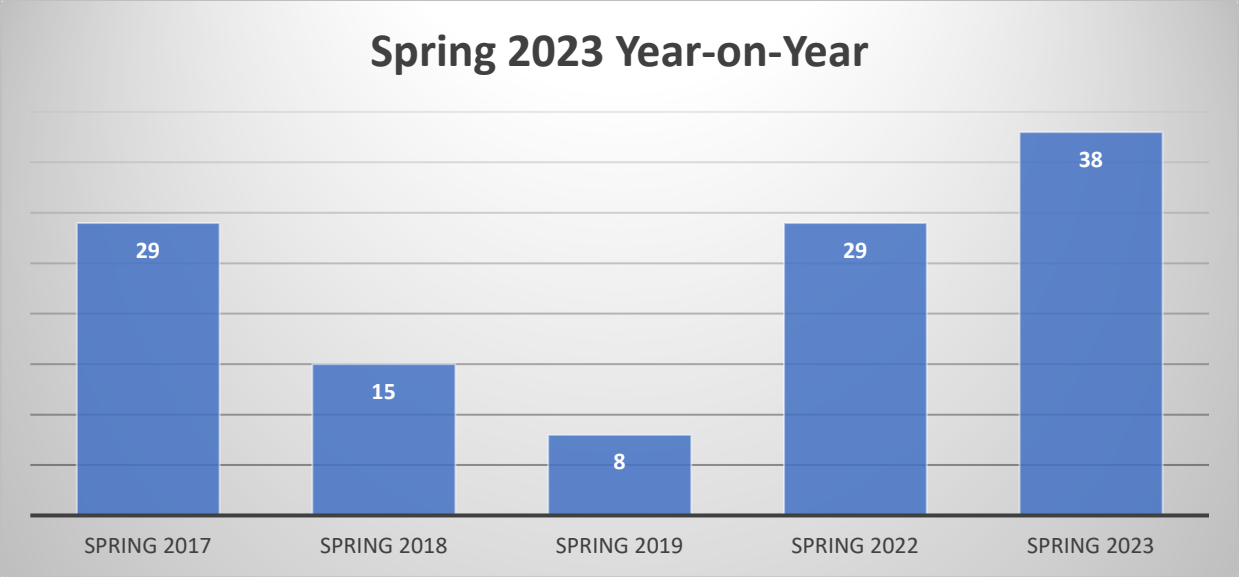
Winter 22-23 saw participants go on both short-term faculty-led programming as well as short-term provider programs.



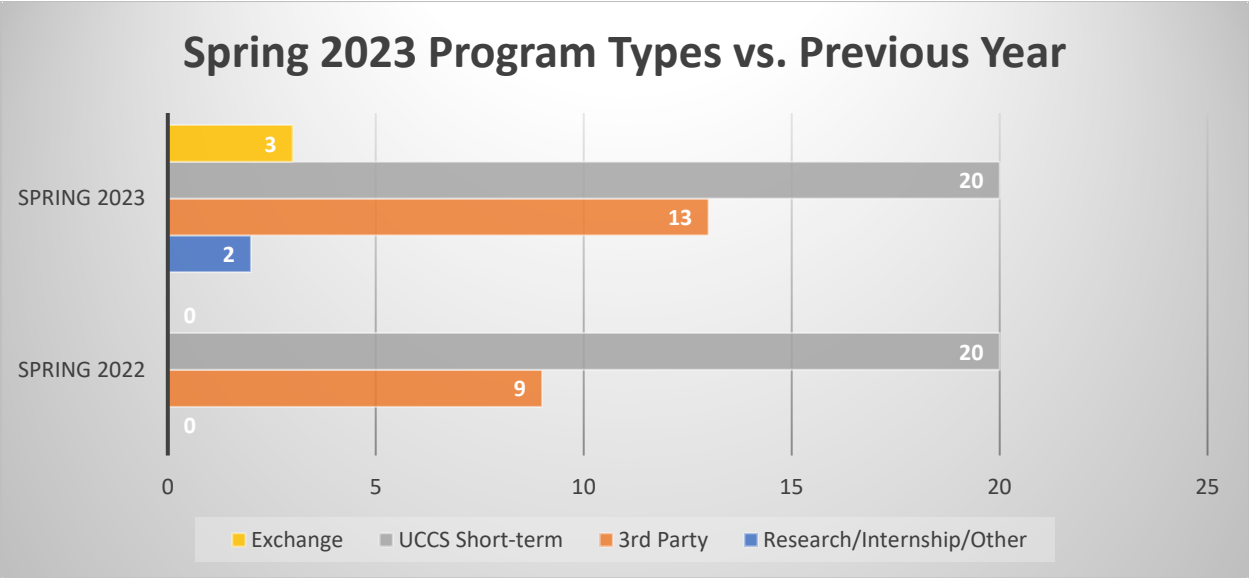
Countries of Destination Winter 2022-23: India, Ireland, Spain, Uganda.

Spring 2023 Overview

Total: 38 Participants



Spring 2023 shows a clear return to the growth trend UCCS was settling into. Matching worldwide trends as travel returns to full operations. Highlighting the continued popularity of the spring semester, it remains important to provide thoughtful and effective support.

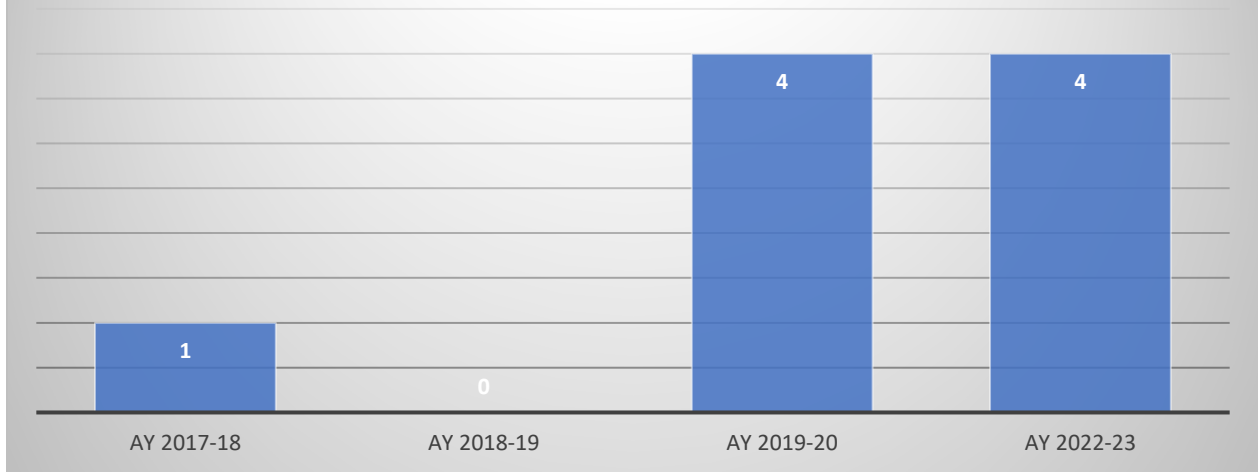


Countries of Destination Spring 2023: France, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Belize, Ireland, New Zealand, Netherlands, Spain, South Korea.

[Academic Year 2022-23 Overview](#)

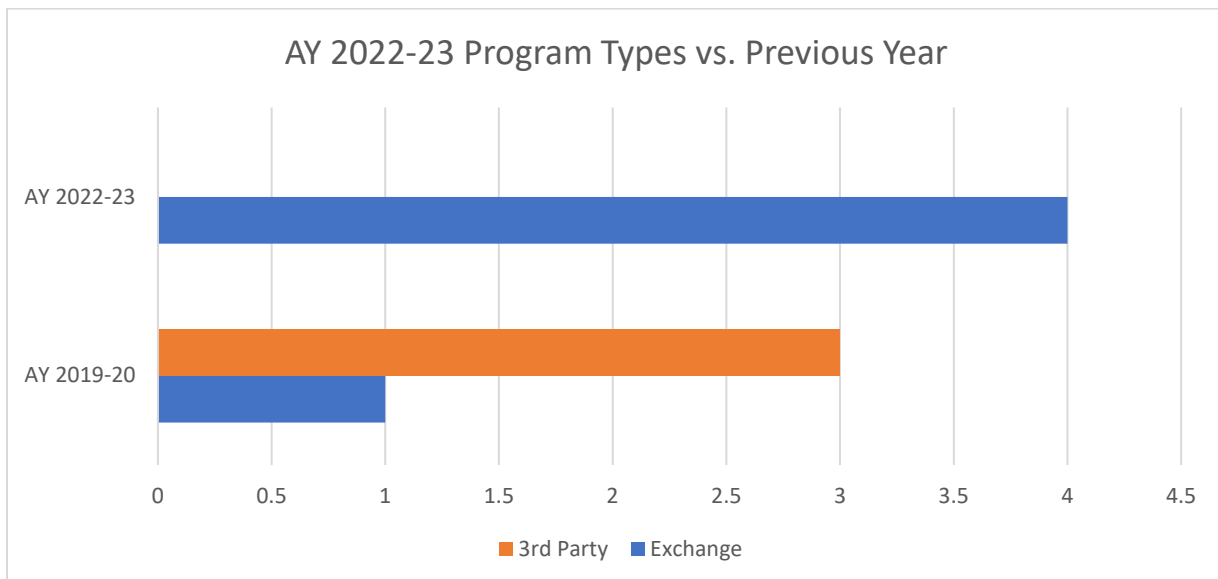
Total: 4 Participants

Academic Year 2022-23 Year-on-Year



The generally low participation in academic year-long programs is likely due to the significant monetary and time commitments involved in going abroad for nine-to-ten months. Especially since UCCS students strongly value affordability and flexibility, as demonstrated by the popularity of short-term programming. Nevertheless, there continues to be steady interest in these programs.

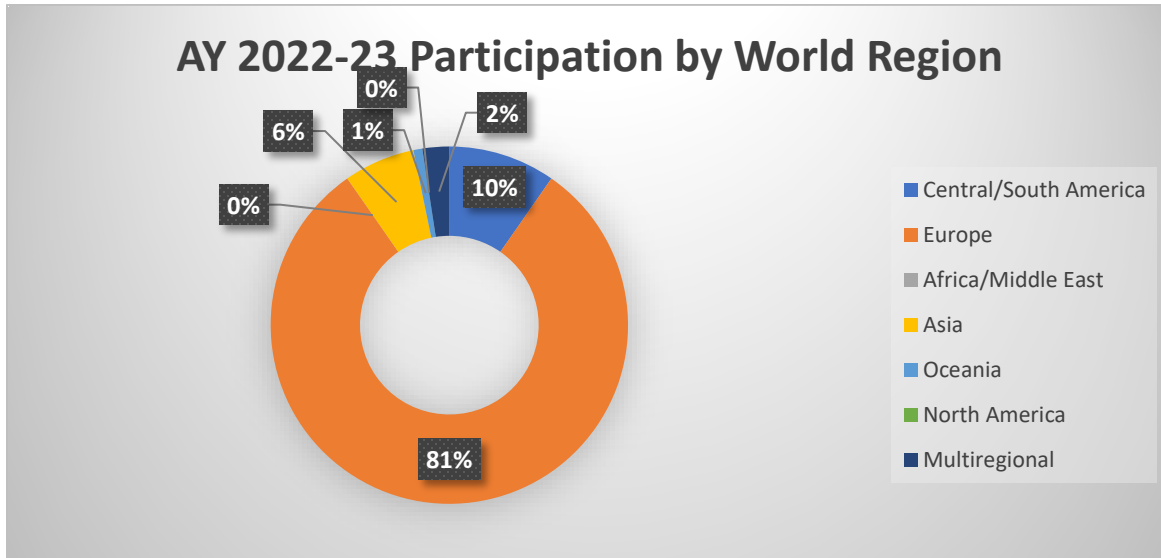
There is a significant increased interest in exchange programs. Perhaps increasing in appeal due to financial opportunities. It will be interesting to see how these programs continue with the full-strength return of the third-party provider programs.



Countries of Destination Spring 2023: Germany, South Korea, Japan.

Regional Participation

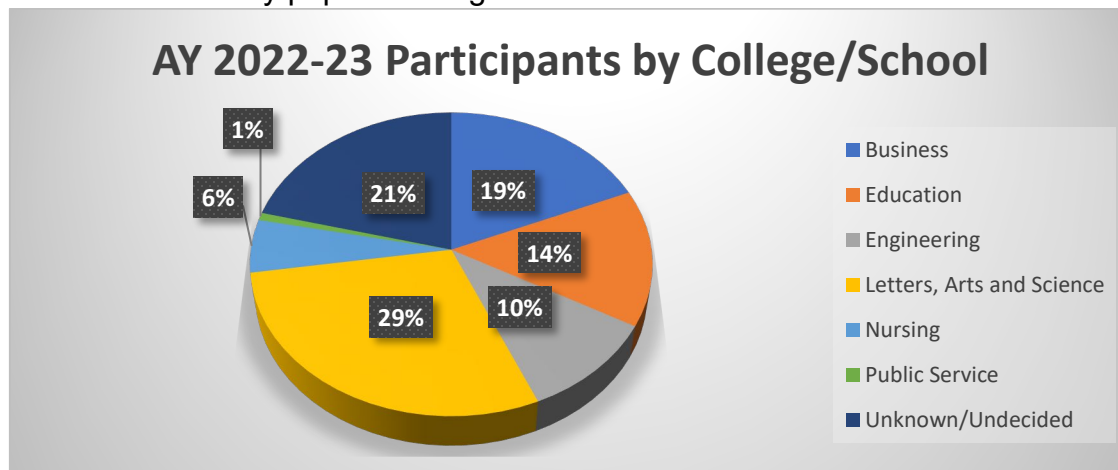
As with national trends, Europe remains the most popular destination for education abroad experiences in all categories. Overall, the International Affairs Office sent 124 UCCS students to over 15 countries during the 2022-23 Academic Year.



While Europe remains the most popular with applications, the return of interest in Africa/Middle East is lacking. Multiregional programs continue to represent a small percentage of total students abroad, while Asia and Central/South America are slightly on the rise.

Participation by UCCS College/School

The chart below details participation rates by self-identified school or college, containing a total of 124 participants. It shows overall participation rates by college/school and highlights the continued overall dominance of the College of Letters, Arts, and Science in education abroad. Also revealing a climb in participants from the College of Education compared to last year. The Colleges of Business and Health Sciences and Nursing continue to be fairly popular colleges for education abroad.



College and School Data Summaries

The **College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences** continues to be the most represented among those who apply and study abroad. While this college contains the most majors on campus, the areas of study, such as the foreign language majors/minors, it also lends most easily to education abroad, with 29% of participants housed here.

The historical relationship that the **College of Business** has with exchange partners, as well as having an international marketing major, makes it well represented. There was a small increase in applications, likely due to the limited availability of programs and the inability to bring back any of the exchanges throughout the 2022-23 Academic Year.

The **College of Nursing and Health Sciences** saw a slight decrease in representation, in large part due to the absence of the yearly Global Brigades trip.

The **College of Education** shows a significant spike in participation in programming this year due to new course offerings and flexible programming.

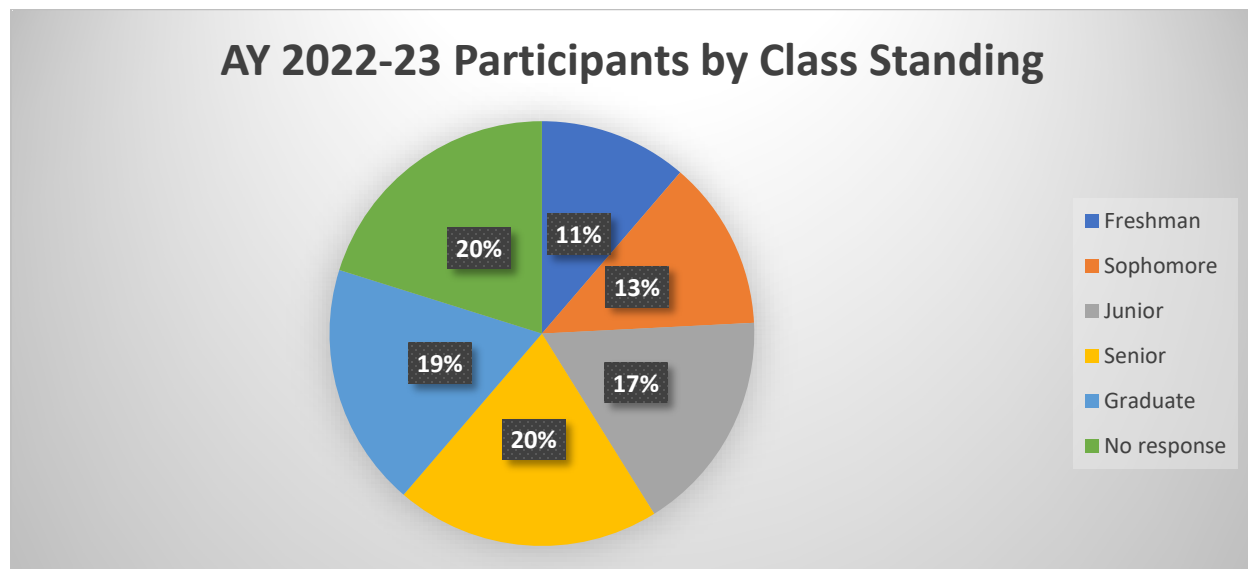
The **College of Engineering and Applied Sciences** students mostly go on summer or winter STEM programs. With one of the small faculty-led trips being engineering geared, these rates can be expected to continue fairly consistently and/or grow at a slight incline based on the popularity and growth of STEM programs.

The **School of Public Affairs** historically has significant presence with short-term programs abroad. While the program Criminal Justice in London was unable to run this year, it will likely return the following year.

It is important to note that not all students going abroad identify a major or degree as part of the registration to go abroad. Further, 26 participants this year indicated no major.

Participation by UCCS Class Standing

As the below chart shows, the 2022-23 Academic Year had a surprisingly even split.



Given the complexities of upper division coursework and schedules, it's interesting to note how many juniors and seniors are participating in education abroad. This suggests that upper-level coursework may not be quite as big a barrier as previously thought. Further research on the intersection between class standing and college/school should be considered to determine if there are certain programs or areas of study in which traveling later in the undergraduate career is more manageable for students.

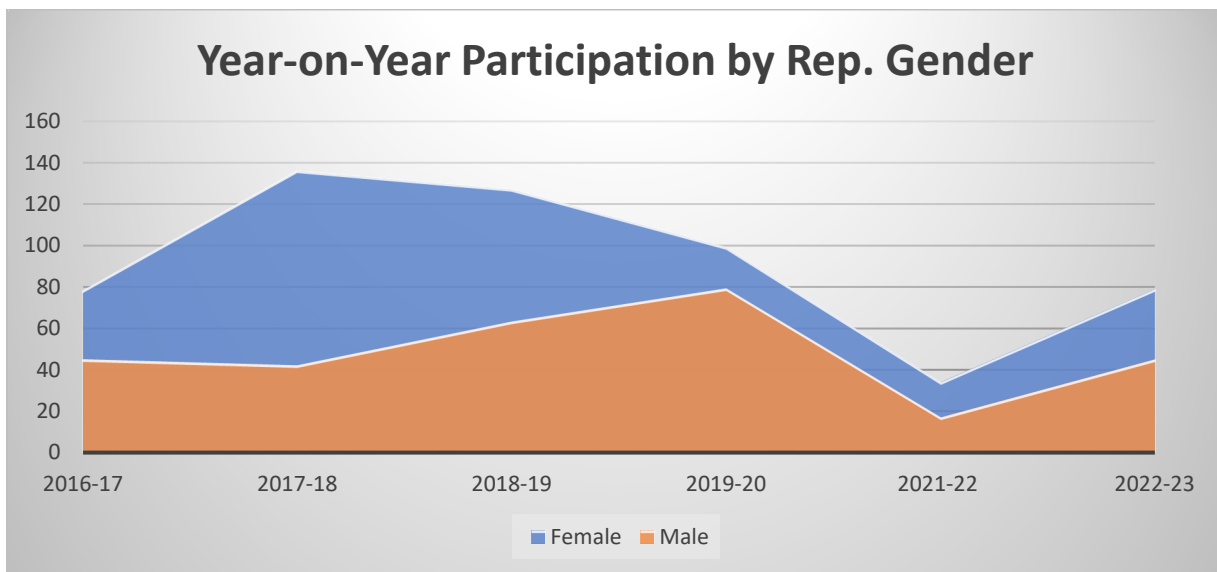
Education Abroad by Reported Gender

This year's report highlights a similar gender gap to last year. Women appear to consistently participate more than their male counterparts. It will be interesting to track whether the continued emergence from the global pandemic represents a return to a more even gender distribution. The creation of personas for targeting through marketing programs may strengthen UCCS' voice in reaching all genders according to their potentially disparate motivators.

Now that short-term programming is increasing, it will be important to note if the steady rise in participation will continue thanks to outreach efforts and on-campus marketing.

Female: 79 Participants Male: 45 Participants

	Female	Male	% Female	% Male
2017-18 Total	136	42	76.40%	23.60%
2018-19 Total	127	63	66.80%	33.20%
2019-20 Total	99	79	55.62%	44.38%
2020-21 Total	0	0	0%	0%
2021-22 Total	34	17	66.67%	33.33%
2022-23 Total	79	45	63.70%	36.29%



Education Abroad by Reported Ethnicity

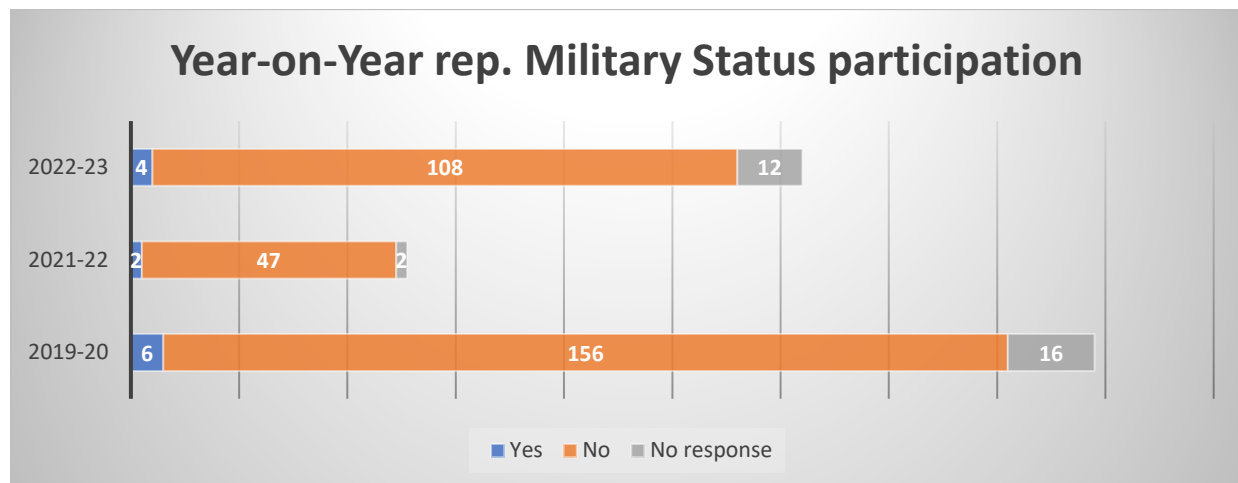
Overall, the trends in reported ethnicity by education abroad participants remain relatively level in recent years. These percentage levels are on par with the national averages for participation by these groups and indicate strong growing diversity in EA at UCCS.

Rep. Race/Ethnicity	2022-23	2021-22	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
African (American)	4.8% (6)	5.5% (9)	6.2% (11)	3.1% (6)	1.7% (3)	<1% (1)
American Indian/Alaska Native	<1% (1)	<1% (1)	1.1% (2)	<1% (1)	<1% (1)	<1% (1)
Asian (American)	2.4% (3)	6.1% (10)	2.8% (5)	3.6% (7)	2.4% (4)	2.5% (3)
Caucasian	49.2% (61)	49.7% (81)	58.4% (104)	55.2% (105)	60% (106)	67.5% (83)
Hispanic/Latino	12.9% (16)	11.1% (18)	9.6% (17)	11% (21)	11.8% (21)	12.2% (15)
Multiple Selected	2.4% (3)	2.5% (4)	2.2% (4)	1.5% (3)	1.1% (2)	-
Did not respond	24.2% (30)	17.8% (29)	14% (25)	18.9% (36)	18.5% (33)	6.5% (8)
Other	2.4% (3)	6.1% (10)	3.4% (6)	4.7% (9)	2.8% (3)	4.9% (6)
Did not wish to report	<1% (1)	<1% (1)	2.2% (4)	1% (2)	1.7% (3)	4.9% (6)

As the data also shows, students classifying themselves as Other or who did not respond or report remained fairly steady.

Education Abroad and Reported Military Status

UCCS prides itself on being a nationally ranked military-friendly institution, with nearly 20% of students having military affiliation. However, there continues to be challenges to their participation in education abroad experiences that are not faced by other students. Tightening of interpretations of the Department of Veterans Affairs benefit eligibility for education abroad continues to impact participation. Currently, students can only use their benefits for direct exchanges, not third-party provider or short-term programs.

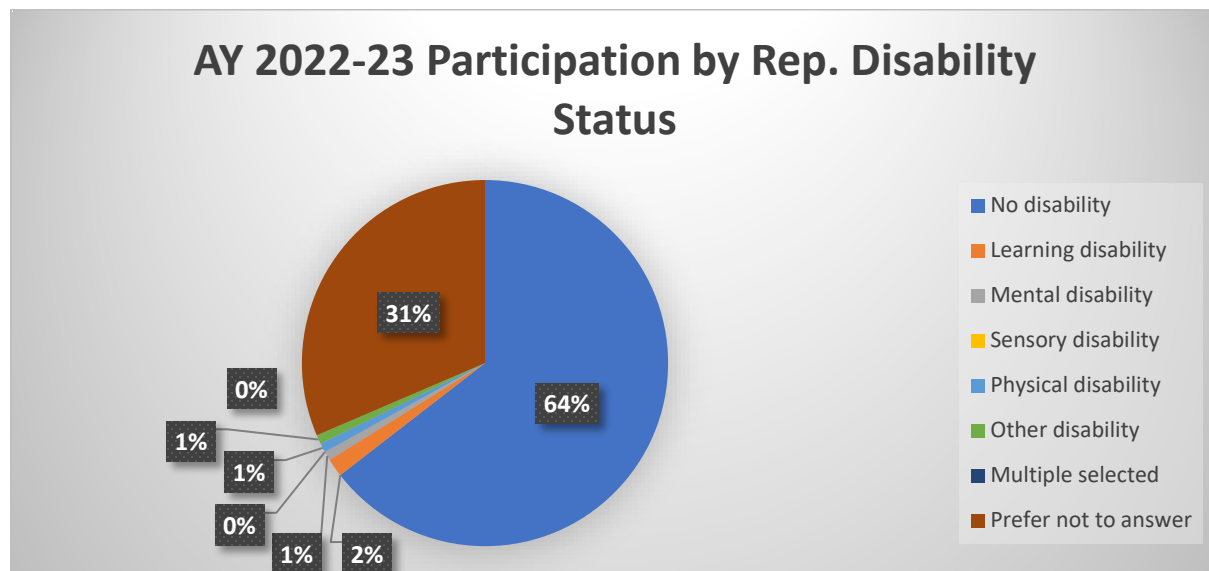


Nevertheless, of the 124 students in this year's data, 4 listed an affiliation with the military on their application. An overall decrease from the previous years, likely due to the limited programming resurgence.

It is important to note that the issue with veteran benefits for programs abroad is not unique to UCCS. All Colorado schools continue to face similar concerns working with veterans for education abroad due to the changes in the interpretation and use of veteran benefits. Overall, the UCCS approach has been measured and, with continued coordination, could present an area of growth given the continued national increase in veteran and military-affiliated members seeking higher education and overseas experiences. An area moving forward for consideration is the use of the VA's WEAMS database of approved overseas schools to establish new agreements for partnership. Using these schools to develop partnerships should assist in finding locations for military-affiliated students that meet the requirements for the use of aid. However, it is important to note that support services at such institutions will be minimal.

Education Abroad and Reported Disability Status

One of the growth areas in education abroad is the reporting and tailoring of approaches for disabled students.



There were few students who self-reported a disability in 2022-2023, a slight increase from the previous year. The major area of concern regarding EA and disabled students is those who do not report their disability or those with multiple disabilities who report only one. Additionally, there may be some concern about the mental disability label being used – or not used – to reflect nuanced mental health issues students may experience. Data collection in this regard is not perfect and will continue to be a work in progress. Greater training of faculty and staff who lead trips overseas, as well as the EA and IA staff, will also continue to be important moving forward.

Marketing and Outreach

Marketing and outreach for this reporting cycle continue to be classified as more tailored and effective as a result. Programs this year were focused on remote communications, promotions, education through Abroad 101, and cultural participation sessions that students could participate in from their own location.

Abroad 101

The main objective of Abroad 101 sessions is to take the confusion out of how to start the study abroad process. The popularity of these sessions has faltered somewhat due to their virtual status and limited programming. Thirty-one students participated in a session this year. Marketing efforts to promote Abroad 101 continue to include connecting with academic advisors and departments as well as campus-wide flyer distribution via email and social media posts. These events will continue to be held virtually multiple times a week with some additional program spotlights in hopes of increasing popularity.

Student Group Presentations

Based on the increased interest in overseas travel by UCCS student groups, a plan to roll out a full communication and presentation schedule with student groups in the next year was created to start next year.

Social Media

Social media has been an area of needed attention and growth to help promote the efforts of IA. To this end, a social media communication plan was developed, and new areas of promotion will continue to be explored.

General Campus Outreach

Tabling events returned in limited numbers for the spring semester of 2022-2023, allowing EA to reach incoming students and passersby again. As these continue to return and be fully present on campus, it is likely to have several more of these moving forward in order to target all campus students.

Co-hosting Events with Other Departments

As SEAA was trained in and programming returned for the spring, EA worked in conjunction with MOSAIC and the Excel Language Centers to host additional events with their own respective themes. This kind of cross-departmental events brought in additional interest and will be explored further for future terms.

Education Abroad Advising

EA advising is done on a walk-in and appointment basis. Students are encouraged to attend an information session as well as meet with an advisor to explore programs and individual questions. Individual advising sessions last between 30-45 minutes, depending on their questions. One-on-one meetings are an important method of connecting with interested students. Virtual offerings continued to supplement in-office appointments.

Pre-Departure Orientations

The pre-departure orientation moved to an online asynchronous experience with information to prepare students for their overseas experiences. The pre-departure orientation is comprehensive, covering things like health and safety, banking, communication, culture, education, and travel best practices. The orientation was augmented with several optional emergency contact and participant virtual sessions that were interactive and meant to be an open forum for students and guardians to ask questions to EA staff.

Faculty/Staff-directed Programming: Short-term Program Leader Information Sessions

One-on-one meetings occurred to discuss the process over the past year. Topics include the following:

- Overview of the process
- Compensation and budget
- The planning processes
- Responsibilities of the program leader and IA
- Program providers
- The proposal forms

In response to these sessions, the forms and resources for faculty and staff have been updated and aligned with best practices and, procedures, and guidelines of other CU-system schools.

Education Abroad International Partnerships

Below is a summary of UCCS bilateral exchanges. The balancing of these exchange agreements remains a challenge as there is increased interest in sending students to UCCS rather than UCCS students going abroad on these programs. In addition, the support offered abroad is minimal and requires very independent and internationally savvy students to navigate the exchange partner institution.

Institutional Bilateral Exchanges

- Waseda University – Tokyo, Japan
- ICES Institute Catholique d'Etudes Superieures – La Roche-sur-Yon, France
- Radboud University Nijmegen – Nijmegen, Netherlands
- Loughborough University – Loughborough, United Kingdom
- University of Hertfordshire – Hatfield, United Kingdom
- Hankuk University of Foreign Studies – Seoul, South Korea
- Southern Institute of Technology – Invercargill, New Zealand (fee-paying exchange)

College of Business Exchanges

- Frankfurt School of Finance and Management – Frankfurt, Germany
- Cologne Business School – Cologne, Germany
- MCI Management Center Innsbruck – Innsbruck, Austria

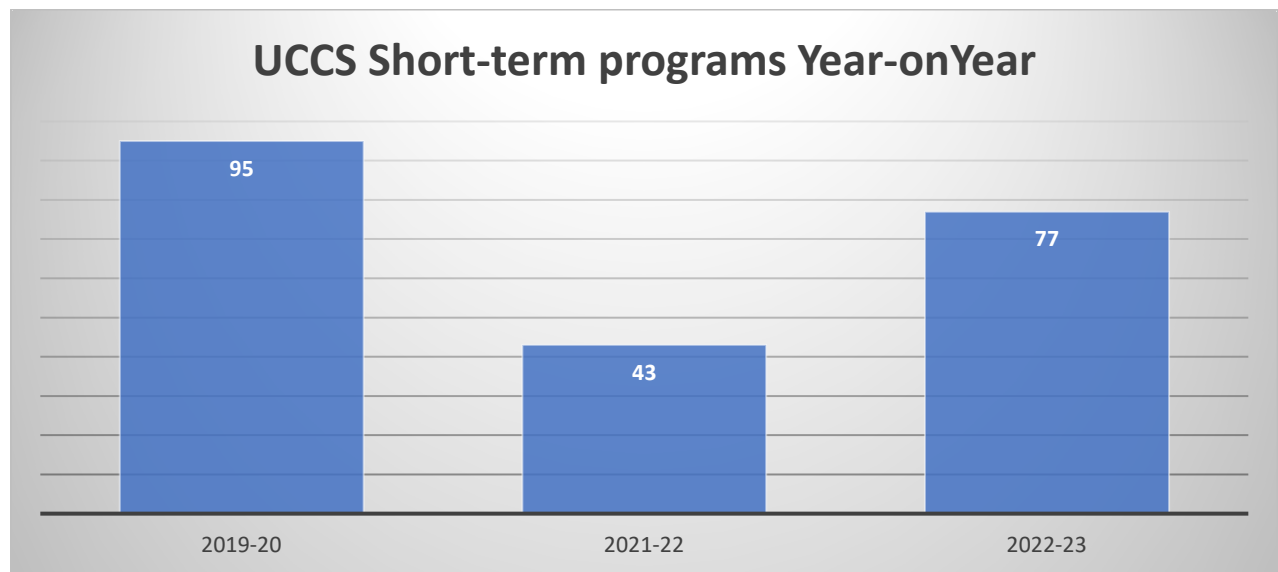
- Munich Business School – Munich, Germany

Funding and Scholarships

IA continues to pursue and consider opportunities for external scholarship funding. To date, there has been no internal, university-wide scholarship funding source identified to help fund study abroad scholarships. Ad-hoc scholarships have been given to students by individual departments and funds, but no consistency has been established. The Gilman Scholarship program is administered by the US Department of State to support undergraduate students with high financial need, specifically those receiving a Federal Pell Grant. Receiving a Gilman Scholarship is prestigious, and Gilman scholars are eligible for noncompetitive eligibility hiring status with the federal government.

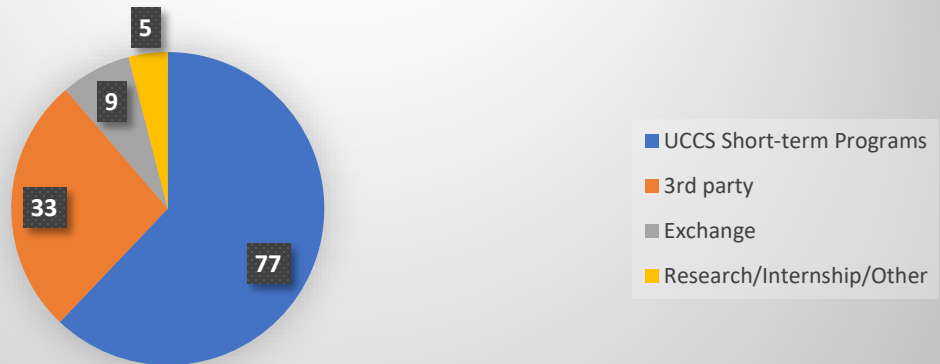
UCCS Short-term Programs Abroad

This reporting cycle reflects the impacts of the continued efforts to align UCCS short-term programs with best practices related to guidelines, procedures, and policies. These efforts encompass both student groups and faculty/staff-directed programs.



As prior discussions and the above chart indicate, short-term programming remains an area in which UCCS students have a strong interest. A centralized approach to the faculty/staff-led program development and proposal process continues to benefit study abroad program participation and helps campus officials ensure administrative practices such as risk management.

AY 2022-23 UCCS Short-Term Participation vs. Other Program Types



This year, short-term programming accounts for a smaller percentage of education abroad participation at UCCS, though it is an area necessary to continue to invest in. Future efforts to accelerate this momentum should include considerations such as:

- Incorporating costs/fees into students' accounts for ease of use
- Providing access to financial aid and assistance for non-traditional education abroad programs, such as faculty-directed programs.
- Outreach to student groups who demonstrate strong interest: The support of IA regarding logistics and enrollment may help to boost participation by additional groups that could further the success of UCCS education abroad programs overall.

2022-2023 Short-term Programs

S.O.L.E. Abroad in Belize

Leader(s): Chris Ertman and Telma Frumholtz

Credits: NA

Cost: \$2,540 (*includes hotel, ground transportation, some meals, entrance fees*)

Enrollment: 11

UCCS Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering Senior Design Program in East Africa

Leader(s): Peter Gorder

Credits: NA

Cost: Determined by program (*includes airfare, hotel, all meals, medical insurance*)

Enrollment: 7

UCCS Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering Senior Design Program in Sweden

Leader(s): Peter Gorder

Credits: NA

Cost: Determined by program (*includes airfare, hotel, all meals, medical insurance*)

Enrollment: 6

UCCS Practicum in Languages and Literacy in France

Leader(s): Mary Hanson

Credits: NA

Cost: Determined by program (*includes airfare, hotel, all meals, medical insurance*)

Enrollment: 5

United Kingdom: Where Have They Gone? Locating Real and Imagined Places

Leader(s): Rebecca Posusta and Helen Davies

Credits: 3

Cost: \$6,450 (*includes airfare, hotel, all meals, medical insurance*)

Enrollment: 22

Aventura Cultural en Madrid

Leader(s): Tom Alsop

Credits: 3

Cost: Determined by program (*includes hotel, all meals, medical insurance*)

Enrollment: 4

Business in Munich

Leader(s): Carol Finnegan

Credits: 3

Cost: \$2,850 (*includes hotel, all meals, medical insurance*)

Enrollment: 8

International Study of Higher Education in Ireland

Leader(s): Patty Witkowsky and Phillip Morris

Credits: 3

Cost: \$3,250 (*includes hotel, all meals, medical insurance*)

Enrollment: 18

Future UCCS Short-term Programs

Fall 2023-Summer 2024 Anticipated Programs

Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering Senior Design Program in Sweden – Fall 2023

Global Brigades at UCCS: Student-led Volunteer Brigade – Summer 2024

S.O.L.E. Abroad in Costa Rica – Spring 2024

Criminal Justice in London – Summer 2024

Criminal Justice in Amsterdam – Summer 2024

Practicum in Language and Literacy in France – Summer 2024

Human Services and Counseling in Ireland – Summer 2024

Business in Germany – Spring 2024

Japanese Language and Culture in Japan – Summer 2024

Blue Zones in Greece – Summer 2024

Art in Scotland – Summer 2024
Literature in England and France – Summer 2024
Psychology in France – Summer 2024

Moving Forward in Education Abroad

The future of Education Abroad at UCCS continues to be very promising. EA is rebuilding and moving forward, establishing groundwork to increase participation rates. The world is vast, and cultural understanding and the need to learn and be united globally are never more evident. International Affairs continues to believe the future will be bright, and learning opportunities abroad for UCCS students will continue to be a priority and interest.

Presenting the idea of education abroad at an early stage in a student's career at UCCS and developing a diversity of short-term and non-traditional experiences will continue to be the two areas of focus and growth. Furthering communications for pre-first year students and the coordinating with the admissions team to promote education abroad early on will help students not only find programs that fit their needs but also ensure they are aware of their options with enough time for planning and approval.

To focus efforts, below is a summary of goals moving forward for next year:

- Maintaining online versions of important outreach tools to continue to connect with students in addition to in-person methods.
- Continuing to strengthen interdepartmental partnerships and offering cross-departmental marketing opportunities.
- Furthering reporting efforts and data collection on education abroad participants.
- Monitoring and evaluating the safety of programming abroad for students as more and more countries become accessible.
- Increasing the short-term programming available to students.

International Student Services

The office experienced a staffing change in the Fall 2022 as the Director of International Affairs resigned, and the position remains vacant. In the interim period, the International Student and Scholar Advisor (ISSA) and International Student Program Manager (ISPM) took on the responsibilities of the Director as well as the roles of Primary Designated School Official (PDSO) and Responsible Officer (RO), respectively.

The primary functions of the ISSA position are immigration advising, programming, and coordinating campus immigration compliance and support efforts to international students and scholars. The primary functions of the ISPM involve managing the training and compliance to better support the campus on F and J immigration regulations, interfacing with all relevant governmental agencies, keeping up to date on developments in international education, and high-level immigration advising. Such efforts within both positions are essential as they not only provide for student success but also for

institutional compliance with federal regulations that permit the institution to host international students and scholars.

In addition to serving international students effectively, the ISSS section of the office contributes to campus internationalization by helping campus staff and faculty be better informed and more knowledgeable about our international student population, student needs, and the rules and regulations pertaining to international students.

The ISSA and ISPM roles are now responsible for all tasks within the J-1 Exchange Visitor Scholar program for UCCS. The J-1 scholar program makes it possible for exchange students to attend as well as temporary researchers, instructors, and professors to be on site at UCCS for collaborative activities under the sponsorship of a UCCS department.

COVID-19 Response & Impact

This report references the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on UCCS international student enrollment and programming due to health and safety concerns.

International student enrollment decreased over the last three years due to newly admitted students' inability to obtain visas because of continued embassy and consulate backlogs and closures around the world. Additionally, several travel restrictions remained in place that hindered students' ability to enter the U.S. to return to school.

The 2022-2023 academic year saw a slight increase in international student enrollment compared to the previous year, which was expected as travel restrictions were almost completely eliminated, and embassies and consulates reopened and worked through backlogs.

Effective May 11, 2023, President Biden terminated the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Public Health Emergency. As a result, the Student and Exchange Visitor Program's (SEVP) COVID-19 guidance was also terminated, though students were able to complete the 2022-2023 academic year under the COVID-19 flexibilities through the 2023 summer semester. This guidance provided flexibility to F-1 students, mostly regarding excessive online enrollment. Active F-1 students will not be permitted to count online classes toward a full course of study in excess of the regulatory limits for the 2023-2024 academic year.

Interest in UCCS remains high as admissions is receiving an increased number of applications from international students, and current students are no longer experiencing issues returning to the U.S. to continue their studies. This bodes well for the recovery of international student enrollment at UCCS in the near future.

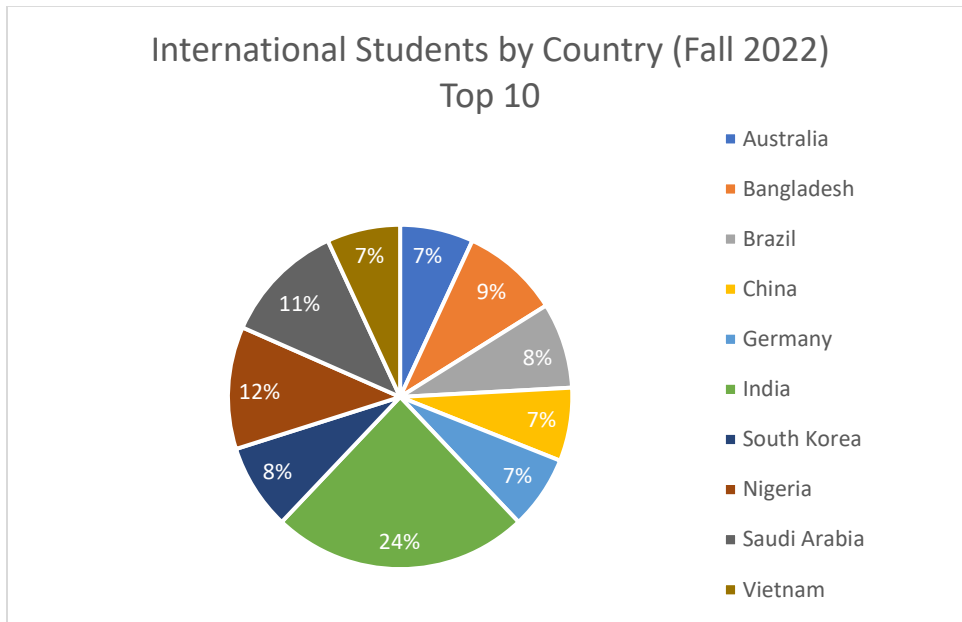
International Student Numbers and Profile

The international student population at UCCS includes students in F-1 and J-1 student status, as well as other non-immigrant visa types that allow study in the U.S., including L-2, H-4, and other statuses. It does not include students who do not have a legal status in the U.S. allowing study (i.e., undocumented students).

Enrollment among international students at UCCS increased slightly over the past year. For the Fall 2022 semester, there were 167 students, compared to 158 in the Fall 2021 semester. The slight population increase is due in part to the recovery of the COVID-19 pandemic. As embassies and consulates reopened, more students were able to obtain visas. Overall, the international student population at UCCS is still significantly less compared to prior years. Which is likely due to external factors outside the university. Such as improved educational quality in students' home countries, increasing competition among other countries to attract international students and home/host country politics that influence student mobility.

The diversity of the UCCS international student population is demonstrated by the fact that 57 different countries were represented on campus in Fall 2022. The top countries represented by population count were India (21), Nigeria (10), Saudi Arabia (10), Bangladesh (8), Brazil (7), South Korea (7), Australia (6), China (6), Germany (6), and Vietnam (6).

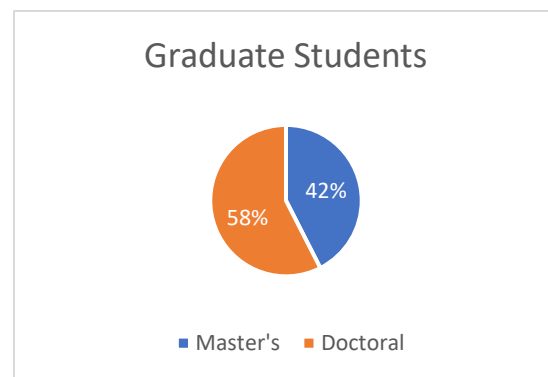
Below is a visual representation of the top countries represented at UCCS in Fall 2022 by population count:



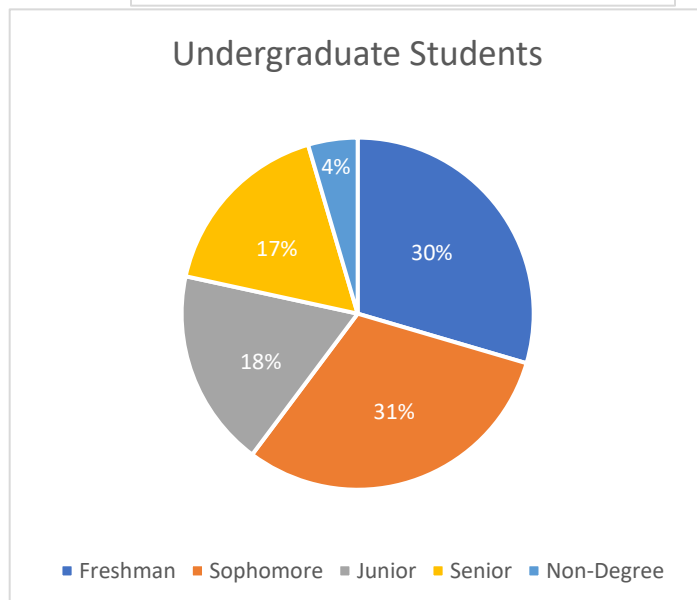
The majority of international students at UCCS are degree-seeking and hold F-1 status, meaning they are typically here for a longer timeframe to complete their UCCS degrees. The Fall 2022 count shows that 51.8% of all international students are studying in undergraduate programs, while 48.2% are studying in graduate programs.

The below graphs show the breakdown of international students in Fall 2022 by degree level and students' year of study:

Graduate: **80**Total
 Master's 34
 Doctoral 46



Undergraduate: **84**Total
 Freshman 26
 Sophomore 27
 Junior 16
 Senior 15



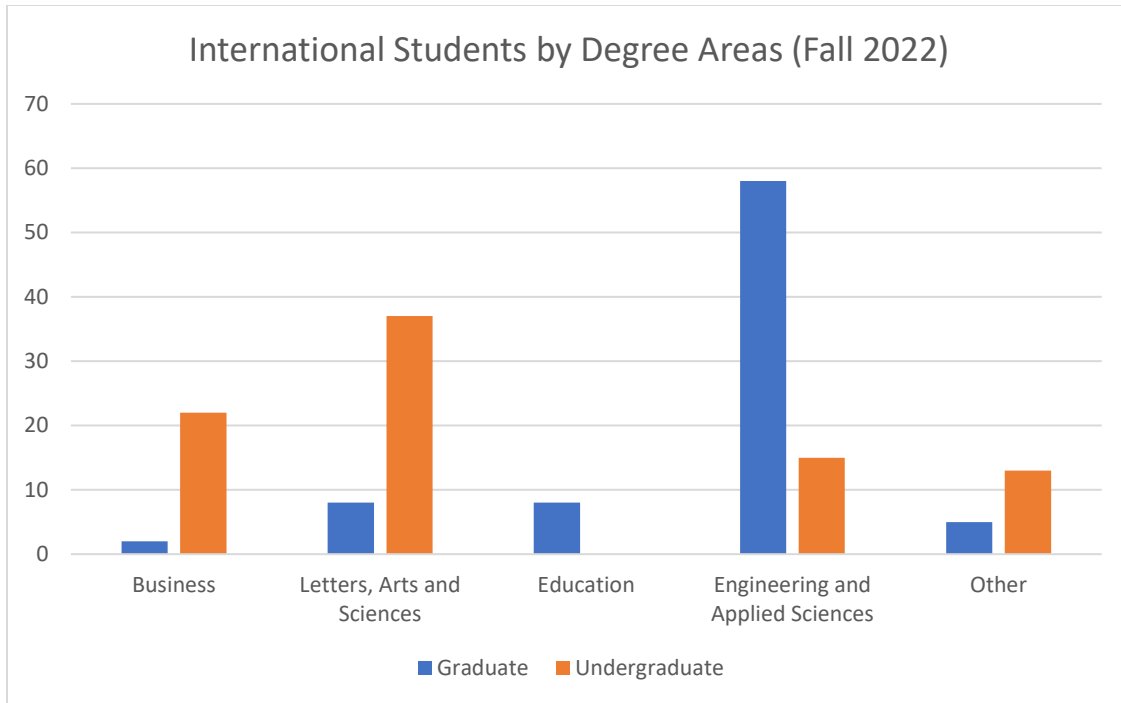
Non-Degree **4**
 Exchange 2
 Undergraduate non-degree 1
 Graduate non-degree 1

NOTE: All numbers come from Fall 2022 Open Doors data as reported to the Institute for International Education following that report's protocol.

The political environment and changes to the various foreign government scholarship programs that bring students to the U.S. continue to negatively impact international student enrollment at UCCS and elsewhere. Saudi Arabia, Brazil, and Kuwait have had strong government scholarship programs in the past, but these programs have changed. In particular, the Brazilian program has all but disappeared, while the Saudi Arabian program has seen severe policy changes and subsequent declines in student numbers at UCCS as well as other U.S. schools.

The chart and graph below show the degree areas where international degree-seeking students are found at UCCS:

	Graduate	Undergraduate	Total
Business	2	22	24
Letters, Arts and Sciences	8	37	45
Education	8	0	8
Engineering and Applied Sciences	58	15	73
Nursing and Health Sciences	1	7	8
Public Administration	3	3	6
Exchange and Non-degree	1	3	4
Total	81	87	168



Advising Services for International Students

IA provides various types of services in support of international students, with particular emphasis on international student retention, success, and student and institutional compliance. In addition, it is extremely important to IA and others at UCCS that international students feel well-supported and served while at UCCS. UCCS is similar to other small public institutions with similar numbers in that international student advising is a full-time position at a minimum.

The advising services consist of:

- Daily immigration advising available to international students by appointment and walk-in.
- Communication protocol - responses/answers within the same business day to questions that come in via email and phone in most cases. In addition, a communication plan has been established that involves a bi-weekly electronic newsletter, regular direct and personal emails about all mission-critical IA issues, programs, and events, as well as relevant UCCS information and events.
- A schedule of workshops offered on topics of interest and need for the population.
- A dedicated webpage containing all forms needed for the most common student requests and development of a standard protocol and business processes for managing forms; and
- A quick turnaround time for student requests and applications – such as for changes to student immigration documents, requests for an office letter to assist with Social Security Number (SSN) application, requests for a signature on the immigration document for travel, for example – of 1-2 business days and often the same day.

Perhaps the most important function within ISSS is that of immigration advising. Serving to assist students in maintaining compliance with U.S. regulations and to complete mandatory federal reporting required for UCCS to host international students and scholars. Many aspects of international student life have an immigration-related component. Keeping up to date with U.S. regulations, changes, and proposed changes is critical. The advisor and program manager positions liaise with the Department of Homeland Security (and its constituent units) and the Department of State about various matters when necessary. While handling these immigration advising duties, the IA staff are officials authorized and required to use the SEVIS database to report required information and monitor international students at our institution (see next section). As such, continuing education and training are needed to stay up to date about the immigration arena, trends, and changes to regulations that affect our students.

By 'advising,' this report refers to two basic functions of the advisor and program manager roles:

- To proactively work to keep students informed about immigration regulations, compliance, and changes by means of communicating with all students in formal ways (typically presentations and workshops, as well as emails and newsletters) and
- To work with students individually and in groups to address their concerns and questions as needed and requested by students.

Advising (in both senses of the word) starts pre-arrival and continues throughout a student's time on the UCCS campus as they pass through different stages of study and often continues beyond graduation.

Institutional interpretations of the various regulations pertaining to F-1 and J-1 students and scholars have been formalized and are in place on the various forms and informational materials coming from the International Affairs Office (including the IA webpages).

OPT Advising for Former Students

The ISSA and ISPM continue to dedicate a significant amount of time to advising former UCCS students. International student alumni who still hold F-1 status while elsewhere in the U.S. because they obtained a work permission called OPT (Optional Practical Training). OPT is facilitated by IA and approved by USCIS. By federal regulation, the university continues to have the responsibility of ensuring compliance, monitoring of their location, work reporting, and further applications for extensions in some cases. At the time of this writing, in May 2023, the number of students in this situation is 34, while the overall student enrolled population was about 165 in Spring 2023. Furthermore, the OPT and STEM OPT programs continue to change, which requires additional research and advising for the ISPM position.

OPT advising for specific cases typically begins in a degree student's final semester. Attendance at an OPT application workshop is required as an introduction to the

application process and important OPT regulations. In the final semester, an application is made to USCIS by the student with an I-20 from the ISSA or ISPM, recommending the permission. If eligible, the student is granted one year of work permission tied to their academic major. If the student's degree is within a STEM field and compliance during that first year of OPT is maintained through proper employment and reporting, then the student can apply (before that year ends) for an additional 24 months of work permission called 'STEM Extension OPT.' During this 24-month extension, compliance requirements actually increase; the advisor or program manager is assisting and reporting in SEVIS as required several times, as well as helping students with any issues or questions that may come up.

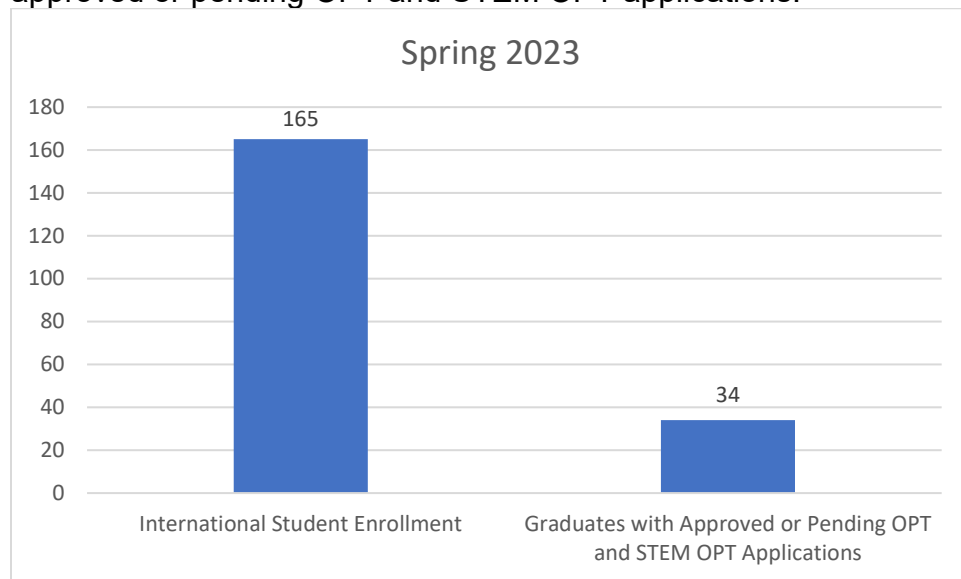
OPT can also be requested during a student's program before graduation. Typically, this is rare, as students keep their allotted time for the post-graduation application. Initial OPT advising for graduating students is time-intensive, requiring, in most cases, personal advising by appointment, and STEM applications are similarly time-consuming.

Spring 2023 Summary

Below is an outline of data points and associated figures for Spring 2023:

- International student enrollment – **165**
- Graduates with approved or pending OPT and STEM OPT applications, no longer UCCS students – **34**

The following graph is a visual representation of student enrollment and graduates with approved or pending OPT and STEM OPT applications:



CPT Advising for Current Students

A second type of employment authorization is CPT, Curricular Practical Training. CPT is available to students who have an internship required in their degree or for whom an internship can be done as a for-credit component of their degree. In either case, CPT can

be authorized by the advisor, and the student can then do the internship off-campus, paid or unpaid.

By regulation, in order to be authorized, CPT requires that an internship be an integral part of an established program. IA policy to comply with the regulations means that CPT can be authorized if an internship is a requirement of a degree program or if it is an option in a degree program (taken for academic credit) available to all students.

In the Spring 2023 semester, four continuing UCCS international students had CPT authorization, while four students were authorized for Summer 2023.

Taxation

U.S. taxation is a difficult area in which advising for international students and scholars is needed. However, IA staff are not tax advisors and cannot advise students on their U.S. tax reporting obligations except in general terms to avoid institutional liability. International students do have tax reporting obligations and are responsible for fulfilling those obligations. As the immigration arena becomes increasingly strict in the U.S. political environment, helping students and scholars understand and fulfill their compliance requirements becomes even more important.

For the 2022 tax year (with tax returns due in April 2023), the CU International Tax Office, located in Denver, provided licenses to a tax software product called Sprintax to nonresident F and J visa students and employees. IA provided communications to students from the CU International Tax Office. While the software seems to be helpful, the licenses only offer free services for federal tax returns, leaving our students and scholars to pay out of pocket for state tax filing. Overall, the educational materials and customer support that is available through Sprintax prove to be extremely beneficial to our international students and scholars.

Advising on Immigration Updates and U.S. Executive Orders

The number of immigration updates regarding events in the U.S. political arena remained relatively stable over the last year. The information provided in this area was restricted to updates to our Immigration Updates webpage and in direct advising provided upon request to student questions. Most of the updates made were in relation to relaxed travel restrictions and the ending of COVID-19 exceptions.

Advising was offered through virtual and in-person appointments, the bi-weekly electronic IA newsletter, as well as through direct email to all students from the advisor. Advising students regarding these political events and changes continues to be a priority going forward.

Full-Service Advising

As a full-service advising shop for students and scholars, continual tweaking of processes, schedules, and communication needs to be done to ensure students understand how best to utilize IA services. Information provided to new incoming students at the pre-arrival

stage and at orientation will continue to address this information as early as possible. The focus of the International Student and Scholar Advisor and International Student Program Manager is to implement clear, service-oriented, best-practices models for advising based upon standards in the field to ensure the most effective compliance practices for students and for the institution.

Institutional Compliance and SEVP Certification

In 2022, the Principal Designated School Official position transferred from the prior Director of IA to the ISSA. The ISSA, in collaboration with the ISPM, are now responsible for UCCS compliance with the regulations relating to the F-1 program (international students on F-1 visas).

Compliance relates to several different aspects of the F-1 program:

- Ongoing university procedures and policies of working with international students regarding the requirements and benefits of their F-1 status and ensuring their compliance with the F-1 regulations.
- Working with university units to assist them in understanding the F-1 regulations that affect their students and their programs.
- Making sure that record-keeping and document management are handled in such a way as to be in compliance with the F-1 regulations.
- Submitting any needed updates in relation to UCCS information and programs to the U.S. government agency (SEVP) that oversees the F-1 program.
- Submitting a recertification application and supporting information and documentation every 2-3 years, as required by SEVP. The recertification application submitted previously was approved and is valid through 4/26/2024.
- Submitting re-designation materials for the exchange program with the Department of State every two years.

Technology and Website

International Student Information Management System

The ISSS staff (along with Admissions & Records) uses Sunapsis, which acts as a go-between for the CU-SIS system, and SEVIS, the federal database used to monitor F-1 and J-1 students, scholars, and dependents. This system went live in February 2019 for all CU campuses. Updates and configurations continue to be implemented over time and are the responsibility of the technology team at UIS in Denver, in coordination with the UCCS IA and Admissions Officers. Testing and individual configurations for the UCCS campus (to reflect UCCS policies and practices, for e-forms, etc.) have been taken on by the ISSS staff in IA along with the school officials who use Sunapsis for Admissions to issue initial I-20s, with assistance from UIS.

The IA Website

The IA website, which uses a system called Drupal, is updated by the staff within the IA Office. More complex edits still require the assistance of the website team at UCCS Office of Information Technology. They are responsive in providing assistance.

An area that continues to need constant updating to reflect changes is the Forms page containing request forms and information handouts. The next significant challenge for the ISSS area of the web pages is to reflect the use of Sunapsis. Since this includes some big variations to how students can submit requests and interact with the advisor, these changes are still forthcoming.

Document Management

Document management is a major part of compliance for the ISSS staff in that documentation for international students has to be rigorously and consistently acquired and retained to maintain compliance with federal regulations. Document management for international students is maintained in the systems used by Admissions (OnBase) and International Affairs (Sunapsis).

On a daily basis, the International Student and Scholar Advisor and Program Manager work with the following systems in order to fulfill the basic functions of the position:

- SEVIS – The U.S. government database to monitor international student information
- PeopleSoft (CU-SIS) – the CU student information system where enrollment and academic information, address and contact information, and financial information are all stored
- MS Office products

In addition, the positions more irregularly use Drupal to update the webpages and OnBase to access needed documentation (usually from the admissions process) for current UCCS international students.

Having a good technology setup and the ability to work with all the software packages required for the ISSS functions is critical due to the following needs:

- To efficiently manage student advising.
- To systematize documentation (including advising notes) and documentation retention to meet institutional and government requirements.
- To keep students and the campus informed in a timely manner of changes to IA or UCCS policies, USCIS updates, and forms with website updates.
- To be able to add outside sources of information to the IA webpages, as well as orientation session materials, workshops, etc., to keep our students and the campus informed.

ISSS Programming

Fall 2022 workshop attendance was similar to Fall 2021, with increased attendance compared to prior years, due largely to the remote options for students to attend. IA continued to host virtual coffee hours in the fall, then a hybrid format for the spring semester. Both on a monthly basis with students and scholars in an effort to provide timely immigration updates and answer any student questions. Overall, hybrid workshops continue to offer a preferred and flexible option for the international student and scholar population at UCCS.

From Fall 2022 to Spring 2023, the main initiatives included International Welcome Orientation Week, the Mayor's Reception, iBuddy meetings, Jollof Cook-Off, Virtual International Family Weekend, and the F.A.M (First-generation and Multicultural) Graduation Celebration (see a full description of these events below).

[International Welcome Orientation Week \(Fall and Spring\)](#)

The Director of International Enrollment in the Office of Admissions coordinates International Welcome Orientation Week (iWOW) in collaboration with IA and other university departments. This collaboration is effective and continually being evaluated and tweaked. Though IA is not the main office responsible for this programming, it is an important element because it is mission-critical by serving as the 'SEVIS Reporting' session.

The main orientation programming consists of mini sessions such as Welcome to UCCS, SEVIS Reporting, Scholarship and Tuition Payments, Campus and Resource Tour, and discussion panel events. The SEVIS Reporting session required of all new international students. The ISSA leads the SEVIS Reporting session in person during iWOW because it is essential in the compliance of our university hosting international students. Federal laws and regulations require the Designated School Official (DSO) to update and maintain the SEVIS records of nonimmigrant students in F visa categories. The check-in process also includes collecting, scanning, and storing immigration documents for all newly enrolled international students, which was done via email. Attendance to iWOW includes new incoming degree-seeking students (both graduate and undergraduate), returning students beginning new degree programs, new exchange students, and other international students in statuses other than F-1/J-1.

[Fall 2022 iWOW \(August\)](#)

Every fall, orientation programming begins the Wednesday preceding the start of classes. Over 50 students attended the Fall 2022 iWOW. Thursday and Friday following the main orientation date, there are many UCCS events for students to attend. The events offered by IA included a lunch and shopping trip, a hike with iBuddy, ice cream with iBuddy, and an International Affairs Question and Answer Session.

[Spring 2023 iWOW \(January\)](#)

Orientation in spring semesters is held on the Friday before classes begin. About 19 students attended iWOW in Spring 2023. The Saturday following the Spring 2023 orientation, IA hosted 'Ride the City Bus and Downtown Shopping Trip' for the incoming students.

[i-Workshops](#)

'i-Workshops' is the name given to the series of workshops that IA puts together each semester. This year, workshops continued to be focused on the areas of greatest interest and need, primarily OPT and work authorization. Sessions on other areas, such as health insurance, Social Security Numbers, and driver's licenses, and car buying, were also held this academic year. Advising on all these topics also occurs in direct advising in response

to student inquiries and through email and website updates to the entire student population. Students are welcome to submit ideas for new workshops as well.

The following table lists the workshops offered in the Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 semesters, which were all offered in a virtual format.

Fall 2022 Events	
Employment Options for International Students	August 19, 2022
Driver's License and Car Buying	September 6, 2022
OPT Workshop #1	September 7, 2022
OPT Workshop #2	September 13, 2022
OPT Workshop #3	September 16, 2022
OPT Workshop #4	November 17, 2022
Spring 2023 Events	
Employment Options for International Students	January 20, 2023
Driver's License and Car Buying	February 7, 2023
Health Insurance in the US	February 7, 2023
OPT Workshop #1	January 27, 2023
OPT Workshop #2	February 1, 2023
OPT Workshop #3	February 9, 2023
OPT Workshop #4	March 31, 2023

Mayor's Reception

On October 15, 2022, the ISSA, along with international students and scholars, attended the Mayor's Reception to honor international students. Mayor John Suthers and members of the community were present to welcome first-year international students from all of Colorado Springs's institutions.

iBuddy Meetings

The ISSA serves as the Staff Advisor for the International Buddy (iBuddy) student club. Due to IA staff turnover, there was not a constant staff advisor for iBuddy until August 2022. As a result, the club was not very active during the Fall 2022 semester. Aside from events held during iWOW, there was only one club meeting during the Fall 2022 semester. In addition, the club's student president graduated in December 2022. With a new President and Vice President for the Spring 2023 semester, the ISSA was able to host and collaborate on the following meetings:



UCCS STUDENTS, SCHOLARS, AND THE ISSA AT THE 2022 MAYOR'S RECEPTION.

Meeting Topic	Date
Culture Shocks	January 19, 2023
Cherry Pies and Learn about Presidents Day	February 17, 2023
Why are Americans so Obsessed with the Flag?	March 3, 2023
Celebrate Earth Day	March 17, 2023
International Game Day	April 6, 2023
Cinco De Mayo - Salsa Dancing Night	April 21, 2023

Jollof Cook-Off

IA hosted the first Annual Cook-Off event on March 22, 2023, with over 70 people in attendance. Featuring Jollof, a West African rice dish. Typically cooked in one pot, the rice and vegetables simmer in a flavorful broth. Each country and region has their own variations of the dish. Students entered the cooking competition, making dishes from Ghana, Namibia, Senegal, Cameroon, and more. Attendees sampled each dish and voted for their favorite.



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ESI FYNN, THE WINNER OF THE JOLLOF COOK-OFF 2023.

Coffee Hours

In the Fall 2022, IA hosted monthly Virtual Coffee Hours for international students and scholars to come and meet with the ISSA and ISPM to receive updates and ask questions. The goal with these events is to facilitate an open-door policy and encourage international students and scholars to use IA as a resource. Attendance at these events was dropping, and as a response, the formatting was changed for the following semester.

Starting in the Spring 2023, these events were hosted in a hybrid format. Allowing people to join online or attend in person. In an effort to provide additional resources and information to the IA-affiliated populations,

the monthly coffee hours focused on a different topic each month. Many departments from all over campus were invited to speak and provide information and resources through facilitating open conversations.

Spring 2023 Coffee Hours	Date
Learning how to navigate life in Colorado	January 26, 2023

How international students can study abroad	February 22, 2023
Policing in the U.S. and chat with the UCCS Police Chief	March 23, 2023
Workplace Culture in the U.S. and International Career Success Day	April 5, 2023

International Family Weekend

February 3-4, 2023, IA hosted a virtual family weeked for international students and their families. Featuring stations for students to write letters for Mother's and Father's Day and virtual parents meet and greets. This event was created to ease the transition to UCCS for international students and scholars and will continue to be implemented each year.

First-Generation and Multicultural Graduation Celebration

This event is co-hosted by IA, the Multicultural Office for Student Access, Inclusiveness, and Community and LGBTQ+ Resource Center, and Student and Family Connections each May and December. IA specifically celebrates students in the following categories:

- Graduate and undergraduate students completing a degree that semester
- Departing exchange students
- Departing scholars
- Education Abroad students who completed their study abroad program

The program for this event includes welcome remarks, a special guest speaker, recognition of the honorees, special recognitions, and thank-you's, along with an informal reception. Students in the above categories are honored with a special 'Global Learners' cord to wear at graduation. The ISSA implemented these cords for the first time in December 2022 and will continue to give out these cords each semester in the future. These cords are for those who choose to be global learners. They are green and blue to represent the colors of the earth, with a small world pin to remind each student of their great accomplishments at UCCS.

ISSS Communications

ISSS follows a strict communication plan each semester to ensure students and scholars are receiving information and updates in a timely manner. This plan includes weekly emails and bi-weekly newsletters to all international students and scholars. Weekly emails include immigration-focused updates, reminders for travel signatures, and UCCS-related information that is important for international students and scholars. At the same time, the newsletters contain important immigration updates as well as IA events and events from around the UCCS campus and the community.

UCCS International Affairs
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
COLORADO SPRINGS

VIRTUAL FAMILY WEEKEND

<p>Friday</p> <p>Mother's and Father's Day Letter Writing</p> <p>Come by Copper House any time 8:30am - 4:30 pm and write a letter to your parents. We will mail the letters for Mother's or Father's day.</p> <p>Virtual Message Home</p> <p>Stop by Copper House any time 8:30am - 4:30 pm and record a video message for your family. International Affairs will send it for you.</p>	<p>Friday and Saturday</p> <p>Virtual Parents Meet and Greet</p> <p>Join your parents for a virtual information session with an International Student and Scholar Advisor. Parents can ask questions and get to know more about being an international student at UCCS.</p> <p>Friday, 8am via Teams. Join here. Friday, 11am via Teams. Join here. Saturday, 8am via Teams. Join here. Saturday, 11am via Teams. Join here.</p> <p>If your parents do not speak English, we advise you to attend with them to translate. The entire presentation and Q&A will be in English and allow time for personal translations to parents.</p>
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February 3 and 4, 2023

Friends of Internationals Email List

The 'Friends of Internationals' list consists of about 80 community members, UCCS faculty and staff, domestic students, and international scholars. Community members both within and outside of UCCS that support International Affairs' efforts and the students and scholars the office serves can be added to this list.

Electronic newsletters are sent bi-weekly to everyone on the Friends of Internationals list, in addition to international students. Contributions to the newsletter from these friends and community members are welcomed and included in the newsletter.

The 'Friends of Internationals' list continues to be the core resource for IA to share communication with about international student issues. Positive feedback from recipients is often received after they have had a chance to view the electronic newsletters that are sent to the international student and scholar population. Contributions to the newsletter from these friends are also welcome and included in the newsletter for international students. International Affairs' relationship with the campus and community is integral to the success of the office and international student/scholar support.

Liaising with Other University Units

By virtue of the responsibilities of the ISSS staff, IA interacts with various other university units in the course of fulfilling our responsibilities: Graduate School, Registrar, Admissions, Compliance, Academic Advising, Bursar, and a few academic units are the units we deal with most often. It has become apparent that the campus community recognizes the ISSA and ISPM roles to be 'the points of contact' to communicate and collaborate on questions and issues relating to international students' unique needs and responsibilities at UCCS. The relationship of the ISSA and ISPM to these various individuals and units continues to be excellent. More outreaches could continue to build and improve these relationships.

The importance of IA's relationship with other university units cannot be overstated. It is critical that the advisor and program manager positions maintain a great working relationship with so many parties on campus. Without that, many of the essential functions of the ISSS unit become extremely difficult.

Moving Forward in International Student and Scholar Services Challenges

Building up the international student population will pose a challenge since many of the factors impacting students' ability to attend are external to the IA office. Although IA is not responsible for recruiting international students, the office provides support to the International Admissions team and prospective students' questions and concerns. Retention of international students is generally high, and most students who transfer to other universities do so because of location or a change in major or program.

Staffing and turnover have been challenges for the office as well as nationwide. The "Great Resignation" is presenting difficulties with hiring new staff for the office due to low candidate pools and favorable conditions for workers to be more selective in the jobs they

accept. Although the International Student and Scholar Advisor position was filled in August 2022, the Director position now remains open and likely will remain open for an extended period of time.

Opportunities Going Forward

While Fall 2022 only saw a slight increase in international student enrollment, there could be higher-than-normal enrollment numbers in Fall 2023 and beyond. Evidence shows that international students still want to study in the U.S., and IA is hopeful that students' deferred attendance at UCCS will eventually result in more substantial matriculation.

Further collaboration with other departments for events and programming will continue to be essential. IA was able to co-sponsor several exceptional events previously that were especially enriching and beneficial for our international students. IA staff is excited to continue collaborating with these departments and hopefully form new partnerships as well.

We look forward to another positive year of contributing to international student support, success, and retention at UCCS, as well as improving the internationalization of the campus.

Moving Forward as a Unit in International Education

IA continues to anticipate future challenges in the coming semesters due to the international nature of the office's work and the need to balance institutional, federal, and international impacts on programming and student mobility. International student enrollment and education abroad participation have already seen a resurgence as we continue to strive for pre-pandemic numbers. The advances made prior to the pandemic have become baselines for future growth. However, the lessons learned about the importance of hybrid programming will continue to inform the office's outreach to meet students' and other strategic partners' needs.