

International Affairs 2020-2021 Annual Report

A report on the Summer 2020, Fall 2020, Winter 2020-2021, and Spring 2021 terms

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Executive Summary

The 2020-2021 academic year was a year filled with unexpected global impacts due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the suspension of education abroad programming, advances were still made to continue to promote and support internationalization at UCCS.

Below is a summary of some 2020-2021 Academic Year highlights included in this report:

- The office and the UCCS community hosted 26 international scholars from 13 countries
- International Affairs provided programming, immigration support, and a friendly environment to 169 total international students from 47 countries
- Engineering and computer science continue to serve as the number one degree area international students pursue at UCCS
- Due to health and safety concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, International Affairs was not able to send any students abroad during the 2020-21 academic year, but had 242 applicants for education abroad during the cycle—a record year and a 17.5% increase from the previous year and a 202.5% increase from six years ago.
- The office filed for UCCS redesignation for the continuation of the J Scholar program and received approval from the program by the Department of State and Federal Government.
- A one year goal assessment and progress review of the office's strategic plan was completed in fall 2020.
- A divisional assessment and program review by two external evaluators was completed in winter 2020-2021.

Introduction

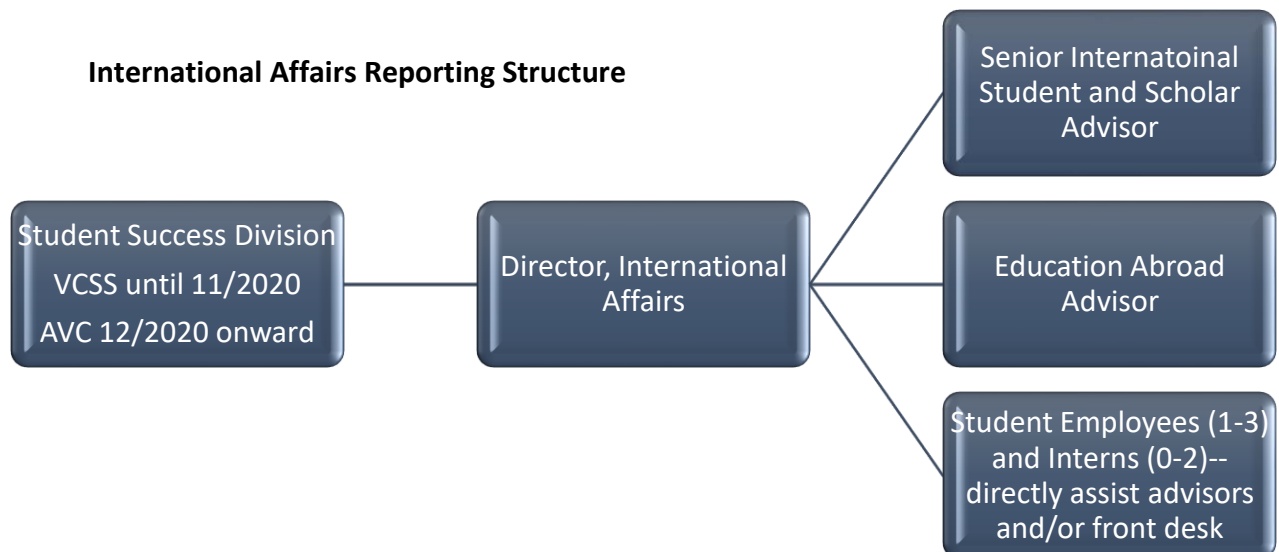
The 2020-2021 academic year was a continuum of unanticipated global events that required the suspension of education abroad programming and intense efforts devoted to supporting education abroad students as well as international students and scholars.

International Affairs 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 served with the utmost attention due to international education expertise and staffing. Annually, campus programming that bolsters internationalization is facilitated in addition to supporting students, along with the support of international delegations and partnership development for the colleges and schools.

It is important to recognize that International Affairs is still a nascent international center with limited staff in comparison to 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

The chart below is an organizational chart for International Affairs. The director formally supervises student employees and interns. However, the advising staff are paired with a student employee or intern for additional mentorship, training, and direct assistance within their respective areas.



The team during this annual report cycle included Ms. Kristina Ewald, Senior International Student and Scholar Advisor, Ms. Haley Jo Cutrone, Education Abroad Advisor, and Dr. Mandy Hansen, Director of International Affairs and Assistant Professor Attendant Rank Languages and Cultures.

Office Visits

The office offers centralized international education services for students with a focus on education abroad and international student and scholar services. Due to the pandemic operations were moved to a hybrid format with in-person and remote functions. There was an increase in international student participation in the virtual workshops and virtual meetings offered while education abroad interest and applications continued, but at lower levels due to the pandemic.

Internships and Training in International Education

The international education field is expansive. For example, the annual international education conference, NAFSA: Association for International Educators, welcomes more than 10,000 attendees from across the United States and around the world. There continues to be a growing interest in learning about international education efforts at UCCS. Inquiries, informational interviews, and internship requests are from students, community members, and international colleagues.

The director and IA team shared about the field of international education and the efforts of International Affairs at UCCS via one-on-one meetings with individuals, international education as a professional field, the training of students, and the hosting of international education interns. As a result of such efforts, the director met or held conference calls with several individuals interested in the field over the course of the past year. These were a combination of current students, recent graduates, employees, and individuals outside of UCCS.

Pre-First Year Global Leadership Program and Global Education Initiatives

The director developed a Pre-First Year Global Leadership Program in Fall 2018 and works with the Admissions Recruitment Director to advertise the program to admitted first-year students. The program has a credit-optional course and includes for all participants an experience abroad (Costa Rica in summer 2020 with plans that were suspended for summer 2021 to Argentina). The continuation of this program is anticipated for 2022-2023.

The mission of the Global Leadership program is to create a fellowship of new UCCS students pursuing mutual knowledge and practice to build a peaceful and better world – making a world of difference. In doing so, the program will:

- Develop students' abilities to navigate cultural and personal borders with particular reference to professional goals and plans;
- Expose students to a wide range of individuals and groups through interactions that are direct and meaningful;
- Expose students to worldviews and experiences different from their own;

- Foster students' awareness of the skills required to be a global citizen;
- Develop students' understanding of their passions, strengths, and purposes as leaders; and
- Familiarize students with local leaders and organizations in the country visited that foster international and cultural understanding and learning.

It is important to continue to highlight that the director's appointment as assistant professor with Languages and Cultures continues to be a benefit to programming abroad offered directly by International Affairs. The collaboration with the Department of Languages and Cultures is a benefit for UCCS students and the relationship is vital to offering and implementing inventive and unique programming like the Pre-First Year Global Leadership Program and the Service Learning Project to Guatemala. Discussions ensue about the creation of unique courses for global leadership and service learning and a proposal is in development for a certificate program.

Fulbright Student and Scholar Advising

International Affairs continues to uphold Fulbright advising liaison responsibilities that were transitioned to IA in 2016. Advising is shared with an additional official Fulbright Advisor and Representative at UCCS, Dr. Fred Coolidge. Last year, three Fulbright Scholarships were awarded to UCCS Faculty with the option to participate for the 2021-2022 year due to the pandemic. Recipients were as follows:

- Dr. Cerian Gibbes, Geology, Taiwan
- Dr. Elizabeth Daniels, Psychology, Albania
- Dr. Amy Silva-Smith, Nursing, Scotland

One-on-one student and scholar Fulbright advising is facilitated by the Director of International Affairs and the UCCS Faculty Advisor. The director also manages the Fulbright student nomination process. Email communication was developed and sent to students, faculty, and staff about Fulbright opportunities. In addition, there was promotion of Fulbright workshops; one-on-one meetings convened with students, faculty, and staff on such programs; and collaboration with the Communique to honor UCCS Fulbright participants, all of which support campus-wide promotion of Fulbright opportunities.

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. The pandemic required a move to virtual meetings and below is an outline of such efforts:

- Student Exchange Visitor Program (Regional Representative), International Student and Scholar Overview

- Peace Corps representative virtual visit
- Partnership with National Student Exchange Partner in Puerto Rico and a shared international programming series; Explore Your World.
- Meetings with international organizations, like EducationUSA, that explored virtual partnerships and interest.

Agreements and Memos of Understanding

The office works with faculty and academic units to support the establishment of partnerships that are strategic and sustainable. A new letter of intent was signed with the University of Warsaw in Poland in spring 2021. Below is an outline of other active partnerships for the 2020-2021 academic year:

Loughborough University	Academic Institution	Agreement / MOU
Colorado School of English	Academic Institution	Transfer Agreement
Spring International Language Center	Academic Institution	Transfer Agreement
AIFS - American Institute For Foreign Study	Provider	EA Provider Agreement
CIEE - Council on International Education Exchange	Provider	EA Provider Agreement
GlobalLinks Learning Abroad	Provider	EA Provider Agreement
Institute for Shipboard Education (Semester At Sea)	Provider	EA Provider Agreement
Sol Education Abroad	Provider	EA Provider Agreement
Beijing Infinity Education Technology Co. Ltd. (BYB)	Academic Institution	Letter of Intent
Dalian Maritime University of China (DMU)	Academic Institution	Letter of Intent
Jiangyin Polytechnic College of China (JPC)	Academic Institution	Letter of Intent
Nantong Vocational College of China (NVC)	Academic Institution	Letter of Intent
Wuxi City College of Vocational Technology of China (WCCVT)	Academic Institution	Letter of Intent
Wuxi Vocational Institute of Commerce (WXIC)	Academic Institution	Letter of Intent
Wuxi Institute of Commerce of China (WIC)	Academic Institution	Letter of Intent
Yancheng Institute of Technology of China (YCIT)	Academic Institution	Letter of Intent
Universidad Americana Managua (UAM), Nicaragua	Academic Institution	Letter of Intent
Korean National University of Education (KNUE)	Academic Institution	Letter of Intent
The University of Castilla - La Mancha	Academic Institution	Agreement / MOU
USC International Academy (USCIA)	Academic Institution	Agreement / MOU
Mari State University (MSU)	Academic Institution	Letter of Intent
Language Consultants International	Academic Institution	Agreement / MOU
University of Hertfordshire	Academic Institution	Agreement / MOU
Hankuk University of Foreign Studies	Academic Institution	Agreement / MOU
University College of Southeast Norway (Business only)	Academic Institution	Agreement / MOU
International Education of Students (IES Abroad)	Provider	EA Provider Agreement
Universitat D'Andorra	Academic Institution	Letter of Intent
Universidad Peruana De Ciencias Aplicadas S.A.C.	Academic Institution	Agreement / MOU
Ewha Womans University EWU	Academic Institution	Letter of Intent
OEI College dba Olympia Education Institute	Academic Institution	Agreement / MOU
Jinan University	Academic Institution	Agreement / MOU
University of Andorra	Academic Institution	Exchange Agreement
Toyo University	Academic Institution	Agreement / MOU
EF International Languages Campuses	Provider	Agreement / MOU

Agreement/MOU is for exchange of faculty, staff, and students or transfer pathways to UCCS as fee-paying students. Letter of Intent is to explore future cooperation. Provider is for Education Abroad services and programming for students.

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 formed to review student travel to high-risk locations abroad. This Committee was appointed by the UCCS Chancellor in Spring 2016 and includes the following members:

- Mandy Hansen, International Affairs, Chair
- Jennifer George, Legal Counsel
- James Duval, CU Risk Management
- Debi O'Connor, Compliance
- Michele Companion, Faculty
- Curtis Holder, Faculty
- Michael Sanderson, Export Control

The Committee was integral to establishing student safety during the pandemic this year and was proactive with its recommendations for student travel abroad during this unprecedented time. The Committee convenes on a regular basis, several times throughout the semester, to review student travel to at-risk countries and make recommendations to the Chancellor for review and a final decision on such travel.

The Director of International Affairs and the CU Risk Manager at UCCS work closely together and attend CU International Risk Management meetings at the CU central office in Denver. Lists of students going abroad with relevant emergency contact details are sent each semester to the CU Risk Manager and protocol is followed in accordance with direction and best practices from the CU system.

International Education Programming

Each area's report below details programming and activities within their specialized fields: Education Abroad and International Student and Scholar Advising. The office has put together events to bring students together in social, cultural, and educational settings, virtually. Though standing community events, like the Mayor's reception were cancelled many key programming initiatives occurred as follows:

International Student & Scholar Certificate Recognition

The International Farewell was initially conceived in Fall 2015 to honor departing international students and scholars and intensive English students advancing a level.

This event, held by IA at the end of each fall and spring term, celebrates students in the following categories:

- Graduate international students completing a degree in that semester
- Undergraduate international students completing a degree in that semester
- Departing exchange students
- Departing international scholars

Due to the pandemic, departing students were honored with certificates and a special feature in the IA newsletter.

International Week 2020

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 U.S. At UCCS, International Affairs provides 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 2020, International Education Week events were held Monday, November 16 – Friday, November 20. The schedule included Education Abroad advising events, a career workshop focused on international experiences for employment, Fulbright webinars, a workshop for International Student Options after Graduation, an OPT Workshop, and international virtual opportunities for the online learning environment. More details about International Education Week 2020 can be found at [International Education Week 2020 | International Affairs \(uccs.edu\)](#).

Friends of Internationals Email List

'Friends of Internationals' is an email list used to communicate pertinent upcoming workshops and news to international students and community members both within and outside of UCCS that support International Affairs' efforts and the students the office serves. The list constitutes over 70 UCCS faculty and staff. Comments from these individuals are often received after they have had a chance to view the electronic newsletters that are sent to the international student population. Contributions for 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 student support.

Virtual Programming

International Affairs adapted to the hybrid format and student interest in virtual programming and services. In an effort to continue to support international education and growth and be responsive to student interests the following programs were offered last year virtually:

Summer 2020

- Virtual International Student and Scholar Check-in and Coffee Hour - June 24 - 10am
- Virtual International Student and Scholar Check-in and Coffee Hour - June 10 - 10am
- Virtual International Student and Scholar Check-in and Coffee Hour - July 8 - 10am
- Virtual International Student and Scholar Check-in and Coffee Hour - July 22 - 10am
- Virtual International Student and Scholar Check-in and Coffee Hour - August 5 - 10am

Fall 2020

- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: August 26 - 10am
- Employment Options for International Students: Friday, August 28 - 2pm
- Explore Your World: Representation through Cartoonization - Preserving Ethnic Minority Language and Culture Through Innovative Learning Materials: September 1 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: September 1 – 4pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: September 2 – 12pm
- OPT Workshop #1: Thursday, September 3 - 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: September 3 – 10am
- OPT Workshop #2: Tuesday, September 8 - 3pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: September 8 – 10am
- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: September 9 - 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: September 9 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: September 10 – 10am
- Returnee Chat: September 10 – 1:30pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: September 15 – 4pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: September 16 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: September 17 – 10am
- Explore Your World: Building Peace - Peace Corps' Impact on International Development & Career Mobility: September 17 – 12pm
- OPT Workshop #3: Friday, September 18 - 2pm
- Application "Bootcamp": September 21 – 11am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: September 22 – 4pm
- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: September 23 - 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: September 23 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: September 24 – 10am

- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: September 29 – 4pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: September 30 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: October 1 – 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: October 6 – 4pm
- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: October 7 - 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: October 7 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: October 8 – 10am
- Explore Your World: Tradition, Resistance and Post coloniality in Contemporary Guatemalan Art: October 8 – 2pm
- Join the Global Pride Follow-Up: October 13 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: October 13 – 4pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: October 14 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: October 15 – 10am
- UCCS Short-Term Programs Overview: October 15 – 4pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: October 20 – 4pm
- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: October 21 - 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: October 21 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: October 22 – 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: October 27 – 4pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: October 28 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: October 29 – 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: November 3 – 4pm
- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: November 4 - 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: November 4 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: November 5 – 10am
- UCCS Short-Term Programs Overview: November 10 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: November 10 – 4pm
- Returnee Chat: November 11 – 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: November 11 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: November 12 – 10am
- Options After Graduation: H-1B, Other Visas and Permanent Residency: Tuesday, November 17 - 2pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: November 17 – 4pm
- Explore Your World: Student Panel - Thoughts & Advice from Studying Abroad: November 17 – 5:30pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: November 18 – 12pm
- Explore Your World: Transferring Your International Experience for Employers: November 18 – 3:30pm
- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: November 18 - 10am
- International Student Panel: Success Stories from UCCS Graduates: Wednesday, November 18 - 5:30pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: November 19 – 10am
- OPT Workshop #4: Thursday, November 19 - 10am
- Fulbright Friday: November 20 – 8am

- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: November 24 – 4pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: November 25 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: December 1 – 4pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: December 2 – 12pm
- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: December 2 - 10am
- Explore Your World: Exploring Opportunities Abroad - Abroad 101: December 3 – 4pm
- International Farewell Celebration: December 4 – 3:30pm
- UCCS Short-Term Programs Overview: December 7 – 2pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: December 8 – 4pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: December 9 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: December 10 – 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: December 15 – 4pm
- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: December 16 - 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: December 16 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: December 17 – 10am

Spring 2021

- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: January 20 - 10am
- Authorized Employment Options: Friday, January 22 - 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: February 2 – 4pm
- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: February 3 - 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: February 3 – 5pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: February 4 – 2pm
- OPT Workshop #1: Friday February 5 - 11am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: February 9 – 4pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: February 10 – 5pm
- OPT Workshop #2: Thursday, February 11 - 2pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: February 11 – 2pm
- Craft Around the Globe: Education Abroad & Information Sessions: February 12 – 2pm
- International Student Panel: Monday, February 15 - 5pm-6:30pm
- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: February 17 - 10am
- Explore Your World: The Arab Spring and the Egyptian Revolution (2011-2015) - An Eyewitness Account: February 18 – 2pm
- Education Abroad Application Workshop: February 22 – 4pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: February 23 – 4pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: February 24 – 5pm
- International Tax Workshop - Thursday, February 25 - 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: February 25 – 2pm
- Craft Around the Globe: Education Abroad & Information Sessions: February 26 – 11am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: March 2 – 4pm
- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: March 3 - 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: March 3 – 5pm

- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: March 4 – 2pm
- Craft Around the Globe: Education Abroad & Information Sessions: March 5 – 12pm
- Spring 2021 Virtual Grad School Fair: March 9 – 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: March 9 – 4pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: March 10 – 5pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: March 11 – 2pm
- OPT Workshop #3: Friday, March 12 - 2pm
- Craft Around the Globe: Education Abroad & Information Sessions: March 12 – 2pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: March 16 – 4pm
- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: March 17 - 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: March 17 – 5pm
- Explore Your World: The Entrepreneurial Mindset as an Essential Skill for the 21st Century: March 18 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: March 18 – 2pm
- Craft Around the Globe: Education Abroad & Information Sessions: March 19 – 12pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: March 23 – 4pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: March 24 – 5pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: March 25 – 2pm
- Craft Around the Globe: Education Abroad & Information Sessions: March 19 – 11am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: March 30 – 4pm
- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: March 31 - 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: March 31 – 5pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: April 1 – 2pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: April 6 – 4pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: April 7 – 5pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: April 8 – 2pm
- Craft Around the Globe: Education Abroad & Information Sessions: April 9 – 2pm
- OPT Workshop #4: Tuesday, April 13 - 11am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: April 13 – 4pm
- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: April 14 - 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: April 14 – 5pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: April 15 – 2pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: April 20 – 4pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: April 21 – 5pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: April 22 – 2pm
- Craft Around the Globe: Education Abroad & Information Sessions: April 23 – 11am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: April 27 – 4pm
- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: April 28 - 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: April 28 – 5pm

- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: April 29 – 2pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: May 4 – 4pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: May 5 – 5pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: May 6 – 2pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: May 11 – 4pm
- International Student and Scholar Virtual Coffee Hour: May 12 - 10am
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: May 12 – 5pm
- Abroad 101 Live Sessions: May 13 – 2pm

Annual International Student Panel

This panel is coordinated in conjunction with Intercultural Communications within the Communication Department. The event was held in Spring 2021 and was attended by 68 students; panelists included international students. Panelists shared their experiences as international students studying at UCCS and living in the United States. The students that attended were well engaged and asked questions ranging from politics to social activities.

International Affairs Strategic Planning and External Review

The 2019-2025 International Affairs strategic plan was finalized in 2019. During 2019, International Affairs 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 completion of various elements occurring throughout the plan cycle.

The IA strategic plan has five 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. Staff reviewed each goal fall semester 2020 and prepared an annual progress update on goal attainment. This progress is reported and stored online under the Reports section of the International Affairs website. To review the IA strategic plan, please visit uccs.edu/international and click on "About Us." It was used as part of the divisional program review conducted for the office by two external reviewers.

The External Review Report for International Affairs revealed some core strengths as well as opportunities and recommendations as follows:

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
- Address the duplication of services and consider centralizing with IA (domestic travel courses, international related activities within colleges, National Student Exchange, service learning)
- 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

Moving Forward

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, IA anticipates 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. Decreases in international student enrollments are anticipated, as are declines in education abroad participation. The advances made over the past and previous years will become baselines for future growth.

Staff expertise will continue to be needed since there are still students that wish to go abroad, as evidenced by future education abroad applications, planned faculty-directed/short-term programs for future terms, and inquiries made by prospective students to Enrollment Services recruitment staff. International students and scholars still want to come to UCCS despite the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting travel bans, flight restrictions, and visa delays. Overall, current and future UCCS students still want to plan for future experiences and travel internationally, whether to pursue their degree here on campus as international students or to study abroad around the world.

Efforts will be made this next year to review the strategic plan and make advances on the recommendations by the divisional external review of IA. The following pages provide a report for the past year and include sections on moving forward for the year to come for both Education Abroad and International Student and Scholar Services.

Education Abroad

Education abroad professionals require people skills as well as data management skills. The education abroad advisor's (EAA) role involves nuanced advising for and outreach to students, staff, and faculty across a wide range of fields, with a 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 knowledgebase includes an in-depth understanding of world travel, education systems, and immigration.

In addition, the Terra Dotta system used to manage and track education abroad participation and risk management data requires the education abroad advisor to have technological savvy, data maintenance knowledge, and report writing skills. Through Terra Dotta, the EAA 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 EAA 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 EAA works to foster greater campus participation in and awareness of the range of education abroad opportunities available at UCCS as well. The EAA also uses social media, tabling, and group-specific programming in this effort.

Through all of the above, as well as close partnerships with other departments and offices across campus, the education abroad advisor works to incorporate meaningful experiences abroad into each student's degree and learning outcomes and to grow interest and participation in education abroad here at UCCS.

COVID-19 Response & Impact

This report references the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on UCCS education abroad with suspensions of all 2020-21 programming due to health and safety concerns.

Over the course of the pandemic, the Chancellor-appointed International Risk Management Committee comprised of faculty and staff across the campus, including legal counsel, the Director of International Affairs, the campus risk management office, and others, has met monthly to determine if student travel abroad would be safe. A

rolling report of applicants, their intended destinations, U.S. Department of State and Centers for Disease Control travel alerts, and country-specific entry/exit requirements was generated monthly for each meeting and was assessed alongside a number of other factors. In the end, for the safety of our students, all terms of the 2020-21 cycle – Summer 2020, Fall 2020, Winter 2020-21, Spring 2021, and Academic Year 2020-21 – were suspended due to public health concerns. All told, 242 students were impacted by the suspension of education abroad programming. No students went abroad this year.

However, interest remained high, with a record 242 students applying to go abroad despite the uncertainty of travel. This bodes well for the recovery of the program post-pandemic.

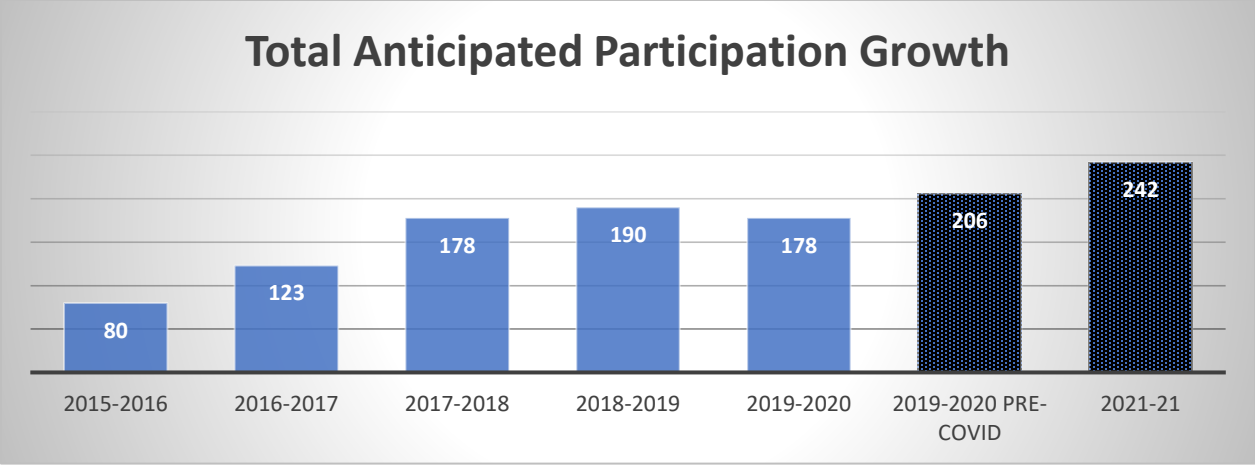
Due to the suspensions, the report below will assess intended participation for this cycle, rather than actual participation.

Annual Overview

During the 2020-21 academic year – from Summer 2020 to Spring 2021 – Education Abroad at UCCS saw a steady level of intended participation in education abroad opportunities. Due to health and safety concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, International Affairs was not able to send any students abroad during the 2020-21 academic year, but had 242 applicants for education abroad during the cycle—a record year and a 17.5% increase from the previous year and a 202.5% increase from six years ago. According to the Institute of International Education Open Doors report for 2020, national growth rates in education abroad participation were at rate of 1.6% in 2018-19. UCCS International Affairs' anticipated participation is well above the national average and represents both International Affairs' efforts to promote and support education abroad as well as strong UCCS student interest in education abroad opportunities despite the realities of the pandemic.

Despite the education abroad suspensions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, International Affairs would have gained ground on national averages with a 2.05% participation rate in education abroad. This participation rate is well above the national participation rate average of 1.9% at U.S. higher education institutions according to the Institute of International Education Open Doors 2020 report.

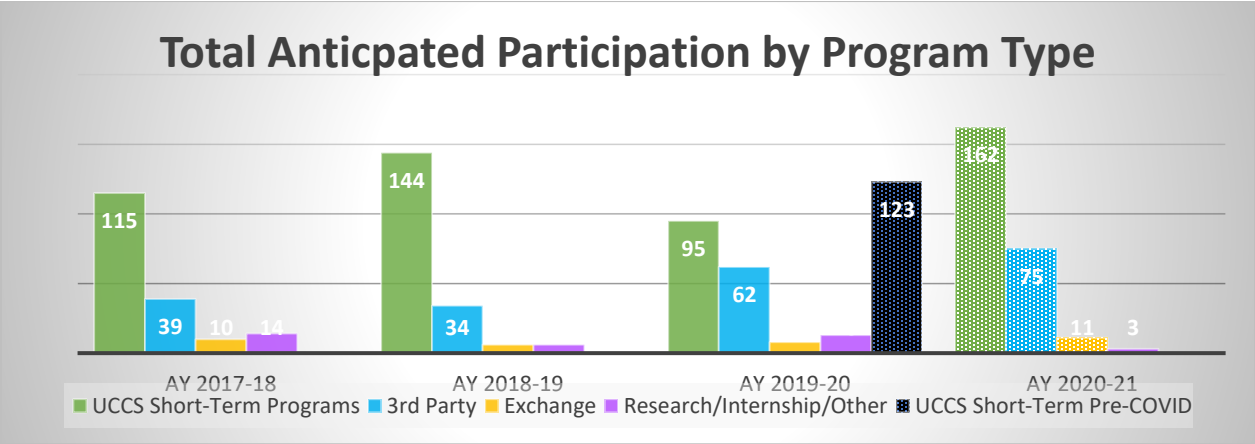
The chart below shows the total anticipated participation in education abroad from the 2015-2016 Academic Year to the current 2020-2021 Academic Year. It includes the projected numbers before the cancellation of programs due to student safety and the COVID-19 pandemic in dark blue. As a reminder the academic year is summer, fall, winter, and spring. For 2020-2021 this includes Summer 2020, Fall 2020, Winter 2020-2021 and Spring 2021.



The popularity of summer programming, especially UCCS short-term programming abroad, continues to be the spotlight in education abroad. Student interest in shorter programs is a growing trend at UCCS as well as nationally due to student responsibilities at home, work, and study.

The chart below details anticipated education abroad participation by program type. The data continues to show significant growth in third-party programming, as well as continued strength in UCCS short-term programs. Third-party programming or provider programs are education abroad experiences organized by companies or non-profits that partner with universities to provide avenues abroad.

These program providers offer a great variety of countries and areas of study to choose from. Students will 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.

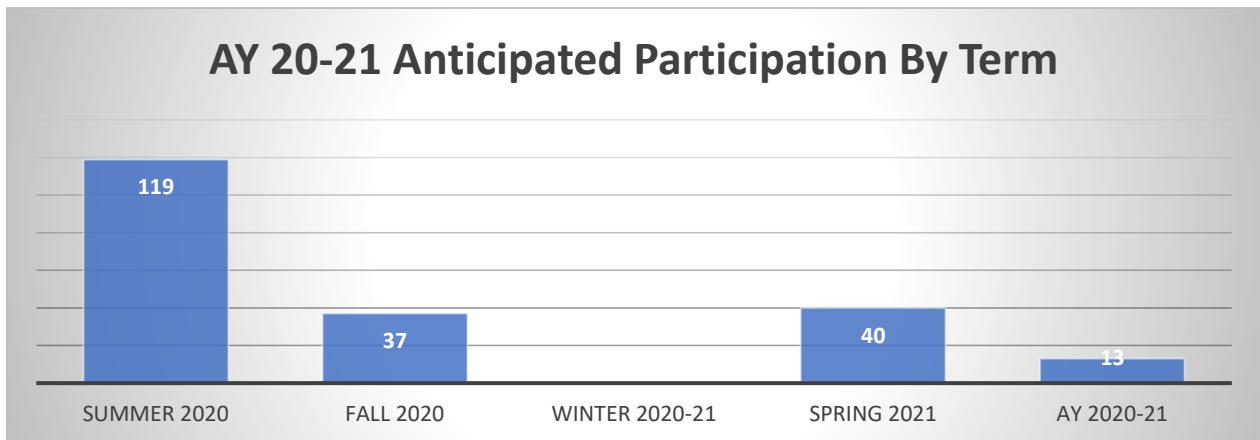


As shown above, intended participation in UCCS short-term programs rebounded over the previous year, from 95 to 162. Last year's downturn in total numbers for UCCS was primarily due to the adjustment to the Global Brigades student group program cycle,

which historically runs in the summer. With Global Brigades' planned trip in Summer 2020, the numbers have once again increased.

The 2020-21 academic year also represented the second 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 semester, requests for proposals and program costs in late spring semester, and the development of promotional materials prior to the end of spring semester. This cycle allows program leaders to share their upcoming program with students and helps students prepare and save over the summer for participation in the next academic year short-term programs. This method continues to be effective as the office turns its attention to the 2021-22 academic year, garnering 12 anticipated programs for next year.

As shown in the chart below, education abroad participation growth continued across terms, indicating a continued interest in a wider variety of education abroad program offerings.



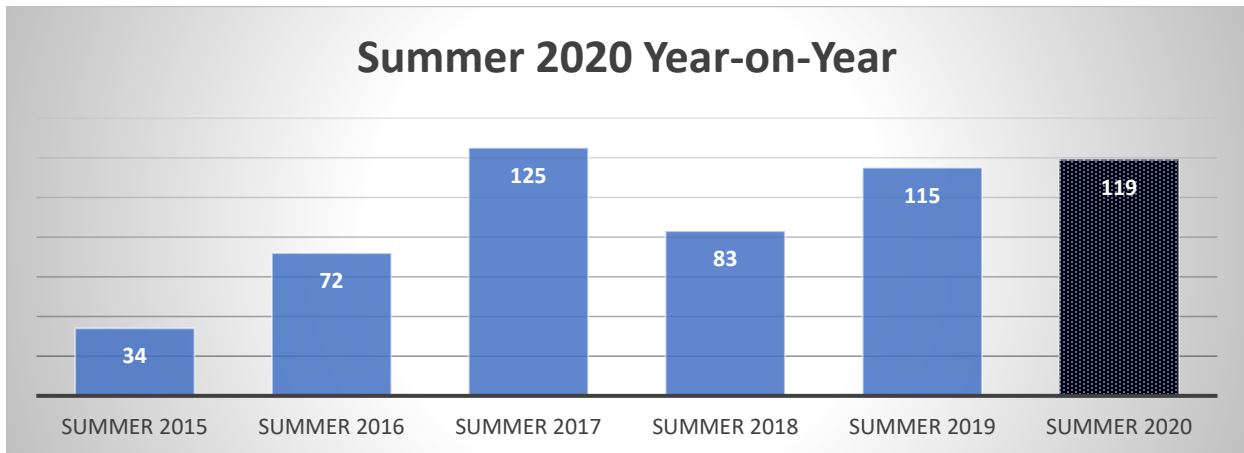
Winter participation decreased primarily due to no short-term programs being presented due to travel restrictions, reinforcing that the continued growth of education abroad will still rely on strong short-term program options for UCCS students who by several measures are more likely to be non-traditional students as well as non-traditional education abroad participants. The term with the heaviest intended participation over the 2020-21 academic year, summer, was dominated by UCCS short-term programs and will likely continue to be the area of natural growth for education abroad along with the winter term. Spring, which continues to be an area of strong participation interest, was also impacted this year by students postponing their intended participation to the term due to the suspension of Fall 2020 programs.

Term Overviews

The summaries below provide a semester or term overview of education abroad student mobility. Each section includes a brief summary with charts that detail current and historical analysis by term.

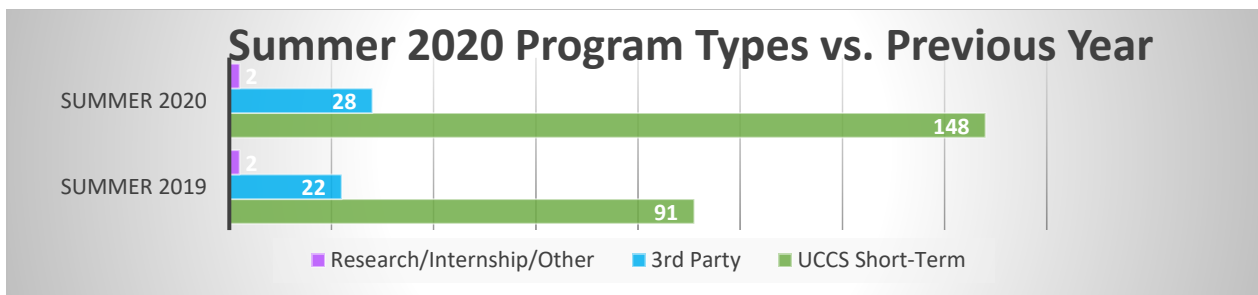
Summer 2010 Overview

Total: 119 Intended Participants



As the chart above demonstrates, a sustained trend is emerging. Global Brigades in 2017 demonstrated the impact that such student group programming has on education abroad participation rates in that year. A steady climb of participation in Summer 2019 over 2018 and then further incremental gain in projected student participation in 2020 suggest a new upward trend overall, especially when looking at the past 5 years cumulatively without Global Brigades.

The following chart illustrates the driver of that upward change. Looking at program type in the chart below, we can see that the sustained increase in participation is due in large part to the increase in short-term program offerings. The key takeaway should be the sustained growth of over 50% in short-term program participation in 2019 and 2020 over prior years.

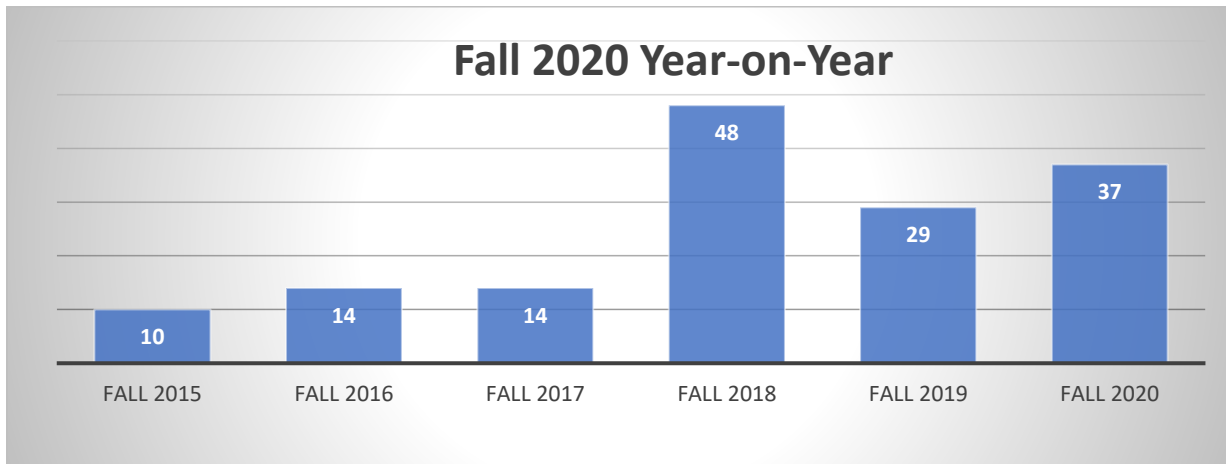


As the chart above shows, a continued focus for summer programming should be on short-term programs – both faculty-led and student-group – as this continues to be the most popular option for summer programs. Along with sustaining a push for cyclical short-term programming, a diversity of student group programming beyond Global Brigades should also continue to be encouraged. As more student groups become interested in education abroad programs specific to their purpose, there may be still larger growth in summer participation, since this can more readily accommodate school schedules and cost considerations.

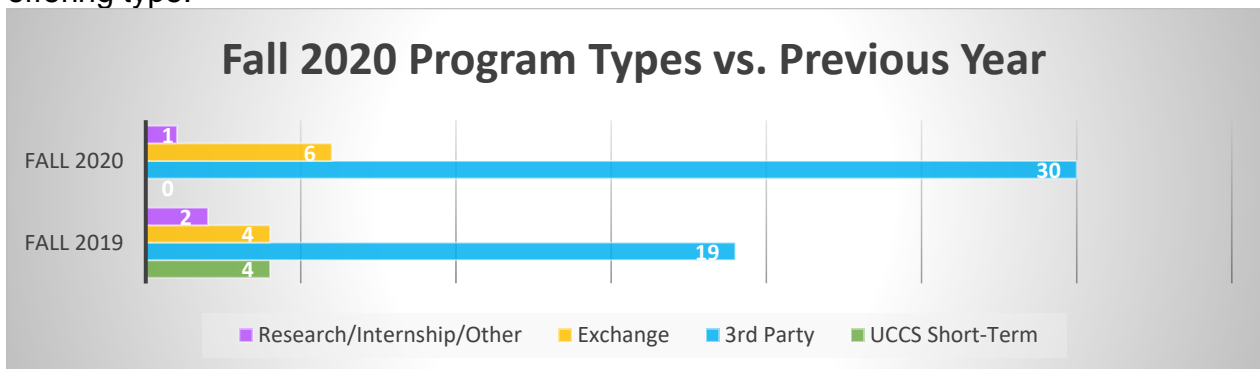
Intended Countries of Destination Summer 2020: Argentina, Costa Rica, France, French Polynesia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, South Korea, Spain, Taiwan, Tanzania, Uganda, United Kingdom

Fall 2020 Overview

Total: 37 Intended Participants



Fall 2020 saw 38 students interested in participating in the education abroad programs. This is an increase from the prior fall, and again demonstrates the sustained impact of short-term programs. The spike in fall 2018 itself enjoyed the highest participation rates due to a rapidly growing interest in 3rd party providers, with participation increasing 128% over the previous year. Fall 2020 further cements this trend, with five times the interest in third party programs over the next most competitive offering type.



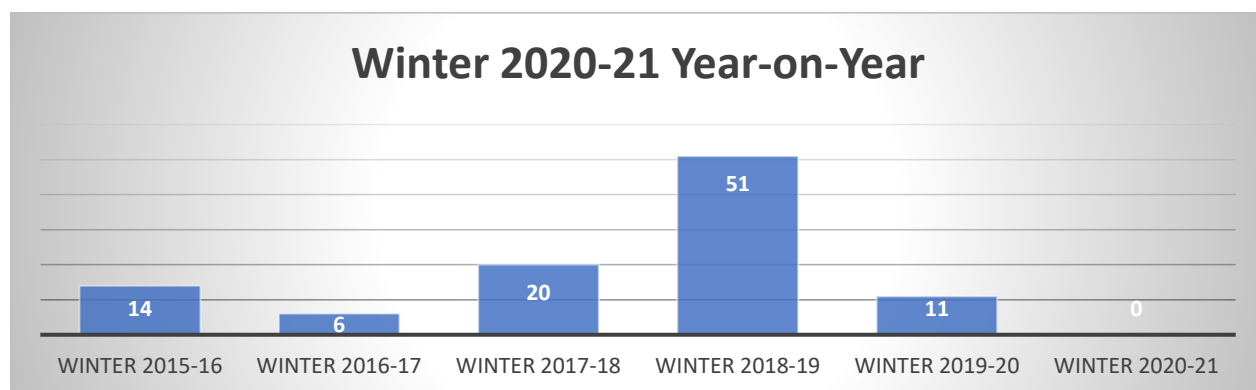
Although figures demonstrate that major continued growth will most likely come from non-traditional short-term programming, the overall increase in program provider participation suggests that interest in more traditional education abroad programming is also on the rise. Research and internships decreased in participation, while the exchange rate is increasing, demonstrating responsible management of exchange balances.

Intended Countries of Destination Fall 2020: Australia, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Fiji, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United Kingdom

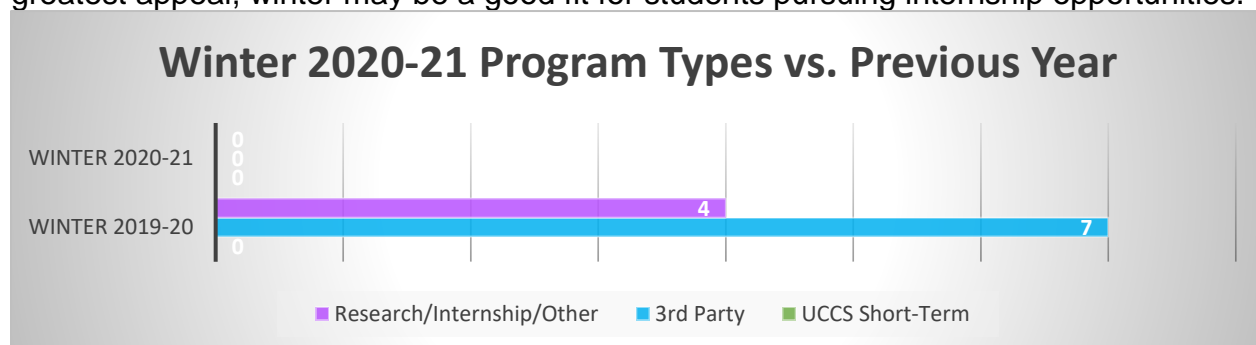
Winter 2020-21 Overview

Total: 0 Intended Participants

Several virtual programs were offered over the winter term due to the global pandemic. The unprecedented nature of that ongoing crisis fully impacted participation. No students enrolled in these virtual offerings.



The chart below suggested that while the third party programs continue to provide the greatest appeal, winter may be a good fit for students pursuing internship opportunities.

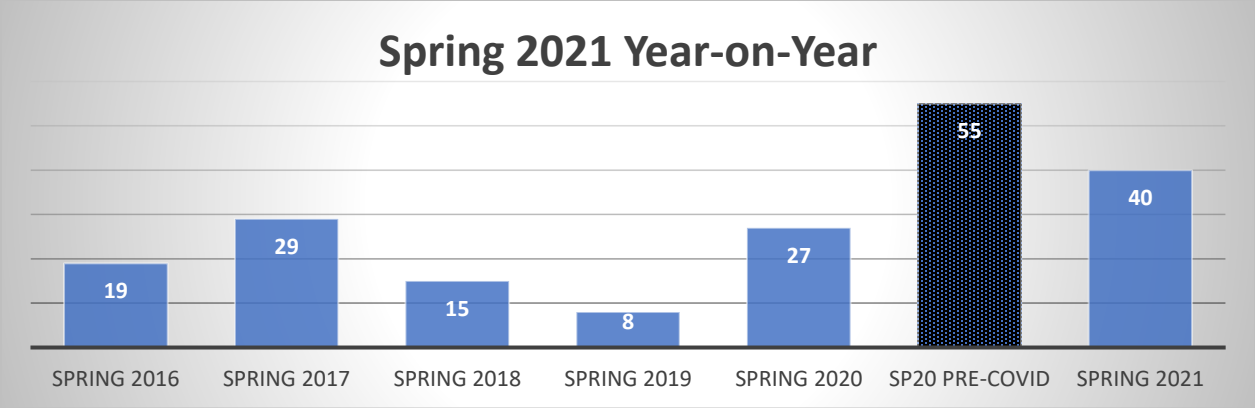


Intended Countries of Destination Winter 2020-21: None

Spring 2021 Overview

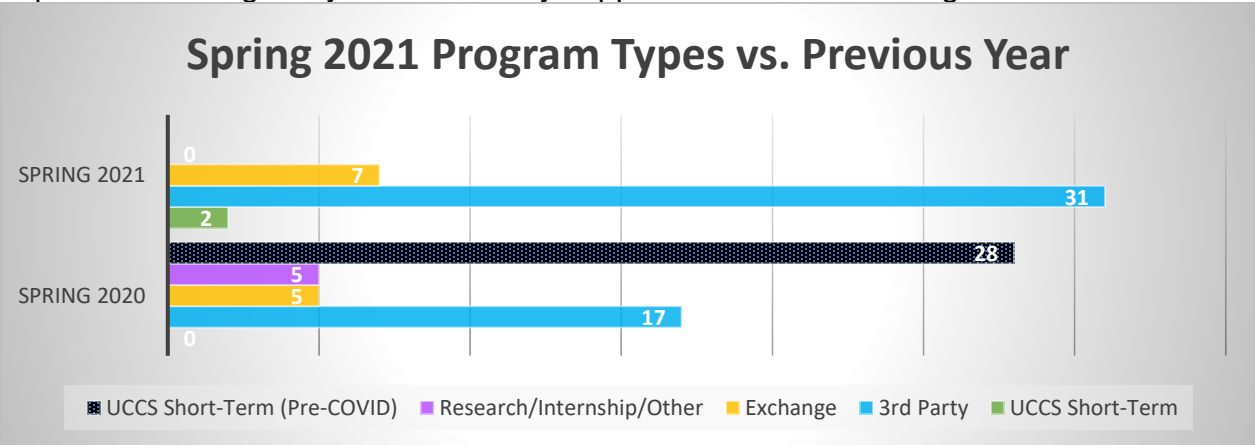
Total: 40 Intended Participants

Spring 2021 shows a gradual emergence from the impact of the global pandemic. This trend is expected to continue as countries worldwide return to a “new normal” of operations and begin to allow travel even as the United States itself is opening up.



The chart below is a visual of spring 2021 participation by program type compared to the previous year. It's worth noting that there is an increase in participation of all program types, except for the internship participation, which trends suggest may be better suited to winter term. Note that there is newfound participation in UCCS' own short-term program offerings.

It is important to continue to highlight that while spring 2020 would have seen record participation in both semester-long and UCCS short-term programming over spring break, spring 2021 even topped that participation. This chart and data highlight that interest in 3rd party programming is growing, interest in UCCS' own short-term offerings is growing, and that exchanges are also a strong offering in this semester. It will remain important to thoughtfully and effectively support these areas moving forward.

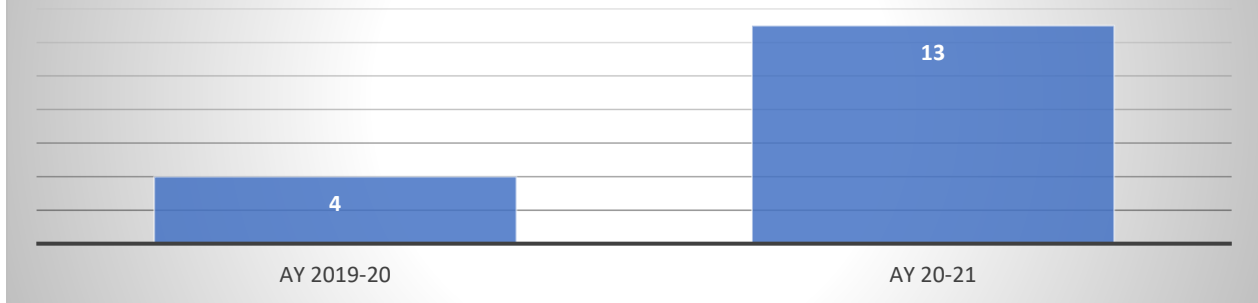


Intended Countries of Destination Spring 2021: Chile, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Ecuador, France, Greece, Guatemala, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, South Korea, Spain, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom

[Academic Year 2020-21 Overview](#)

Total: 13 Intended Participants

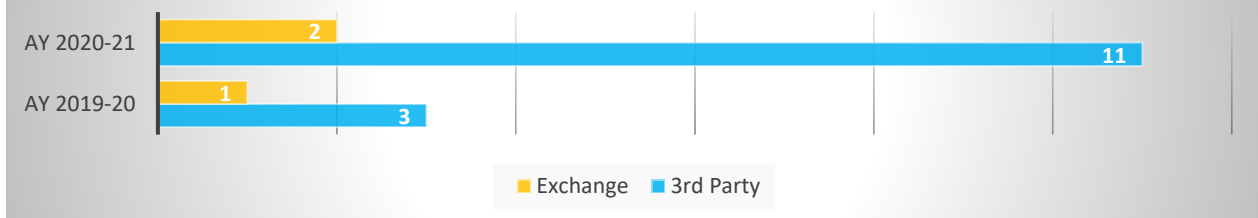
Academic Year 2020-21 Year-on-Year



As the above chart indicates, academic year-long programming continues to experience an upsurge in interest. The low participation in previous years was likely due to the significant monetary and time commitments involved in going abroad for a full nine-to-ten months, especially since UCCS students so strongly value affordability and flexibility as demonstrated by the popularity of short-term programming.

Nonetheless, 13 students intended to go abroad for the academic year in 2020-21, a 2.25% increase over the previous year. Note that these year-long numbers are also included in the above tallies for fall and spring.

AY 2020-21 Program Types vs. Previous Year



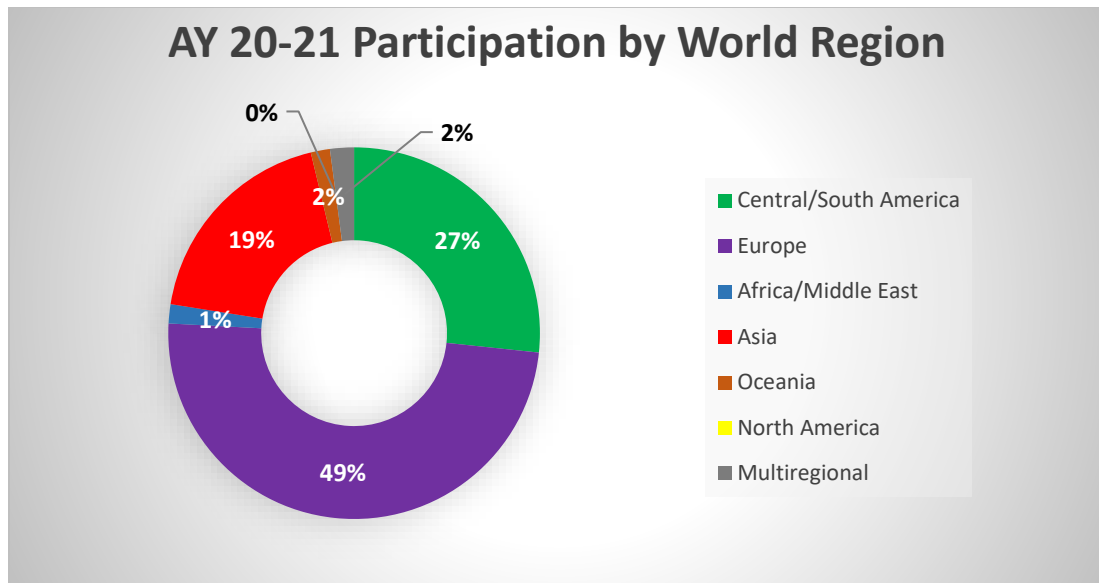
As the chart above demonstrates, there is significant interest in 3rd party programming over exchanges, much like the fall term, perhaps because there is often greater flexibility and more support from program providers when it comes to going abroad for a year. It is likely that this trend will continue into the future as well.

Intended Countries of Destination AY 20-21: Chile, Czech Republic, France, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, South Korea, Spain, United Kingdom

Regional Participation

As with national trends, Europe remains a popular destination for education abroad experiences in all categories from faculty-led to exchange and 3rd party partners. Central/South America is next in popularity, and Asia continues to show a strong appeal as well, primarily in Costa Rica, Japan, and South Korea, along with less traditional countries including China and Peru.

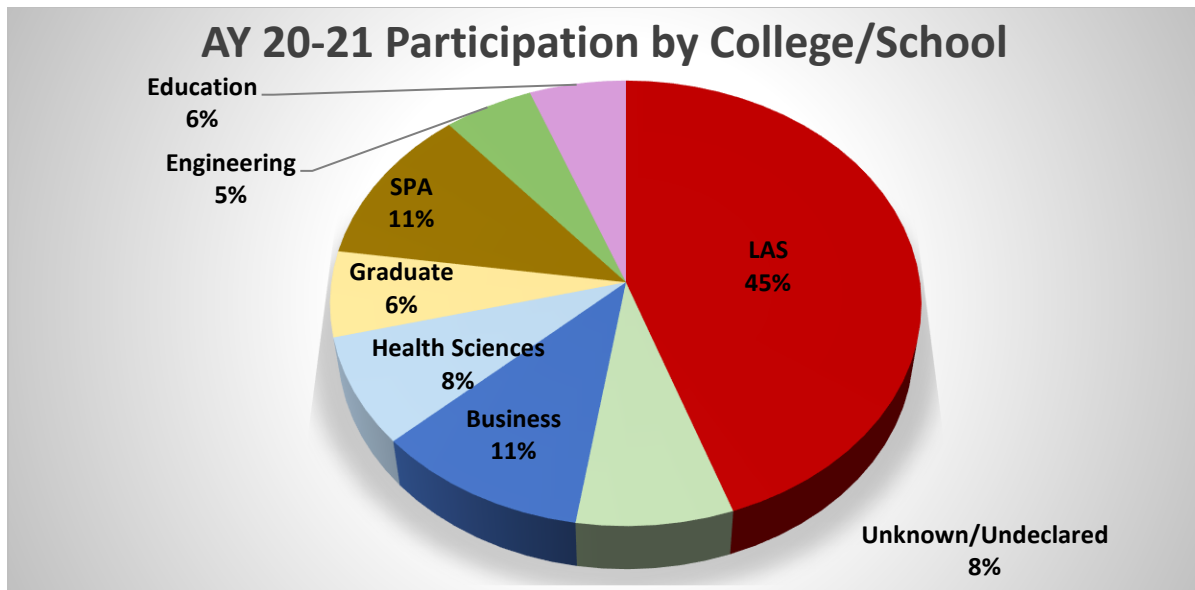
Overall, the Office of International Affairs anticipated sending 242 UCCS students to 33 countries on 5 continents over the 2020-21 academic year.



Looking at the world region chart above, we do see some shifts in numbers. Europe is down 6% over the previous year, from 54% to 49%. Participation in Africa/Middle East continued to decline, down to 1% from 4% last year. Central/South America, on the other hand, saw an increase in intended participation, from 14% of total participants in 2019-20 to 27% this year, likely due to Global Brigades' intended travel to Panama. Asia saw an increase over last year's 13%, up to 19%, while Oceania has experienced a significant decrease of total participants to 2%, as opposed to the 11% of total participants it carried in the previous year. The decrease in Oceania is likely due to well-known stringent COVID-19 regulations in that region, significantly impacting student interest in the area as a practical place to apply in the hopes of traveling during the pandemic.

Participation by UCCS College/School

The chart below is a pie graph detailing the participation rates of the 242 students that intended to go abroad by their self-identified school or college. 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 but also reveals growth in the School of Public Affairs and the College of Education; both have continued to grow their percentage of total participation from the previous year to 11% and 6% respectively. Graduate student intended participation and participation from the College of Engineering declined compared to the year before, but the Colleges of Business and Health Sciences and Nursing held steady.



College and School Data Summaries

The **College of Letters, Arts and Sciences** continues to be the most represented among those that hope to participate in study abroad. While this college contains the most majors on campus, the areas of study it contains, such as the foreign language majors/minors, also lend themselves most easily to education abroad. 45% percent of intended students identify a major within this college and there was an overall participation increase of 66% from 68 to 108 students.

The historical relationship that the **College of Business** has with exchange partners, as well as having an international marketing major, also makes sure it is represented well. There was a minor drop in the number of business students going overseas, from 12% to 11%, but overall participation held steady. 26 students indicated a business major this year vs. 21 last year.

Health Sciences and Nursing has benefitted from an annual student group program, Global Brigades, and an increased number of programs offered abroad for health sciences in previous years. Still, even with that annual trip intended for this year, there was a drop in participation down to 8% from 12% last year. Likely this is due to the pandemic and the increased focus on local health these students experienced. 19 students indicated a major in this area this year versus 20 last year. Efforts to grow in this area should continue to be targeted at students early on due to challenges with course sequencing and approval in the junior and senior years.

The **College of Education** still lacks study abroad numbers outside of the faculty-led graduate program. Again, early access to students to inform them of their options will help to grow numbers in this school. Nonetheless, there was an anticipated jump in participation this year from 2% to 6%. This can be attributed largely to the return of two

teaching-focused UCCS short-term programs. 14 students indicated an education major versus 3 last year.

The **College of Engineering and Applied Sciences** students are seen to have the desire to go abroad, and mostly go on summer or winter STEM programs abroad. Anticipated numbers declined from 10% to 5%, likely due to a lack of research excursions and no available winter STEM programs. 13 students indicated an engineering major this year versus 18 last year.

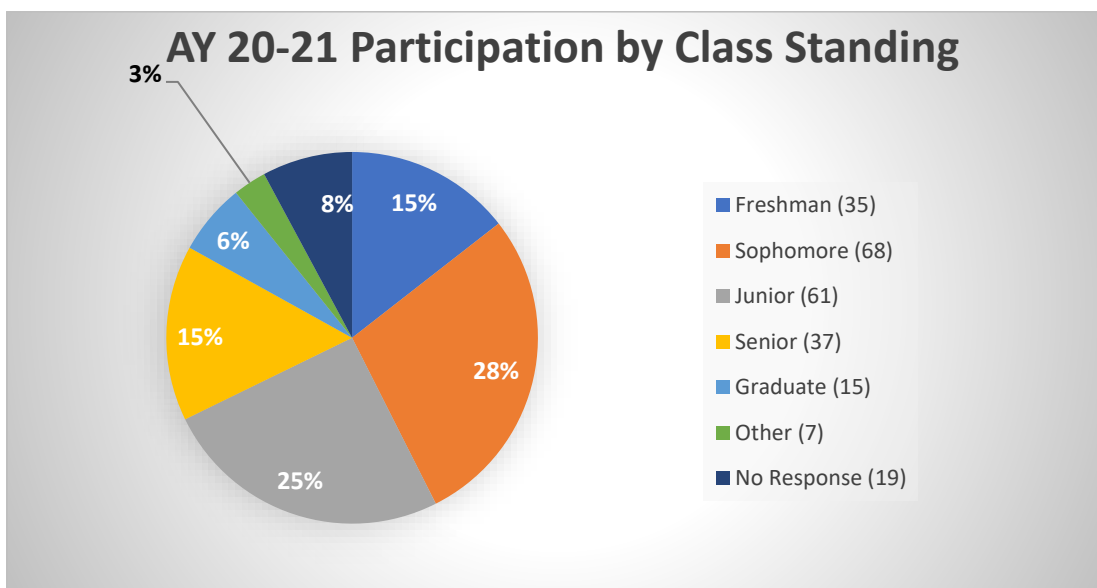
The **Graduate School**, in line with national trends, is limited in the number of students it sends abroad. We did see a decrease in graduate students going abroad from 10% in the previous year to 6% this year, but this is likely due to a greater participation from undergraduates affecting overall percentages than a decrease in interest. 15 students indicated a graduate school relationship versus 17 last year.

The **School of Public Affairs** has significant presence with short-term programs abroad, specifically Criminal Justice in London. 28 students this year indicated a SPA major versus 8 last 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. 19 students versus 23 last year indicated no major.

Participation by UCCS Class Standing

As the below chart shows, juniors participated in education abroad the most out of any class, followed closely by sophomores in 2020-21. 28% of education abroad students were juniors and 25% sophomores, an increase of 4% in sophomore participation over the prior year. This is compared to a 1% decrease in participation for seniors and 2% increase for freshmen. Graduate students accounted for 6% of education abroad participants in the



last academic year, down from 10% the prior year. Their work is mainly in International Business Seminars and faculty-led programs. Juniors and sophomores, comparatively, went abroad on all types of programs, from 3rd party to faculty-led to exchange, while freshmen mainly participated in faculty-led programs. Seniors, meanwhile, also participated in faculty-led programs, but tended to carry out international research or internships as well.

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 travelling later in the undergraduate career is more manageable for students.

Education Abroad by Reported Gender

This year's report highlights a broader gender gap than last year, more akin to the distributions seen in 2017 through 2019. Women appear to consistently participate more than their male counterparts. The striking increase in the number of female students and partial decrease in male students participating in education abroad over the previous year contrasts to 2019-20 with its narrower gender gap of the last five years. It will be interesting to track whether the continued emergence from the global pandemic represents a return to a more even gender distribution, or whether women again lead the embrace of international education. The creation of personas for targeting through marketing programs may strengthen UCCS' voice in reaching both men and women according to their potentially disparate motivators.

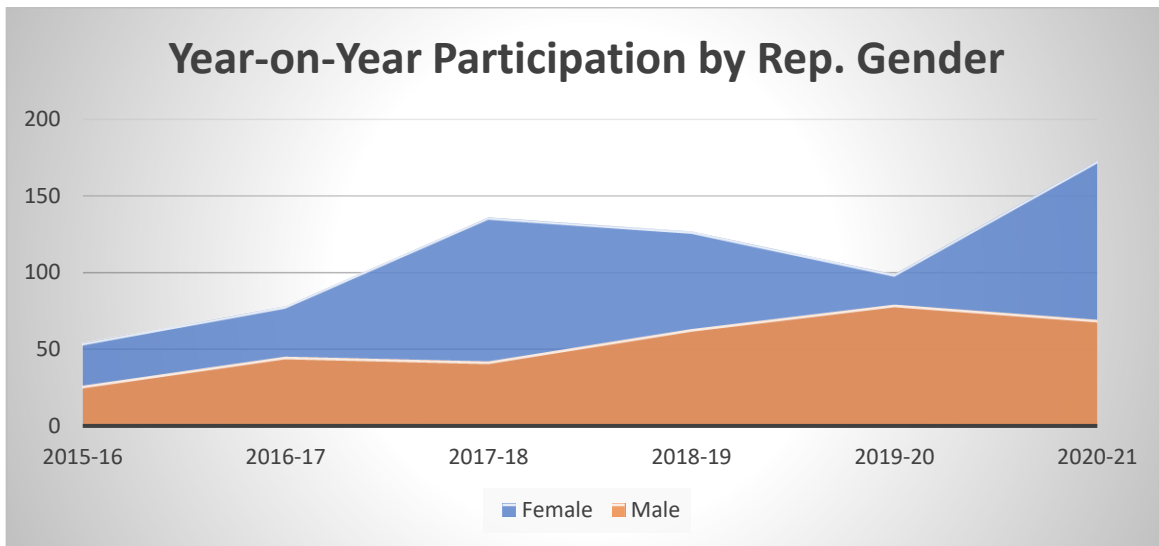
It's worth noting that women's participation in study abroad programs is nearly double that of the year before. Clearly UCCS' outreach efforts have been reaching interested participants. It's only a matter of building on the strengths of these outreach efforts to further increase participation among even more students of all genders.

Female: 173 Intended Participants

Male: 69 Intended Participants

	Female	Male
2015-16 Total	54	26
2016-17 Total	78	45
2017-18 Total	136	42
2018-19 Total	127	63
2019-20 Total	99	79
2020-21 Total	173	69
2015-16 Percentage	67.50%	35.50%
2016-17 Percentage	63.40%	36.60%
2017-18 Percentage	76.40%	23.60%
2018-19 Percentage	66.80%	33.20%

2019-20 Percentage	55.62%	44.38%
2020-21 Percentage	71.49%	28.51%



Education Abroad by Reported Ethnicity

Overall, the trends in reported ethnicity by education abroad participants remains relatively level in recent years. There are some important areas of representation that are increasing, however, as the below table demonstrates. Primarily, we saw an increase in students who identified themselves as African American, Asian American, and Hispanic/Latino participants have increased.

These percentage levels are above the national averages for participation by these groups and indicate strong growing diversity in education abroad at UCCS.

<i>Rep. Race/Ethnicity</i>	<i>2020-21</i>	<i>2019-20</i>	<i>2018-19</i>	<i>2017-18</i>	<i>2016-17</i>	<i>2015-16</i>
<i>African (American)</i>	7.9% (19)	6.2% (11)	3.1% (6)	1.7% (3)	<1% (1)	2.5% (2)
<i>American Indian/Alaska Native</i>	<1% (1)	1.1% (2)	<1% (1)	<1% (1)	<1% (1)	1.25% (1)
<i>Asian (American)</i>	5.8% (14)	2.8% (5)	3.6% (7)	2.4% (4)	2.5% (3)	2.5% (2)
<i>Caucasian</i>	56.6% (137)	58.4% (104)	55.2% (105)	60% (106)	67.5% (83)	68.75% (55)
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	12.4% (30)	9.6% (17)	11% (21)	11.8% (21)	12.2% (15)	5.0% (4)
<i>Multiple Selected</i>	1.2% (3)	2.2% (4)	1.5% (3)	1.1% (2)	-	2.5% (2)
<i>Did not respond</i>	9.5% (23)	14% (25)	18.9% (36)	18.5% (33)	6.5% (8)	8.8% (7)
<i>Other</i>	3.3% (8)	3.4% (6)	4.7% (9)	2.8% (3)	4.9% (6)	2.5% (2)
<i>Did not wish to report</i>	1.7% (4)	2.2% (4)	1% (2)	1.7% (3)	4.9% (6)	6.25% (5)

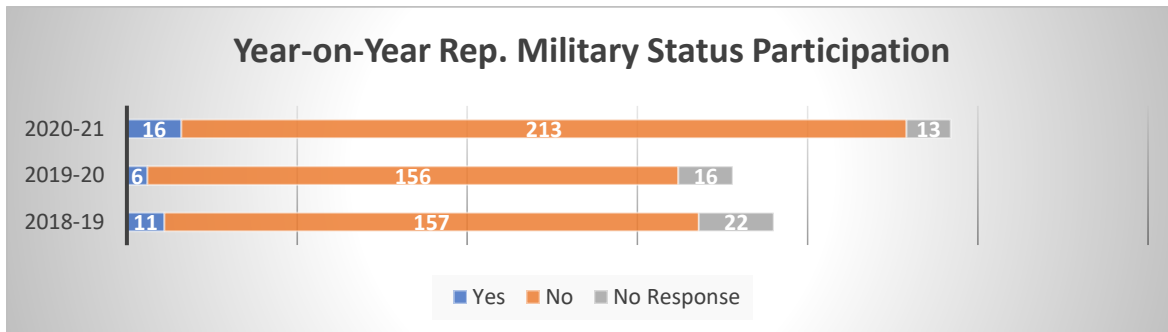
As the data also shows, we have increased the number of overall respondents, down about 5% over the prior year in terms of students classifying themselves as Other or who did not respond or report. That figure is down also from the previous year, when it

was almost 25%, demonstrating an improved trend in capturing this important data point for UCCS.

Education Abroad and Reported Military Status

UCCS prides itself on being a nationally ranked military-friendly institution, and nearly 20% of students have a military affiliation. However, there continues to be challenges to their participation in education abroad experiences that are not faced by other students.

Tighter of interpretations of VA benefit eligibility for education abroad continue to impact intended participation. Students continue to be able to use their benefits only for direct exchanges, not 3rd party provider programs.



Nevertheless, as the above chart indicates, of the 242 students in this year's data, 16 listed an affiliation with the military on their education abroad application. This represents 6.6% of all education abroad students and is up from 3.3% last year. The increase can likely be attributed to a greater anticipated participation of students in education abroad overall, and returns the office to our baseline from previous years.

It is important to note that the issue with Veteran benefits for programs abroad is not unique to UCCS, and 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 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.

AY 20-21 Participation by Rep. Disability Status

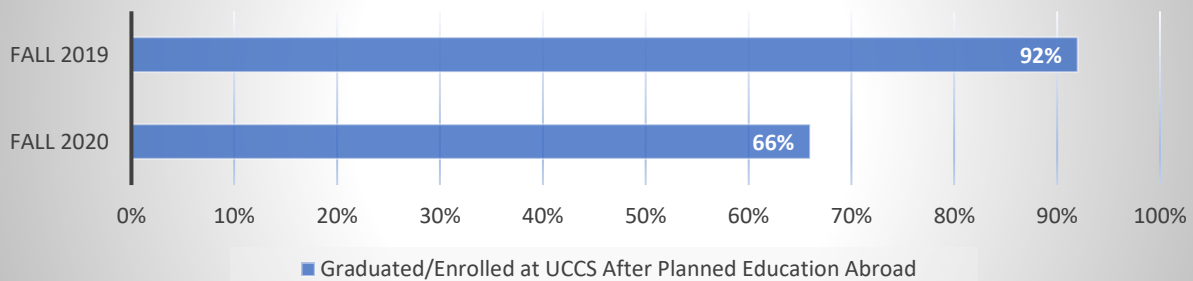


As the data above shows, there were 18 students who self-reported a disability in 2020-21, a slightly higher number than the 12 of the previous year. The major area of concern overall regarding education abroad and disabled students is those who do not report their disability or those with multiple disabilities 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 Education Abroad and International Affairs staff will also continue to be important moving forward.

Education Abroad and Persistence

Though data gathered in this regard is in very initial stages due to the limited data and access, the data shows that participation in education abroad positively impacts persistence at UCCS, as without the ability to travel abroad this year, persistence decreased from 92% to 66%. It is also important to note that some of this decrease can also be attributed to a general decline in persistence this year due to changes in course delivery related to COVID-19.

EA Student Graduation/Enrollment Analysis



This will be an area of continued development and reporting moving forward as more persistence and graduation rate data is requested from senior leadership. Data integrity will require an adaptation of recording information in PeopleSoft (CU-SIS) so that reports can be pulled, a project that was completed this spring and will be implemented moving forward.

Marketing and Outreach

Marketing and outreach for this reporting cycle can continue to be classified as more tailored overall and more 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 the Abroad 101 session 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, with 64 students having participated in a session this year. Marketing efforts to promote Abroad 101 continue to include connecting with academic advisers and departments as well as campus-wide flyer distribution via email and social media posts.

Student Group Presentations

This area of focus near is based on the increased interest in overseas travel by UCCS student groups. With the impact of the pandemic, however, the focus shifted elsewhere, and we therefore plan to roll out a full communication and presentation schedule with student groups in the next year.

Social Media

Social media has been an area of needed attention and growth to help promote the efforts of Education Aboard and International Affairs. 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 were not held this year due to public health concerns. As campus reopens, a return to tabling and other general outreach methods will need to be explored and implemented.

Education Abroad Advising

Education Abroad advising is done on a walk-in as well as an 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 upon the questions with the average student

spending 35 minutes in one-on-one advising meetings. One-on-one meetings, despite being held virtually, remained an important method of connecting with interested students this year, and virtual offerings should continue to be made going forward to supplement in-office appointments.

Pre-Departure Orientations

The Pre-Departure Orientation is generally an in-person meeting which prepares students for their overseas experiences. The orientation is comprehensive, covering things like health and safety, banking, communication, culture, education and travel best practices. The orientation is interactive and is meant to be an open forum for students (and guardians) to ask questions to staff and study abroad alumni.

Normally, four general Pre-Departure Orientations would be held, two for the fall and two for the spring. Additionally, each UCCS short-term program abroad had its own mandatory orientation for the group and one for group leaders. This means that almost every student who went or is going abroad participates in a Pre-Departure Orientation.

However, no pre-departure sessions were held this year due to no students traveling abroad. Instead, an online version was developed and will be further refined for the future.

Faculty- and 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:

- an overview of the process
- compensation and budget
- the planning process
- responsibilities of the program leader and IA
- program providers
- the proposal form

The session/meeting is also a time to brainstorm program ideas, answer questions, review due dates for program materials and the steps needed to ensure program success.

Education Abroad International Partnerships

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

student to participate and navigate at the exchange partner institution. Therefore, the importance of 3rd party provider programs is crucial in moving forward and a growing interest for semester students.

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, UK
- University of Hertfordshire – Hatfield, UK
- Peruvian University of Applied Sciences – Lima, Peru
- 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
- Stockholm University School of Business – Stockholm, Sweden
- Lillehammer University College – Lillehammer, Norway

3rd Party Partnerships (*signed partnerships prior to 2016*)

- Semester at Sea
- Sol Education Abroad
- AIFS-American Institute for Foreign Study
- ISA-International Studies Abroad
- CIEE-Council on International Education Exchange
- IES Abroad
- University of Oregon-Global Education Programs (signed in 2019)

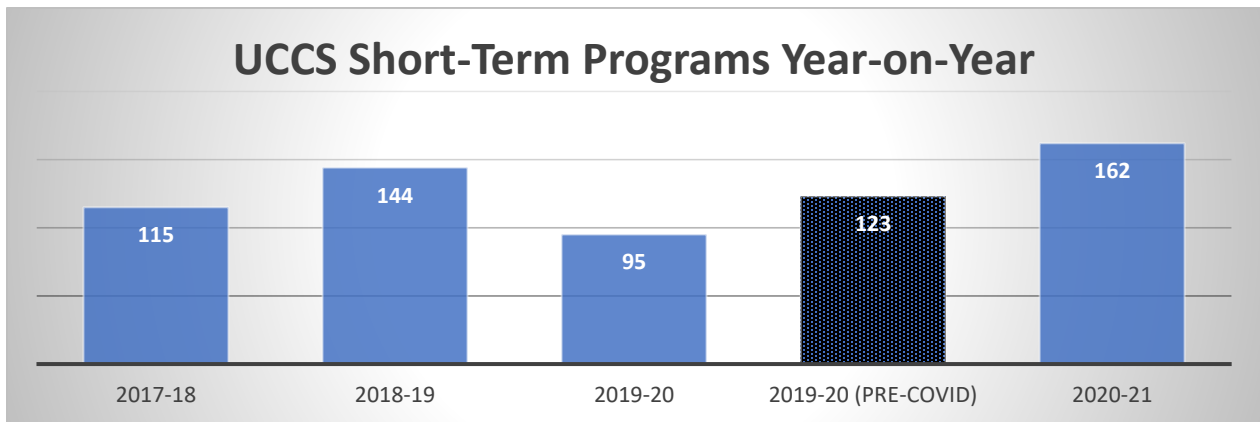
Funding and Scholarships

International Affairs 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. One student was awarded the Gilman Scholarship for a now-suspended Fall 2020 program: Isabella Huhn, a Geography major who now intends to

participate in a program in France in Spring 2022 via USAC. 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 centralize UCCS short-term programs with International Affairs. These efforts encompass both student group and faculty/staff-directed programs.



As prior discussions and the above chart indicates, short-term programming remains an area in which UCCS students have strong interest. A centralized approach to the faculty/staff-led program development and proposal process continues to benefit study abroad program participation as a whole. Faculty and staff are increasing the number of outgoing programs by doing information sessions each semester, and are managing the travel and vendor processes for most of the programs. Since cost, location, and advance planning are the most important factors in establishing a successful program, the centralized approach is beneficial as are the educational pieces of Abroad 101.

AY 20-21 UCCS Short-Term Participation vs. Other Program Types



Short-term programming accounts for 65% of education abroad participation at UCCS. It is clearly an area in which we should continue to invest. 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, where success of programs like Global Brigades demonstrate that this is an area in which students have strong interest: the support of International Affairs regarding logistics and enrollment may help to boost participation by additional groups that could boost the success of UCCS study abroad programs overall.

Summer 2020 Intended Short-Term Programs

Note: Enrollment numbers reflect those registered on or before March 13, 2020; applications were still being accepted when the term was suspended.

Criminal Justice in London

Leader(s): Rich Radabaugh and Katy Cathcart

Credits: 3 credits of CJ 4600 or CJ 6600 (optional)

Cost: \$2,809 (*includes airfare, hotel, ground transportation, some meals*)

Enrollment: 17

Explore Japan

Leader(s): Mioko Webster

Credits: 1-3 credits of FCS 3890

Cost: \$3,850 (*includes airfare, hotel, ground transportation, some meals*)

Enrollment: 13

Geography in Ireland

Leader(s): Eric Billmeyer and Michael Larkin

Credits: 4 credits of GES 4460

Cost: \$1,400 (*includes hotel, ground transportation, some meals*)

Enrollment: 13

Teaching in Taiwan

Leader(s): Katie Anderson-Pence

Credits: 3 credits of IECE 4000

Cost: \$1,410 (*includes hotel, ground transportation, some meals, entrance fees*)

Enrollment: 6

Global Economic Education Alliance Study Tour to Peru

Leader(s): John Brock

Credits: 3 credits of ECON 9400 (optional)

Cost: \$3,500 (*includes in-country airfare, hotel, ground transportation, meals, entrance fees*)

Enrollment: 7

UCCS Pre-First Year Global Leadership Program to Argentina

Leader(s): Mandy Hansen

Credits: 3 credits of FCS 3890 (optional)

Cost: \$3,597 (*includes airfare, hotel, ground transportation, some meals, entrance fees, activity fees, medical insurance*)

Enrollment: 6 (recruitment in progress when trip was suspended)

Global Brigades at UCCS: Student-Led Medical/Dental Volunteer Brigade to Panama

Leader(s): Bailie Zuber & Kevin Sullivan (advised by Sabine Allenspach & Travis Loos)

Credits: None

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

Enrollment: 39

Future UCCS Short-Term Programs

Fall 2021-Summer 2022 Anticipated Programs

Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering Senior Design Program in Sweden – Fall 2021

Global Brigades at UCCS: Student-led Volunteer Brigade to Guatemala – Winter 21-22

Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering Senior Design Program in E. Africa – Winter 21-22

S.O.L.E. Abroad in Costa Rica – Spring 2022

UCCS Service Learning in Guatemala – Spring 2022

Criminal Justice in London – Summer 2022

Culture and Lifestyle within the Blue Zone Regions of Okinawa – Summer 2022

Engineering and Culture in Sweden – Summer 2022

Explore Japan – Summer 2022
Gender in International Politics in Italy – Summer 2022
Engineering and Culture in Sweden – Summer 2022
Global Economic Education Alliance Study Tour to Peru – Summer 2022
Practicum in Language and Literacy in France – Summer 2022

Moving Forward

The future for Education Abroad at UCCS is promising despite the impacts COVID-19 had on programming in 2021. These impacts will continue to be felt over the next semesters and while interest has remained strong, some decrease in participation is anticipated as travel once again becomes possible due to continued travel restrictions and the economic uncertainty resulting from the pandemic. The groundwork established to increase education abroad participation rates at UCCS will remain and will help to regain and build for future years. The world is vast and cultural understanding and the need to learn and be united globally is 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 coordination 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 w/ students in this unprecedented time
- Continuing to strengthen interdepartmental partnerships
- Collaborating with colleges and schools to develop virtual experiences and online courses that introduce students to cultural understanding and global perspectives
- Furthering reporting efforts and data collection on education abroad participants
- Monitoring and evaluating safety of programming abroad for students

International Student Services

The 2020-2021 academic year saw international student services in International Affairs offered on a full-time basis under the direction of a full-time advisor. The primary functions of the International Student Advisor (ISA) position are immigration advising, programming, and leading and coordinating campus immigration compliance and support efforts to international students and scholars. Such efforts are essential as they not only

provide for student success but also for institutional compliance to 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 ISA role continues to be responsible for most of the administrative tasks within the J-1 Exchange Visitor Scholar program for UCCS in assuming the 'Alternate Responsible Officer' (ARO) position, while the Director of International Affairs continues to hold the 'Responsible Officer' (RO) role. 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 substantially over the last year due to newly admitted students' inability to obtain visas because of embassy and consulate closures around the world. Additionally, numerous travel restrictions were put into place that hindered students' ability to enter the U.S. to return to school.

Due to the pandemic, IA offered a fully remote set of programming for the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters, and with great success. Fall 2020 virtual workshop attendance was up 256% compared to Fall 2019 due largely to the remote options for students to attend. IA also began hosting virtual coffee hours with students and scholars in Summer 2020 on a bi-weekly basis in an effort to provide time to address immigration updates and answer any student questions. These have continued to be offered through Summer 2021. Overall, the COVID-19 pandemic revealed that remote workshops and events offer a preferred and flexible option for the international student and scholar population at UCCS.

Interest in UCCS remains high as admissions is receiving an increased number of applications from international students and current students are able to safely return to campus as a result of relaxed travel restrictions. This bodes well for the recovery of international student enrollment post-pandemic. Remote offerings for programming should remain available even after the pandemic due to its great success.

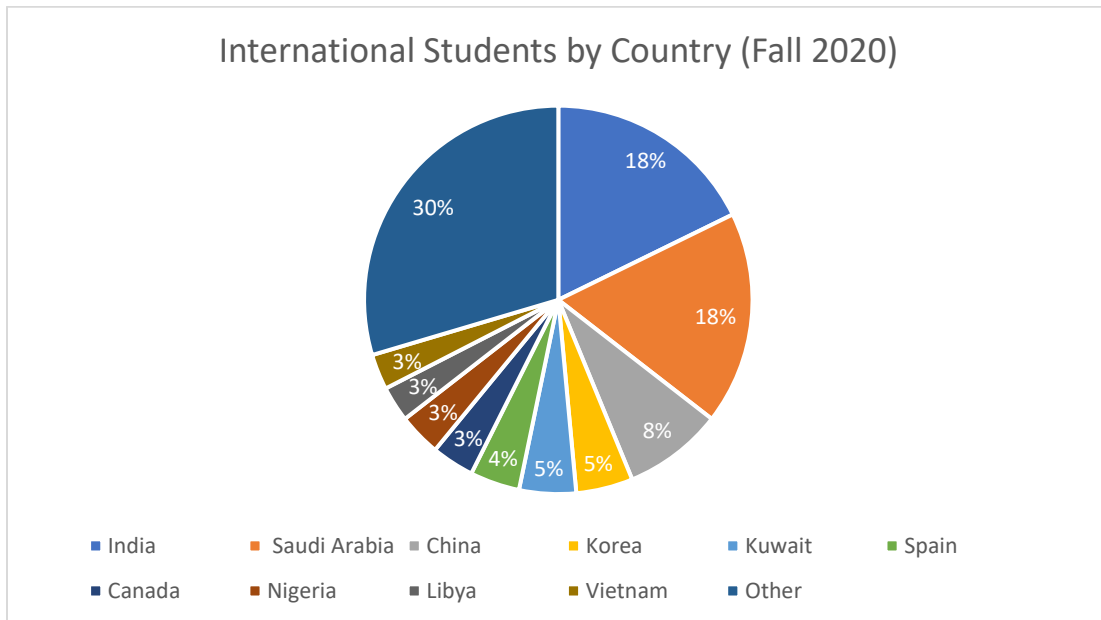
International Student Numbers and Profile

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 is decreasing, and for the Fall 2020 semester the count was 169 students, compared to 202 in the Fall 2019 semester. The population decline is due in large part to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as factors external to 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 international student population is shown in the fact that 47 different countries were represented on campus in Fall 2020. The top countries represented at UCCS in Fall 2020 by population count were India (30), Saudi Arabia (30), China (14), Korea (8), Kuwait (8), Spain (7), Canada (6), Nigeria (6), Libya (5), and Vietnam (5).

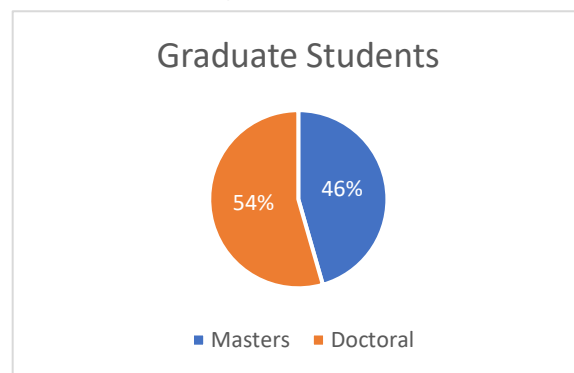
Below is a visual representation of the top countries represented at UCCS in Fall 2020 by population count.



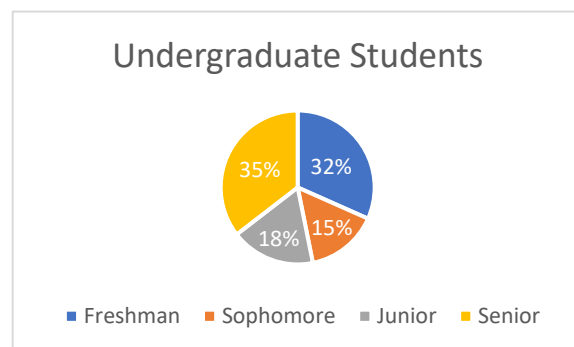
The majority of international students are degree-seeking and hold F-1 status, which means they are typically here for a longer period to complete their UCCS degrees over a multi-year timeframe. The Fall 2020 count shows that 53.3% are studying in graduate programs.

The below graphs show the breakdown of students in Fall 2020 by degree level and students' year of study:

Graduate:	90	Total
Masters	41	
Doctoral	49	



Undergraduate:	79	Total
Freshman	25	
Sophomore	12	
Junior	14	
Senior	28	



NOTE: All numbers come from Fall 2020 Open Doors data as reported to the Institute for International Education following that report's protocol.

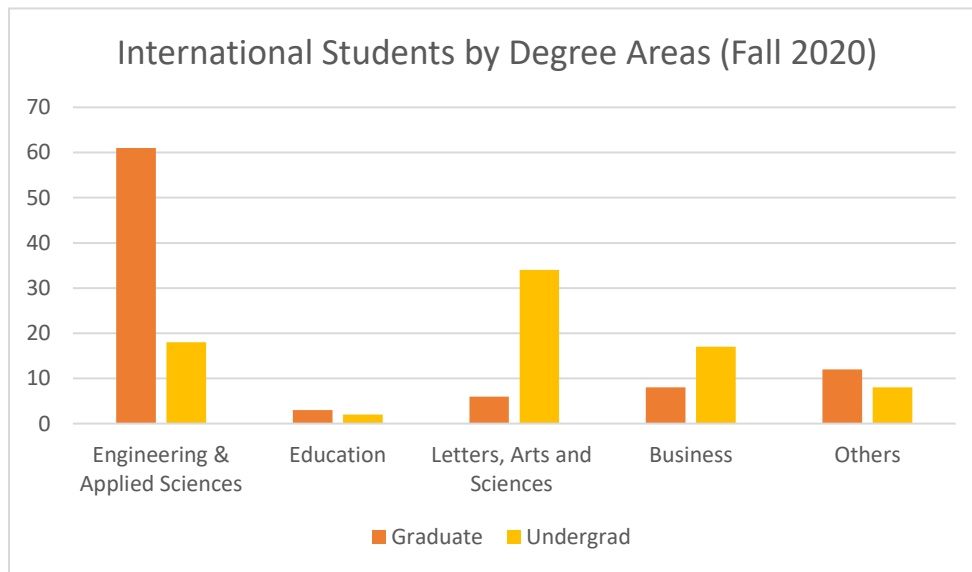
The COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted international student enrollment across the country due mainly to embassy and consulate closures as well as travel restrictions. Many students were unable to obtain student visas to enter the U.S. as a result of these embassy and consulate closures, while other students simply could not enter the U.S. due to pandemic-related travel restrictions.

Additionally, the political environment and changes to the various foreign government scholarship programs bringing 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, and these programs have now 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.

	Total	Graduate	Undergrad	Non-Degree
Engineering & Applied Sciences	79	61	18	
Education	5	3	2	

Letters, Arts and Sciences	40	6	34	
Business	25	8	17	
Others	20	12	8	
Total	169	90	79	



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 to others at UCCS that international students perceive that they are well-supported and served at UCCS. UCCS is similar to other small public institutions with similar numbers in that international student advising is a full-time position.

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 in most cases on questions that come in via email and phone. 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 the forms needed for the most common student requests and development of a standard protocol and business processes for managing them; and
- A turnaround time for student requests and applications – such as for changes to student immigration documents, requests for an office letter to assist with SSN application, requests for a signature on the immigration document for travel, for example – of 1-2 business days and often same day.

Perhaps the most important function of the advisor position is that of immigration advising, which serves 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, and keeping up to date with U.S. regulations, changes, and proposed changes is critical. The advisor position liaises with the Department of Homeland Security (and its constituent units) and the Department of State about various matters when necessary. In the course of handling these immigration advising duties, the IA advisor and director positions 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 role:

- 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 email and newsletters), and
- To work with students individually and in groups in addressing their individual 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 ISA continues to dedicate a significant amount of time to advising former UCCS students, now international student alumni, still holding F-1 status while elsewhere in the U.S. This is because these international alumni now hold a work permission called OPT (Optional Practical Training) that 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 2021, students in this situation currently

number 33, while our overall student enrolled population was about 176 in Spring 2021. Further, the OPT and STEM OPT programs continue to change, which requires additional research and advising for the ISA 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 International Student Advisor, 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 permission called 'STEM Extension OPT'. During this 24-month extension, compliance requirements actually increase, so that the advisor is assisting and reporting in SEVIS as required several times, as well as assisting students with any issues or questions that may come up.

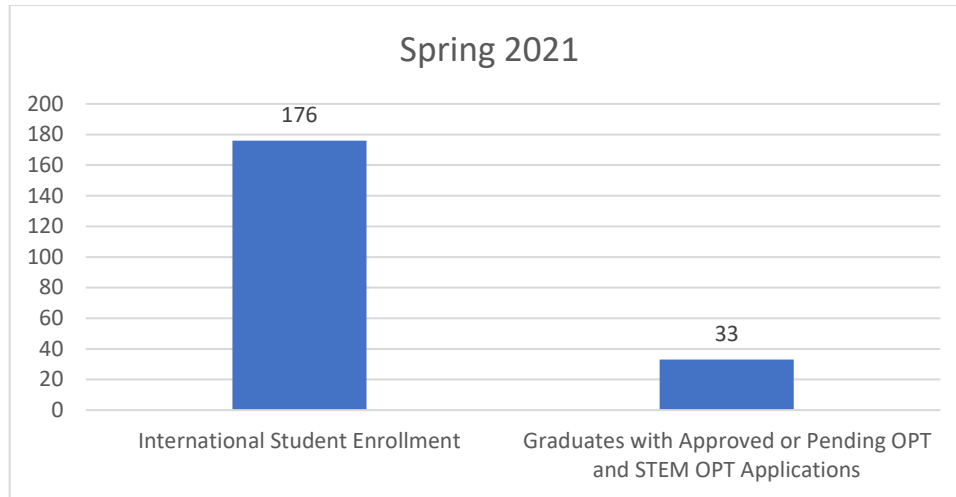
OPT can also be requested during a student's program, before graduation, but typically this is rare, as students keep their allotted time for the post-graduation application. Initial OPT advising for graduating students is time-intensive, requiring in most cases personal advising by appointment, and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

Spring 2021 Summary

Below is an outline of data points and associated figures for Spring 2021:

- International student enrollment – **176**
- Graduates with approved or pending OPT and STEM OPT applications, no longer UCCS students – **33**

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.

At the current time, 1 continuing UCCS international student had CPT authorization for the Spring 2021 semester, and 5 students are authorized for Summer 2021.

Taxation

U.S. taxation is a difficult area in which advising for international students and scholars is needed. However, IA advisors 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 2020 tax year (with tax returns due in May 2021), the CU International Tax Office, located in Denver, provided licenses to a tax software product called Glacier Tax Prep. The office was able to offer this software to nonresident F and J visa students and employees while supplies lasted. IA provided the communications to students from the CU International Tax Office. While the software proved to be helpful to students, it only

offers services for federal tax returns, leaving our students and scholars to find another option for state tax filing.

Advising on Immigration Updates and U.S. Executive Orders

The confusion and concern regarding events in the U.S. political arena increased over the last year as a result of COVID-19. The information provided in this area was restricted to updates to our Immigration Updates webpage, our COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Information for International Students and Scholars webpage, and in direct advising provided upon request to student questions. UCCS students were impacted by travel restrictions put into place in response to COVID-19 and continue to be subject to increased scrutiny in visa applications and visa renewals. It is very likely that prospective students and interested applicants have been impacted as well.

Sessions, website updates, and advising were offered through the bi-weekly electronic IA newsletter as well as through direct email to all students from the advisor. Additionally, in November 2020, we invited an immigration attorney to provide a workshop to students related to immigration updates as a proactive measure. Advising students regarding these political events and changes continues to be a concern 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 at the pre-arrival stage and at arrival orientation to new incoming students will continue to address getting this information into the hands of students as early as possible. The focus of the International Student Advisor 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 2019, the 'Principal Designated School Official' position transferred from the prior ISA to the Director of IA. The Director, in collaboration with the ISA, 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 in regard to 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 10/26/2021.
- Submitting re-designation materials for the exchange program with the Department of State every two years
- Submitting updated operational plans to SEVP and EVP due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Technology and Website

International Student Information Management System

The advisor position (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 ISA in IA along with the school official who uses 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, and they are responsive in providing that assistance.

The next large challenge for the ISSS area of the webpages is to reflect the change to using Sunapsis, since that change will see some big variations to how students can submit requests and interact with the advisor. These changes are still forthcoming. Other areas that continue to need constant updating to reflect changes are the OPT, CPT, and STEM OPT information pages, the Forms pages containing request forms and information handouts, and the taxation pages.

Document Management

Document management is a major part of compliance for the ISA position, 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). There are plans in the future to eventually integrate the OnBase documents into Sunapsis as well.

On a daily basis, the International Student Advisor works 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 position more irregularly uses 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.

Programming

IA's programming for international students is another 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 a network or networks that hopefully they will learn can act as good sources of support for them (all types)
3. It keeps students informed along their educational path (workshops, primarily)
4. It gives students a chance to experience different facets of U.S. life that they may otherwise not be able to enjoy (events and event collaborations)
5. It gives students a chance to share their cultural backgrounds with the rest of the campus and community (events)
6. It helps to internationalize and inform the campus (events, workshops)

In all these functions, we see common threads, and those threads are promoting efforts to improve international student success, retention, and engagement with the campus and community. For this reason, it was important to the IA Office to continue with programming despite the restrictions on events caused by the pandemic. IA offered a fully remote set of programming for the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters, and with great success. Fall 2020 virtual workshop attendance was up 256% compared to Fall 2019 due largely to the remote options for students to attend. In response to the pandemic, IA began hosting virtual coffee hours with students and scholars in Summer 2020 on a bi-weekly basis in an effort to provide time to address immigration updates and answer any student

questions. These virtual coffee hours continued throughout the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters and saw an overall attendance of 140 students and scholars. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed that remote workshops and events offer a preferred and flexible option for this student population, and it is recommended that remote offerings remain available even after the pandemic.

IA programming consisted in 2020-2021 of the following main initiatives:

Orientation (Fall and Spring)

The International Student Services and Recruitment Coordinator position in Admissions coordinates orientation in collaboration with IA and other university units. The collaboration is effective and continually being evaluated and tweaked. Though IA is not the office mainly responsible for this programming, it is included here because it is mission-critical and a priority for us to contribute to the interests of our mission. The 'SEVIS Reporting' session that the IA advisor leads is essential in the fulfillment of our compliance mission.

Fall 2020 Orientation (August)

Every fall, orientation programming begins on the Wednesday preceding the start of classes the following week. The main orientation programming in Fall 2020 consisted of required sessions such as welcome sessions, SEVIS reporting, paying UCCS bills, campus tour, and discussion panel events. Thursday and Friday following the main orientation date had other UCCS events for students to attend. About 15 students attended orientation programming as new UCCS students in Fall 2020.

Spring 2021 Orientation (January)

Orientation in spring semesters is held on the Friday before classes begin. The orientation for Spring 2021 was held in a virtual format for the first time ever. The SEVIS reporting session required of all new students was presented by the ISA via Microsoft Teams. The check-in process also includes collecting, scanning, and storing immigration documents for all newly enrolled international students, which was done this year via email. About 20 students attended orientation programming as new UCCS students in Spring 2021. This count included new incoming degree 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.

i-Workshops

'i-Workshops' is the name given to the series of workshops that IA's International Student Advisor puts together each semester, starting with orientation workshops (coordinated with Admissions) and running through nearly the end of each semester. These workshops have previously included sessions on 'Getting a Social Security Number and/or Driver's License,' 'Employment Rules for International Students,' 'OPT Info Session,' 'Understanding US Healthcare and Insurance,' 'Taxation,' and more. Students are welcome to submit ideas for new workshops as well. This year, workshops continued to be focused on the areas of greatest interest and need, primarily OPT and taxation, since

turnout at the other workshops was low. Advising on other areas, such as health insurance, SSN and Driver’s License, etc., can occur in direct advising in response to student inquiries and through direct email and website updates to the entire student population.

The following table lists the workshops offered in the Fall 2021 and Spring 2021 semesters, which were all offered in a virtual format.

Employment Options for International Students	August 28, 2020
OPT Workshop #1	September 3, 2020
OPT Workshop #2	September 8, 2020
OPT Workshop #3	September 18, 2020
Options After Graduation: H-1B, Other Visas and Permanent Residency	November 17, 2020
International Student Panel: Success Stories from UCCS Graduates	November 18, 2020
OPT Workshop #4	November 19, 2020
Authorized Employment Options	January 22, 2021
OPT Workshop #1	February 5, 2021
OPT Workshop #2	February 11, 2021
International Student Panel	February 15, 2021
International Tax Workshop	February 25, 2021
OPT Workshop #3	March 12, 2021
OPT Workshop #4	April 13, 2021

IA Events

The office has put together events to bring students together in social, cultural, and educational settings, sometimes away from campus. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, off-campus events were not authorized this year. In the past, these events included hiking day trips with iBuddy, the Mayor’s Reception, and the Recognition Celebration held each fall and spring for our departing students and scholars. We plan on resuming these events after the pandemic when it is determined that it is safe to do so.

International Student & Scholar Recognition Celebration

This event, held by IA each April/May and November/December, celebrates students in the following categories:

- Graduate students completing a degree in that semester
- Undergraduate students completing a degree in 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-yous, along with an informal reception.

In Fall 2020 and Spring 2021, this event was not offered due to COVID-19. In lieu of an in-person event, IA honored these students through email communications and mailing students their hard-copy certificates in the mail.

International Education Week 2020

In 2020, International Education Week events were held Monday, November 16 – Friday, November 20. The schedule included Education Abroad advising events, Explore Your World events, a workshop for International Student Options after Graduation, an OPT Workshop, and a panel discussion featuring success stories from UCCS international student alumni. More details about International Education Week 2020 can be found at <https://international.uccs.edu/iew>.



"International Student Panel: Success Stories from UCCS Graduates" (November 2020)

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, since prior to 2016 there were no international student events except those done by MOSAIC
- There are a multitude of events on campus, and collaboration is needed to make sure that we don't program events in conflict with other programming from other offices, thereby harming each event attempted

- The limited budget(s) of the offices involved mean that collaboration is a better use of programming dollars and can offer the most value
- The expertise is different in different offices, and collaborating is a way to take advantage of that
- Collaboration helps keep our stakeholders involved, interested, and motivated on the IA mission and helps to internationalize the UCCS workforce
- Collaboration introduces and shows our students to the multitude of parties on campus interested in knowing about and contributing to international students' academic, professional, and personal success.



“International Student Panel” (February 2021). In collaboration with the Department of Communication, the annual international student panel event is held every spring semester. It highlights UCCS international students and their experiences. Attendees learn about the various cultures represented as well as the challenges faced when studying in another country.

Liaising with Other University Units

By virtue of the responsibilities of the advisor position, 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 ISA role and individual to be ‘the person’ to communicate and collaborate with on questions and issues relating to international students’ unique needs and responsibilities at UCCS. The relationship of the ISA to these various individuals and units continues to be excellent. More outreach could continue to build and improve these relationships.

The 'Friends of Internationals' mailing and communication list continues to be the core resource for individuals who are communicated with about international student issues. The list constitutes about 70 UCCS faculty and staff members. Comments from these individuals are often received after they have had a chance to view the electronic newsletters that are sent to the international student population. Contributions to the newsletter from these friends are also welcome and included in the newsletter for international students.

The importance of IA's relationship with other university units cannot be overstated. It is critical that the advisor position, particularly, 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

Challenges

The 2020-2021 academic year has been extremely eye-opening for IA as the office dealt with various unique challenges. One major challenge that the office will continue to face is managing the impacts of COVID-19. International student enrollment decreased substantially over the last year due to newly admitted students' inability to obtain visas because of embassy and consulate closures around the world. Additionally, numerous travel restrictions were put into place, some of which still exist and will continue to hinder students' ability to enter the U.S. to return to school. Overall retention of international students will pose a challenge as well since many of the factors impacting students' ability to attend are external to the office.

Due to the pandemic, international students can be considered an at-risk student population since they are susceptible to isolation, concerned about their visa status or financial stability, and hesitant to utilize counseling services as a result of cultural taboos. Furthermore, Asian students have been targets of racism and xenophobia tied to the origins of COVID-19 in China. Although UCCS had no significant reports of this type of racism on-campus, many Asian students have fear and anxiety surrounding the return to in-person classes. The limited number of students who were able to arrive in the U.S. and take classes at UCCS experienced struggles integrating with the American population and meeting fellow students since on-campus events were mostly suspended. A significant challenge moving forward will be ensuring that international students feel safe on-campus and have access to resources to boost mental well-being.

Programming for international students will need to be adjusted to accommodate public health orders as needed. Although remote offerings for workshops was a great success, the office will need to assess which events will be successful to hold in-person since it is still beneficial for students to meet each other in-person and connect.

Opportunities Going Forward

While Fall 2021 may only see a slight increase in international student enrollment, there could be higher-than-normal enrollment numbers in Spring 2022 and beyond. Evidence

shows that international students still want to study in the U.S., despite the current pandemic, and we're hopeful that students' deferred attendance at UCCS will eventually result in matriculation.

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

IA is fortunate that the Student Affairs in Higher Education (SAHE) Masters Leadership program at UCCS is a perfect fit to provide interns the opportunity to assist with IA functions and in turn learn the field of International Education. IA hosted an intern during the Fall 2020 semester and there were various successful outcomes. Previous interns have been integral to the optimal functioning of the office, and we are anticipating additional internship assistance for the upcoming year.

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.