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February 22, 2011

Shifts in Congress Could Hurt Global-Exchange Programs, Educators Fear

By Karin Fischer

San Francisco

International-education officials meeting here are expressing alarm at deep cuts in global-exchange programs in a budget bill [passed](#) late last week by the U.S. House of Representatives.

The measure, [HR 1](#), would sharply reduce spending for international exchanges, decreasing support for such programs by 21 percent for the current fiscal year, to \$501.3-million.

If approved, the impact of the cuts could be compounded because the government already has been operating for the first four months of the 2011 fiscal year based on spending levels in the previous year's budget, said Michael McCarry, executive director of the Alliance for International Education and Cultural Exchange, a coalition of education and nongovernmental groups.

That means the reductions really could feel more like 40 percent, Mr. McCarry told members of the Association of International Education Administrators, which is holding its annual conference here this week. He urged attendees to contact their members of Congress.

To take effect, the legislation would still have to pass the Senate and be signed by President Obama, who has been an [advocate](#) for educational exchanges that bring foreign students to colleges in the United States and send American students abroad. Mr. Obama included current spending levels for such programs in his budget for the 2012 fiscal year.

Even so, Mr. McCarry warned that international-education programs could be subject to further reductions, particularly with the influence of new Republican lawmakers elected on a platform of spending cuts, most of whom, he said, have limited experience abroad. What's more, the programs' longtime champions, Rep. David R. Obey of Wisconsin and Sen. Christopher J. Dodd of Connecticut, both Democrats, both retired at the end of the last


Congressional session.

"There is going to be pressure on federal spending," Mr. McCarry said. "It has to go down; the question is how."

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 **22074041** 1 week ago

Ironic, it seems, for our leaders to narrow their vision at a time that our students' lives will become more not less global; when wars and clashes throughout the world will require more, not less, understanding of other cultures and religions; and when U.S. future economic success and advantage will depend more, not less, on international markets, business, trade, and finance. Naomi F. Collins, Ph.D. Consultant.


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 **lotsquestions** 1 week ago

I'm sorry but I've never understood why my tax dollars should be used to pay tuition for a foreign student to come to the US to get an MBA or a law degree or a degree in political science -- when there are no similar US government funded scholarships for American students to get these degrees in our own American universities. If my kid wants an MBA he has to pay for it, take out loans or I have to pay for it.


Free tuition programs to American universities for foreign students seem like a boondoggle to the average American taxpayer. In our situation, we get to pay outrageously high tuition to send our own kids to college, we get to pay higher prices in order for the universities to distribute financial aid to other American kids whose parents chose to buy a boat or a house they couldn't afford, and then we get to pay taxes to give scholarships to foreign students to come to the US as well. I'm sure that these programs are lovely and make lots of people feel good about all the international peace and love they are spreading, but in these hard economic times it's not fair to ask the American taxpayer to fund this. And if you asked the average American taxpayer, they'd probably say that they'd prefer to give foreign food aid to people who were starving rather than pay tuition for international students to get MBA's.

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 **22074041** 6 days ago in reply to lotsquestions

I'm not sure why you think that U.S. tax dollars are used to pay tuition for foreign students. Have you read the facts about the sources of foreign student funding? It's the students who bring money to the U.S. and not the other way around. Billions of dollars a year. We Americans do not subsidize them.

[Like](#)

 **lotsquestions** 6 days ago

Actually, 22074041, you're wrong. Here's the link to the US taxpayer sponsored program which pays for international students to get MBA's:
<http://exchanges.state.gov/aca...>

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February 21, 2011

Internationalization Presents Steep Challenges for Historically Black Colleges

By Beth McMurtrie

San Francisco

Many colleges have struggled to translate their interest in internationalization into action. But historically black colleges face some particularly steep challenges, according to a new survey by the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities.

The survey, which has not yet been released, asked the country's 18 historically black land-grant institutions about their internationalization efforts, as a first step to help build more collaboration among those colleges and with majority-white institutions. The results, based on responses from 14 institutions representing more than 74,000 students, were presented here on Monday as part of the Association of International Education Administrators' annual conference.

The survey found that in the 2008-9 academic year, for the 14 institutions that responded:

- Six had no full-time employee in charge of campus internationalization, and the average institution had fewer than two people devoted to that area.
- Only 0.55 percent of their students studied abroad, and more than one-third of those who did were white. In contrast, a survey by the American Council on Education found that an average of 14 percent of students among its member institutions have studied abroad.
- Of students from historically black institutions who studied abroad, 82 percent went on short-term programs, compared with the national average of 55 percent.
- International students made up only 1.78 percent of the student body on these campuses. The national average for all higher education institutions is closer to 4 percent.

On the positive side, historically black institutions tend to send students to, and draw students from, locations that majority-white institutions do not, said Lorenzo L. Esters, vice president for the land-grant university association's Office for Access and the Advancement of Public Black Universities, which coordinated the survey.

For example, the surveyed institutions offered as many study-abroad programs in Africa as they did in Europe. Nationwide, Europe has long been the dominant destination for college students, with few heading to Africa.

And historically black institutions draw many of their international students from the Caribbean and Africa, two nontraditional sources of students for American colleges in general.

Mr. Esters said that APLU is looking at ways to encourage minority institutions to collaborate more to leverage their limited resources. The survey found that the historically black colleges don't often work together on internationalization efforts. Such cooperation could be particularly important in the area of curricular development, where few of the surveyed institutions offered languages beyond French and Spanish, or programs in international or area studies.

Many historically black colleges also lack trained staff in their international offices, several speakers said. Cornell H. Menking, assistant vice president for international affairs at Kentucky State University, said that his predecessor had no background in international education and thus did not know how to advise students. In the two years prior to his arrival, Mr. Menking said, not a single student studied abroad. He called the lack of training a "widespread problem" among minority-serving institutions. Only five of the 14 historically black colleges surveyed, for example, were members of the Association of International Education Administrators.

Yet, Mr. Menking noted, when he started a committee to look at internationalizing the campus, he found widespread enthusiasm among faculty members. That, combined with a new \$60,000 fund the university started for study abroad, led to 16 students going overseas this year.

Darryl Crompton, university counsel and vice president for governmental affairs at Tuskegee University, issued a word of caution about financing for international activities. He noted that President Obama's proposed budget [would eliminate](#) Pell Grant funds for summer study. And the House of Representatives' proposed budget [would slash](#) Pell funds significantly.

If either were to happen, he said, educators should expect to see "almost an elimination" of participation by low-income students in summer study-abroad programs.

Mr. Esters, of APLU, said that at a time when minority representation in the country, and in higher education, is growing, it is critical for higher education to "democratize" campus internationalization and engage more minorities and minority-serving institutions in global activities.

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February 23, 2011

Despite Hurdles, India Is Ripe for Partnerships, Educators Say

By Beth McMurtrie

San Francisco

Why aren't American colleges more engaged in India's fast-growing higher-education market? That was a frequent topic of conversation at the annual conference of the Association of International Education Administrators here this week.

As American colleges continue to look abroad for partners, international administrators say India has proved to be a more challenging country to penetrate than others. But why that's so isn't always clear.

"Even in institutions with lots of international partnerships, very few partnerships are in India," said Susan Buck Sutton, a former associate vice chancellor for international affairs at Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, in a session on building education partnerships in India.

Yet India, on its face, would seem to be a natural place to develop relationships, said Ms. Sutton, now a senior adviser for internationalization at Bryn Mawr College. It's an English-speaking country in which education is highly valued. It has longstanding ties to the United States. There is great unmet demand for higher education in India, and large numbers of Indian students study in the United States.

But many colleges say it is extraordinarily difficult to find the right partners to develop active exchanges and other ties there. Some colleges complained of being approached by institutions whose names they had never heard of, leading them to dismiss the overtures. "I can't make sense of them all," one college administrator said in a session looking at higher-education reforms in China and India.

Beyond a few elite central universities and the Indian Institutes of Technology, it seems, few American educators can name many Indian colleges.

Bhushan Patwardhan, a professor in the School of Public Health & Health Science at the University of Pune, who spoke on the same panel as Ms. Sutton, said there might also be a mismatch of interests. Historically, American colleges have wanted to engage Indian institutions in areas such as social science, humanities, development, and public health. Indian institutions are more interested in working with American partners in the fields of business, technology, and engineering, he noted.

Stephen C. Dunnett, vice provost for international education at the State University of New York at Buffalo, who spoke in the session on reforms in Chinese and Indian higher education, noted that American study-abroad numbers to India have remained fairly low, and attributed that in part to lack of interest among public institutions in India in developing exchange programs. "They're not so welcoming and don't have a long tradition of receiving American students."

And certainly, many partnerships have faltered on the American side as well. Nicole Ranganath, director of the global-studies program at the University of California at Davis Extension, said that it took a particularly persistent faculty member to get a study-abroad program off the ground in India.

She recounted the failure of an ambitious project called the UC-India Initiative, which was created in 2005 to give the University of California campuses leverage with leading Indian institutions and the Indian government. Despite a multimillion dollar commitment from the Indian government, it became a casualty of the California budget crisis.

Finally, there is the challenge of India's continuing to ban foreign providers from offering degrees there. A bill opening the market to foreign universities is stuck in India's Parliament, and versions of that same piece of legislation have been kicking around since 2006, noted Rahul Choudaha, associate director of development and innovation at World Education Services, in a session examining the prospects of the bill.

Overly Regulated

While he said he is optimistic that the bill will pass by December, India itself remains an overly regulated system, speakers and participants noted. Anand Sudarshan, chief executive of Manipal Education, one of the largest private universities in India, said that for foreign universities to be truly effective in India, they need to see that a broader higher-education reform bill, also before Parliament, passes as well. That would significantly streamline and

improve the regulation and accreditation of the higher-education system.

"The intent is a very honorable one," he said of international partnerships. "But the path is filled with boulders."

Still, universities are finding ways around these roadblocks.

John E. Dooley, vice president for outreach and international affairs at Virginia Tech, noted that his university has made several mistakes along the way as it has sought to carve out a role in India. Now, with an advisory board in place that includes representatives from Indian industry, and support from India's minister who oversees higher education, Kapil Sibal, Virginia Tech is aiming to create a small graduate-level institute to conduct research and offer master's and doctoral programs.

Mr. Choudaha noted that a number of British, American, and other foreign institutions have figured out a way to work in India despite regulatory restrictions. Some have created joint-degree or nondegree programs with Indian partners. Others have set up research partnerships with stand-alone research institutes. Still others have engaged private institutions, which can be more outward looking and better financed than cash-strapped public institutions.

Is India ready to open itself to the world? he asked. "Yes, but it takes patience and persistence."



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American Universities Have Major Stake in Immigration Reform, Speaker Says

By Karin Fischer

San Francisco

If the United States doesn't reform its immigration system, it risks a vast "brain hemorrhage," as American-educated Indian and Chinese engineers and entrepreneurs return to their own countries, the scholar and entrepreneur Vivek Wadhwa said in a provocative speech on Tuesday at the annual meeting here of the Association of International Education Administrators. And American universities have much at stake in reform, he said.

Mr. Wadhwa, who holds appointments at Duke University, Harvard Law School, and the University of California at Berkeley, said the United States was squandering the competitive edge of its higher-education system by allowing one million highly educated immigrants to linger in immigration limbo because of tight caps on visas. And that outmigration could eventually affect American universities, rendering them "obsolete," he said.

"The United States is headed for massive reverse brain drain," said Mr. Wadhwa, who is also a columnist for *Business Week* and an adviser to a number of startup companies.

"The outflow is happening too fast to be good for the United States," he said. "It's happening too much too fast."

America's innovation economy, Mr. Wadhwa pointed out, owes much to imported talent. A quarter of all patent applications filed in this country are the work of foreign nationals.

From 1995 to 2005, 25 percent of all startup companies had at least one immigrant founder. The number was even higher among new high-tech enterprises—in Silicon Valley, more than half of all companies were started by immigrants. A disproportionate number of startups were founded by immigrants from India, he added.

But current U.S. immigration policy is hostile to those very entrepreneurs, Mr. Wadhwa said. Each year the United States issues only 65,000 H1-B visas, which allow international workers in

certain high-tech and specialty fields to be employed in this country, and the federal government tightly caps the number of green cards granted annually to immigrants from individual countries. More than one million foreigners now in the United States are waiting for one of 120,000 permanent-resident visas issued annually to skilled workers.

As a consequence, he said, young and well-educated workers from abroad must return to their home countries. The average age of Indians now returning home from America is 30, and Chinese returnees are, on average, 33.

'Get Out of Their Shells'

American universities are helping fuel the roaring economies overseas, particularly in India, which does not even produce enough engineering doctorates to staff its own universities.

What's more, many international students increasingly believe that the "grass is indeed greener back home," Mr. Wadhwa said.

Just a few years ago, Mr. Wadhwa said, when he would ask his international students at Duke whether they wanted to stay permanently in the United States, most said they did. Today, he said, most plan to work in this country for just a few years and then return home.

As part of his research, Mr. Wadhwa used Facebook to poll foreign students at American universities: Fewer than 10 percent of Chinese students and just 6 percent of Indian students surveyed said they wanted to permanently emigrate to the United States.

Given those trends, Mr. Wadhwa said, a decade from now it's unlikely that 50 percent of all companies will have immigrant founders, a trend that could pose serious consequences for American competitiveness and innovation.

"We're getting more xenophobic, anti-immigrant, just when we need them," he said of American policy and political rhetoric.

Mr. Wadhwa also dismissed as "garbage" American academic studies that suggest such competitiveness concerns are overblown.

American universities, Mr. Wadhwa said, have to "get out of their shells" and become greater advocates for immigration reform. Otherwise, they risk becoming "obsolete."

As more well-educated Chinese and Indian nationals opt to return or remain in their home countries, he said, the quality of universities there will improve, making them more competitive on a world stage.

Over the next decade "Silicon Valley-class universities" will develop in those countries, Mr. Wadhwa said. "American students will want to go there—we'll be left out."



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Thomas Polaczek 1 week ago

people should be realistic

no changes unless absolutely necessary

2 people liked this.



gloverparker 1 week ago

While I agree that U.S. academic institutions should stake out a role as advocates on behalf of progressive immigration reform, I'm not sure I understand the fear that "As more well-educated Chinese and Indian nationals opt to return or remain in their home countries... the quality of universities there will improve, making them more competitive on a world stage." Must we deem it a bad outcome if U.S.-educated students return home and ultimately play leadership roles in the development of their own societies? For decades, we worried about a "brain drain" from the developing world - we felt it was morally wrong that international students were not returning to their home countries to rebuild their societies. And now Mr. Wadhwa claims that the U.S. will "lose" because such students now have greater incentives and opportunities to return home. It seems to me that globalization of higher education ultimately results in greater flows of students across borders -and that is a force that cannot be denied or wished away.

12 people liked this.



peachy2417 1 week ago

I find it hilarious that immigrants want to come to the United States to get an education, but then they want to go back to their country to work. The United States is very accomodating to immigrants and they should not complain.

4 people liked this.



swish 1 week ago in reply to peachy2417

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February 23, 2011

American Colleges Discuss Their Next Moves in Protest-Riven Middle East

By Beth McMurtrie

San Francisco

The recent uprisings across North Africa and the Middle East have placed American colleges in a tense situation. Beyond immediately evacuating students in harm's way, what is their role in these events and their aftermath? A session on Wednesday here at the Association of International Education Administrators' annual conference prompted a frank discussion of those questions.

As the waves of populist protest against autocratic regimes continue, educators at the meeting said they were torn between wanting to stay engaged in the region and needing to protect students and faculty members who are there.

One worry is that a temporary pullout could be seen as a signal for permanent disengagement, said Katherine Bellows, executive director of the Office of International Programs at Georgetown University.

Georgetown is scheduled to offer a language program this summer in Alexandria, Egypt. "What are we going to do?" she wondered. "Part of me fears that if I say, 'No, you're not going,' that will be seen as a long-term decision."

Public institutions like the State University of New York face further complications, said James Ketterer, the system's deputy provost and chief of staff of the Office of Academic Affairs and University-Wide Programs.

"We're funded by the Legislature, and they are very much driven by the headlines, by calls from parents and constituents," he said. Although he understands the hesitancy to withdraw from countries in turmoil, he said, universities cannot afford to make missteps that could result in a permanent pullout. "These are day-by-day, minute-by-minute calculations," he said.

'A Road That Has Not Yet Been Paved'

Even as colleges are propelled by State Department warnings and

concerned parents to pull back, the Middle East has become a more fascinating place with which to engage, participants said. That holds true for students and faculty members alike, said Norm Peterson, vice provost for international education at Montana State University, who moderated the session.

"While we were flying students out of the region, there were students clamoring to go in," he said. "That's part of the tension of our work."

Tully Cornick, executive director of Higher Education for Development, which is primarily financed by the U.S. Agency for International Development, said that at the same time his organization has been evacuating project members from Egypt, its officials have begun discussing how they can reprogram their Middle East partnerships. For one thing, he asked, would the new governments in the region even honor the existing agreements?

Many at the session had worked in the field long enough to remember similar discussions following the fall of Soviet-backed regimes and the opening of Eastern Europe in the 1990s. Yet there are a number of crucial differences, Georgetown's Ms. Bellows noted, such as culture, religion, violence, and economic issues, including access to oil.

"That's what's disturbing," she said. "We're looking at a road that has not yet been paved."

Colleges should begin considering strategy now for their long-term engagement in the region, participants agreed. That means working internally with faculty and staff members to figure out institutional priorities. It also means reaching out to federal bodies like the Agency for International Development and the State Department to offer expertise and guidance.

"In the long run," said SUNY's Mr. Ketterer, "the work we do is going to become more important in helping to reset foreign policy in the region."



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