

## International Students Affected by ICE COVID-19 Guidance for Fall 2020<sup>1</sup>

July 10, 2020

### I. INTRODUCTION

On July 6, 2020, in spite of a rebounding COVID-19 pandemic, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) [issued guidance](#) indicating it would issue a regulation in the coming weeks that would expel international students who are only enrolled in online courses for Fall 2020. International students seeking to enter the U.S. to attend a college or university that is only operating online for Fall 2020 due to COVID-19 would be barred from entering the country. This analysis was generated in response to data from ICE on the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) and covers the number of international students currently studying at U.S. institutions that would have their education interrupted due to this new guidance.

### II. DATA ANALYSIS

The following counts represent the upper bound of the number of international students whose education would be interrupted as a result of the new guidance.

- **Undergraduates** who may have just finished their first year and may have 3-4 more years before finishing their degree: **261,118**
- **Graduate students** who may have at least one year of graduate school and have a minimum of three years before finishing their degree: **314,969**
  - Of these, graduate students who may have just finished their first year and may have 5-6 more years before finishing their degree: **145,648**
  - Of these, graduate students who may have just finished their comprehensive exams and (a) no longer are taking courses, having entered the dissertation phase and (b) have anywhere from 3-5 years before finishing their degree: **169,321**
- **Total Undergraduate and Graduate students** that may be affected: **576,087**

Due to more limited data points, the following counts represent the lower bound of the number of undergraduate and graduate international students studying areas essential to the current COVID-19 pandemic response whose education would be interrupted as a result of the new guidance.

- Students enrolled in **Medical and Health Sciences and Services** programs: **19,549**
- Students enrolled in **Biology and Life Sciences** programs: **27,387**
- **Total students** enrolled in programs relevant to COVID-19 response: **46,936**

### III. METHODOLOGY

These data are provided by Tom K. Wong, Director of the U.S. Immigration Policy Center (USIPC) at UC San Diego. The 2018 Census American Community Survey (ACS) microdata are used to estimate likely international students. Combinations of the “citizen,” “gradeatt,” “educ,” and “yrsusa1” variables are used to estimate the total number of international students currently pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees in the United States.

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<sup>1</sup> For questions regarding this analysis, please contact [info@presidentsalliance.org](mailto:info@presidentsalliance.org).