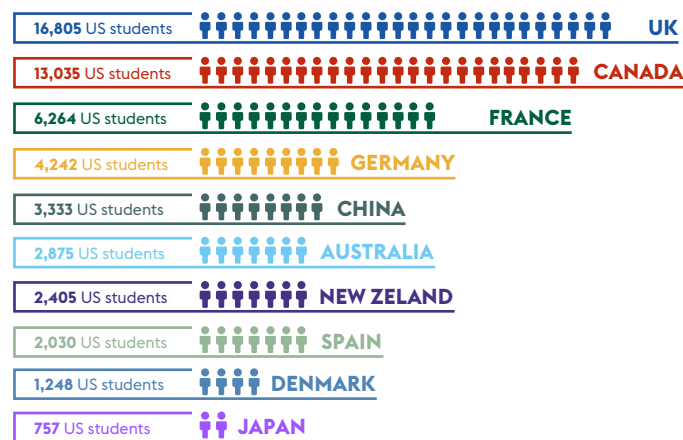


## US Study Abroad Outlook

By Anna Esaki-Smith

In 2019-20, the latest year for which the NCES has published data, 162,633 US students studied abroad. As this number was severely impacted by the pandemic, suffering a 53 per cent fall compared to the year before, it is important to note that it totalled 347,099 in 2018-19.

Over half of all US study abroad students consistently head to Europe (57.9% in 2019-20) with the majority of these (44%) enrolling in either Spain, Italy, the United Kingdom, France, or Ireland. In 2018, most US students abroad were studying in Anglophone countries, of which the UK (16,805 US students) and Canada (13,035 US students) were the top hosting countries; Australia enrolled 2,875 US students and New Zealand enrolled 2,405. Elsewhere, 6,264 US students enrolled in France, 4,242 in Germany, 3,333 in China, 2,030 in Spain, 1,248 in Denmark, and 757 in Japan.



Around 9 out of every 10 US students studying abroad are undergraduates and around 2/3 are female. The fact that more females study at the university level than males contribute to the latter trend, partly because the jobs males can get without a university degree pay more highly than those available to females. Historically, too, women tended to study languages and humanities, subjects which more easily translated into study abroad opportunities initially.

Sources:

<https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2022/2022144.pdf>  
<https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2020/2020024abbrev.pdf>

In 2018-19, 30.7 per cent of outbound US students enrolled abroad for one semester only while just 3.5 per cent enrolled for the full academic year; 38.6 per cent opted for the summer term and 29.6 per cent stayed abroad for a period of between just two and eight weeks. Positioning the undergraduate Junior Year Abroad (JYA) experience as the most popular mode of study abroad for US students.

In 2019-20, JYA students accounted for 42.7 per cent of all outbound US students. Just 5.4 per cent of outbound US students were master's students, 1.6 per cent were doctoral students and 0.6 per cent graduate professional students; a further 5.1 per cent were unspecified bachelor's students and 1.7 per cent were unspecified graduate students.

According to data published by NAFSA, in 2019-20 the US states sending the largest fractions of enrolled students abroad were Vermont (3.96%), District of Columbia, (3.45%), Rhode Island (2.62%), Delaware (2.23%), Massachusetts (2.08%), Maine (1.66%), Connecticut (1.32%), Wisconsin (1.26%), South Carolina (1.26%), Pennsylvania (1.51%), Minnesota (1.46%), New York (1.35%), North Carolina (1.22%), Indiana (1.22%), Iowa (1.21%), Colorado (1.08%), and Washington (1.04%).

Apart from the obvious appeal of high-quality programmes, there are many reasons why US students choose to enrol abroad. As highlighted above, short-term undergraduate programmes have high appeal for outbound US students. They cause little disruption to a student's home programme and do not require a long-term commitment. Students often use the study abroad destination as a base for travel before or after semester dates, exploring for example Europe or Southeast Asia.

For institutions, short stays can function as taster courses leading students to return for postgraduate study as students can become familiar with a host country and how courses are taught.

## US Study Abroad Outlook

By Anna Esaki-Smith

While the US is home to some of the most outstanding higher education institutions in the world, push factors for study abroad include challenges facing the US postsecondary sector. Among them are high tuition fees, the disconnect between what students' study at university and the skills needed by employers and, before the pandemic, a robust economy that provided jobs opportunities for high school graduates.

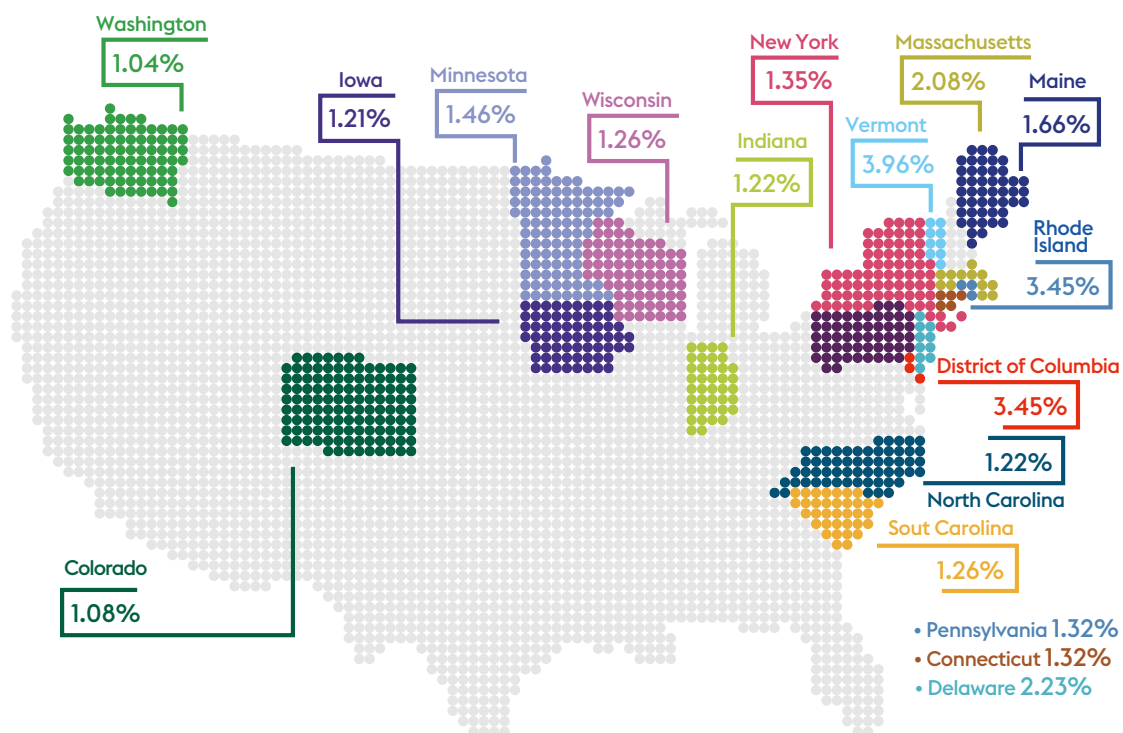
- Numbers of US students enrolling in the UK have remained steady for several years, hovering just under 40,000 per year.

- The pandemic saw the total numbers of US students enrolled in UK HE institutions fall by a colossal 51.4 percent in 2019 to just 19,147 and by a further 7.4 per cent in 2020-21 to 18,470.

- There were 8,855 US students were enrolled on UK TNE programmes in the US in 2020-21 (a growth rate from 2019-20 of 20.7 per cent)

The appeal of UK universities to the US market includes high-ranking universities, a lack of linguistic barriers, a more intensive mode of learning, and financially competitive institutions.

**The US states sending the largest fractions of enrolled students abroad.**



Sources:

[https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d21/tables/dt21\\_310.10.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d21/tables/dt21_310.10.asp)  
 NAFA, <https://www.nafsa.org/sites/default/files/media/document/State-by-State-19-20-study-abroad-statistics.pdf>  
<https://feed.georgetown.edu/access-affordability/women-increasingly-outnumber-men-at-u-s-colleges-but-why/>  
 NAFA, <https://www.nafsa.org/sites/default/files/media/document/State-by-State-19-20-study-abroad-statistics.pdf>  
<https://frontiersjournal.org/index.php/Frontiers/article/view/133>  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2015/08/20/the-surprising-effects-of-study-abroad>  
<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/student/advice/cost-studying-university-uk>  
<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/universities-uk-international/insights-and-publications/uuki-publications/international-facts-and-figures-2022>

