



Expanding U.S. Study Abroad to INDIA: A Guide for Institutions

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Institute of International Education (IIE)

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Executive Summary and Key Findings

The steady growth of U.S. study abroad in the past couple of decades has been accompanied by an increasing interest on the part of American students to study in what might be considered as “nontraditional destinations.” Because the majority of U.S. students have gravitated toward Western Europe in the past, countries in Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East have been viewed as nontraditional destinations. Emerging interest in these study destinations is due to a combination of reasons, including the growing need to learn about cultures that are critical to U.S. strategic interests, as well as acquiring languages that provide a competitive advantage in an increasingly global workplace. As more and more U.S. students have sought study opportunities in nontraditional destinations, their home institutions too have begun to expand study abroad programs to these countries, while also enhancing other forms of partnerships such as joint and dual degree programs and faculty exchanges.

In light of the growing interest among U.S. students and institutions in study abroad to nontraditional destinations, the Institute of International Education (IIE), with the support of the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), launched an initiative to expand the capacity of key nontraditional countries outside Western Europe to host a larger number of U.S. study abroad students. The project was carried out from 2008 to 2010 in India, Brazil, Turkey, Thailand and Indonesia, and in partnership with EducationUSA, the Forum on Education Abroad, the American Association of Community Colleges and the U.S.-India Educational Foundation (USIEF).

The key goals of the project were to:

- Assess the current capacity of these countries to host expanded numbers of U.S study abroad students and to assess the scope for future expansion of study abroad in each target country;
- Collaborate with project partners and EducationUSA advisers to strengthen advisers’ capacity to serve as a key liaison between local institutions in the host country and U.S. institutions interested in expanding their study abroad programs in the country; and
- Disseminate information to institutions interested in expanding their study abroad offerings in the destination countries.

This report, focusing on India, is the first in a series of user-friendly guides for U.S. institutions interested in expanding their study abroad offerings in nontraditional destinations. Forthcoming reports in the series will focus on expanding U.S. study abroad to Turkey, Brazil and selected other destinations.

The current report begins with an overview of the Indian higher education sector, with a particular focus on Indo-U.S. relations and the current state of U.S. study abroad to India. The second portion of the report focuses on existing study abroad programs available to U.S. students, along with challenges and recommendations for expanding U.S. study abroad to India and developing institutional partnerships with higher education institutions in India.

Despite India’s increasing popularity as a study destination, there are many challenges in trying to expand study abroad to India, among them the uneven quality of Indian higher education; a bureaucratic system that poses many hurdles to rapid expansion of Indo-U.S. educational collaborations; vastly different pedagogy and curricula; and misconceptions and stereotypes on the part of U.S. citizens about India as a country. Despite these initial challenges, India is a study abroad destination with a high degree of appeal and potential, given its diversity, long history and increasing prominence in the world economy.

Key findings and recommendations include:

- The global economic downturn in 2008 adversely affected overall study abroad enrollments in India. However, programs that had lower overall costs, were open to students outside the U.S. sponsoring institution or consortium and offered scholarships to outside students, actually saw increases in enrollment.
- While prima facie the number of available programs in India may seem large (94 programs are listed in *IIE Passport*), in reality, many of these programs are operated by the same local providers in India, limiting options.
- Many of the existing study abroad programs in India are already at or near enrollment capacity. In order to significantly expand the number of U.S. students studying abroad to India, new programs and partnerships will need to be developed.
- Building partnerships requires a long-term perspective incorporating intensive research and multiple trips to India to meet potential partners, to evaluate infrastructure and to educate U.S. administrators about India and the Indian higher education system.
- U.S. institutions should be aware that bureaucracy may present a significant challenge to setting up study abroad programs in India and building partnerships with Indian institutions. Legislation to alleviate this has been introduced but has an uncertain future.
- Given the delay of the much anticipated Foreign Providers' Bill in India, U.S. institutions interested in initiating large-scale operations in India may want to focus on joint and dual degree programs in partnership with Indian institutions, rather than wait for future opportunities to establish brick-and-mortar branch campuses in India, which may also be prohibitively expensive to launch.
- As more and more U.S. students study abroad in destinations that are unfamiliar to the average American, systematic cross-cultural training prior to departure can alleviate many concerns for students, faculty and administrators.
- Creative study abroad programming, including offering courses in more career-specific and technical areas, such as business and management, information technology and/or engineering, can help increase interest in study abroad to India. In addition, opportunities for practical experiences, such as field visits, independent research and internships, are an important component of study abroad in non-traditional destinations, especially in India, which hosts a large number of nonprofit, development and service organizations, as well as multinationals and corporations with U.S. partners.

INDIA: Quick Facts

Official name: Republic of India

Population: 1,189,173,000 (July 2011)

Area: 3.29 million sq. km. (about 1/3 of the U.S.)

Capital: New Delhi

Major cities: New Delhi, Mumbai (Bombay), Kolkata (Calcutta), Chennai (Madras), Bangalore

Government: Federal republic; parliamentary democracy with 28 states and 7 union territories

Neighboring countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, China, Nepal and Pakistan

Common languages: Hindi, Bengali, Telugu, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu, Gujarati, English

Common religions: Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism

Monetary unit: Indian rupee (INR)

Major industries: Agriculture, industrial equipment & machinery, mining, petroleum, pharmaceuticals, software, steel, telecom, textiles, tourism, transport equipment

Higher Education in India

With a population of almost 1.2 billion people, India is the second most populous country in the world. Thirty percent of the population lives in urban centers, such as Mumbai, Kolkata and New Delhi, the capital, which has a population equal to the entire country of Australia. An incredibly diverse country, India has 15 national languages and myriad religions and ethnic groups. By 2025, the number of 15-24 year olds is expected to rise to 100 million—twice the number of young adults in North America and 25 percent more than in all of Europe.

In addition to a large and growing population, India also has the third largest higher education system in the world, behind China and the U.S., in terms of number of students enrolled. The highly centralized system consists of over 400 institutions established and recognized by the Indian government, including 20 central universities, 215 state universities, 100 deemed universities and 13 institutions of national importance, which include the world-renowned Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs). Created to train and develop a skilled workforce of scientists, engineers and business leaders, IITs and IIMs attract the country's most talented and ambitious students, and admission is extremely competitive. In addition, there are over 21,000 colleges of varying degrees of quality.

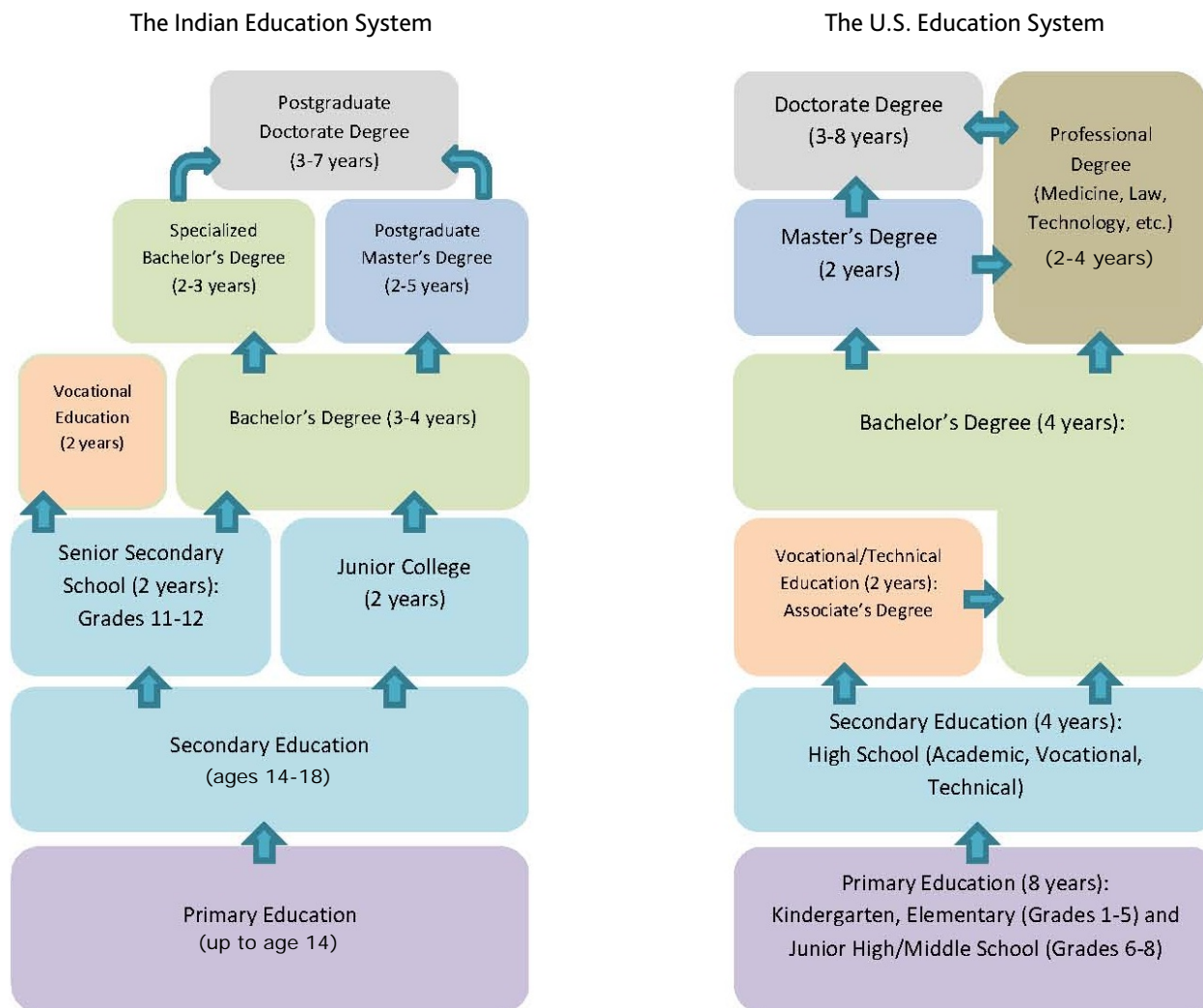
Access to higher education for India's youth is limited due to social, economic and political factors. Nearly 40 percent of higher education students come from lower socioeconomic strata; only 35 percent of higher education students are women. Over the last several years many universities and colleges, particularly private institutions and IITs and IIMs, have added fees and increased the cost of tuition, making higher education, including vocational and technical degrees, prohibitively expensive for the nation's poor. As a result, entrance examinations for top universities tend to favor the nation's rich, who are often from large urban centers. While English is not one of India's 15 national languages, it is recognized by the Constitution as a secondary official language, is widely used in India, and has become the lingua franca of Indian higher education, especially at the graduate level.

Standards for higher education are determined by the *University Grants Commission (UGC)*, which also allocates and distributes university grants. However, few effective strategies have been developed to address the issue of quality assessment and accreditation among Indian higher education institutions. While IITs, IIMs and a select number of public universities have established an international reputation for excellence, they collectively enroll only a small fraction of the higher education population. With over 21,000 colleges, creating national standards has been an arduous task, rife with political and social implications. This has resulted in a large degree of incongruence in the quality of education provided to the relatively small educated elite and the rest of the population.

Higher Education in India

- India's higher education system has the third largest enrollment in the world, after the U.S. and China.
- There are over 400 universities and 21,000 colleges of varying quality recognized by the Indian government, with a growing private sector.
- Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) consistently rank among the world's top universities in international university rankings.
- Standards for higher education are determined by the University Grants Commission, which also allocates and distributes university grants.
- Higher education in India suffers from a lack of quality control standards and national-level assessments.
- Increased demand for higher education from the growing Indian middle class will require government action to overhaul the current system to ensure high standards.

Figure 1: The Indian and U.S. Education Systems Compared

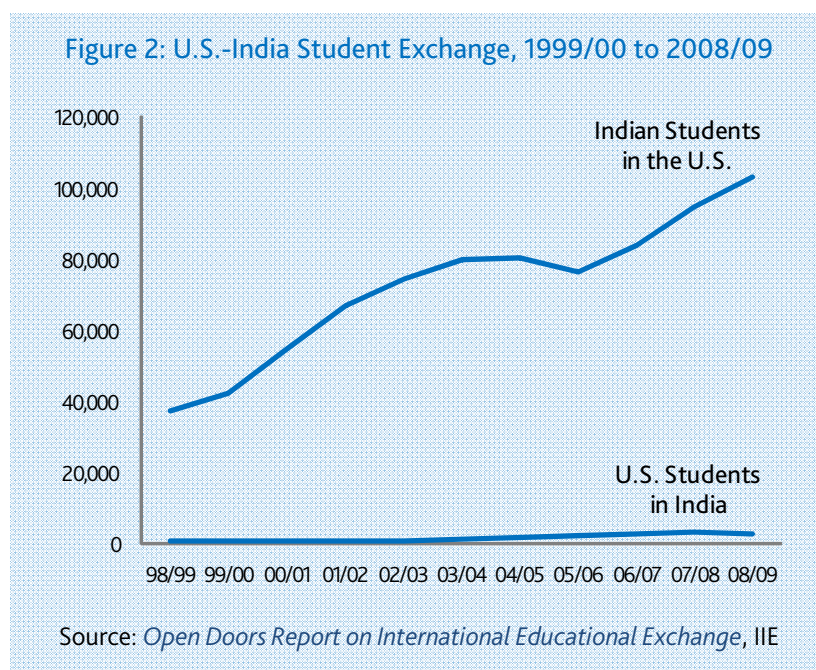


While in recent years India's economy has thrived in spite of the global recession (India's GDP is US\$4 trillion), 25 percent of India's population still lives below the poverty line. As a BRIC nation, India's economy, bolstered by major advances in universal primary education as part of the UN Millennium Development Goals, is expected to show considerable growth in the next few decades. With 60 percent of its population under 25 years of age, India must also educate the young generation to succeed in a globalized world. To this end, increasing the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) from 10 to 15 percent has been a strategic priority for the Indian government.

There are several reforms under way which may change the landscape of Indian higher education in the coming years. Institutional governance, teaching accountability, accreditation and regulation, improvements in curriculum and resource allocation are all issues currently under discussion. As India's middle class continues to grow, improving quality and access to mainstream higher education institutions will not only make for a more equitable society, but will also be vital to the overall quality and sustainability of its workforce for decades to come.

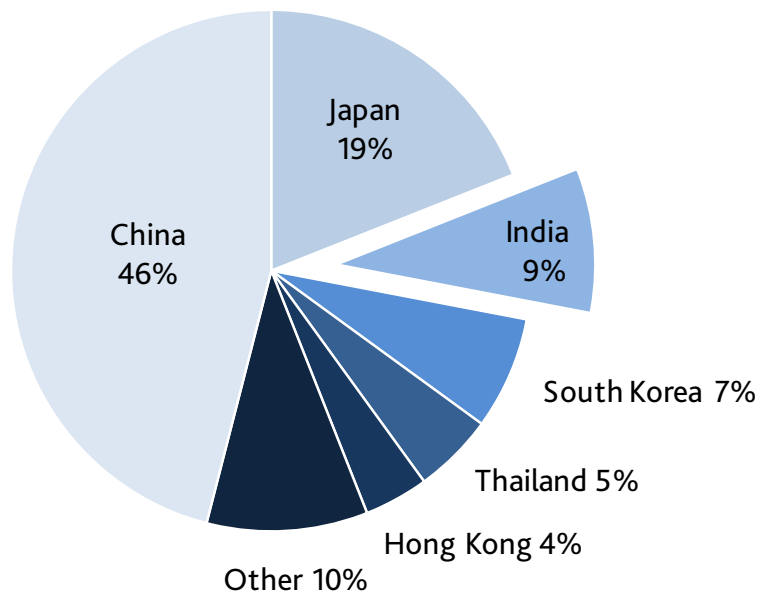
Higher Education Exchange between the U.S. and India

Large numbers of Indian students have sought an overseas education over the past two to three decades, in large part due to the insufficient number of seats at high-quality institutions in India. Many of these mobile students have been drawn to the United States because of its highly regarded higher education system, the availability of funding (especially at the graduate level), and the use of English as the language of instruction. Over the past two decades, roughly one million Indian students have been educated in the U.S. According to the *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange*, during the 2009/10 academic year, over 104,000 Indian students were studying at U.S. institutions (fig. 2), a 37 percent increase since 2005/06. Most of these students were enrolled in graduate-level programs at doctorate degree-granting universities. The majority (74 percent) were studying in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields, contributing to U.S. competitiveness in science and technology.



The trend in U.S. study abroad to India has increased at a much slower rate than the overall growth in U.S. study abroad. While the U.S. government and U.S. higher education institutions have shown increased interest in building U.S.-India academic exchange, U.S. students have not “voted with their feet” with the same enthusiasm. According to the *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange*, 2,690 U.S. students studied abroad for academic credit in India during the 2008/09 academic year (the most recent year for which data is available), barely two percent of the 104,000 Indian students in the U.S. The number of U.S. students studying in India in 2008/09 declined 15 percent from the previous year’s total of 3,146, despite the general increase in popularity of study abroad in nontraditional destinations outside of Western Europe (China, for example, hosted 13,674 U.S. students in 2008/09, an increase of four percent over the previous year’s total). India is nevertheless the third most popular destination in Asia, after China and Japan (fig. 3), and the 21st most popular study abroad destination for U.S. students. Large research universities send the highest numbers of U.S. students on study abroad to India. Many of these universities are located in the Midwest and have strong South Asian studies programs.

Figure 3: Top U.S. Study Abroad Destinations in Asia, 2008/09



Source: *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange*, IIE

Furthermore, the majority of U.S. students who study in India participate in short-term programs that are typically one semester or shorter (including summer programs), compared to Indian students who often stay in the U.S. for several years to complete their graduate degree programs. Moreover, Indian students currently contribute \$3.1 billion to the U.S. economy through a combination of their educational and living expenses. The same is not true for U.S. students in India. Few, if any, U.S. students pursue full programs of study and for those students who study abroad for academic credit toward their U.S. degree, their tuition fees are for the most part retained by their U.S. home campus or study abroad provider. This enormous educational and economic exchange imbalance is an issue that needs to be addressed in light of India's increased importance on the world stage.

Despite the low number of American students who study in India, India has long been a host to students from other developing countries: there were about 22,000 international students enrolled in public and private Indian higher education institutions in 2008/09 (*Project Atlas*, 2010), the majority of whom came from neighboring countries in South Asia and the Middle East.¹ Most international students in India were full degree students studying in and around large cities such as New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Pune, where the highest ranked Indian universities enroll 80 percent of all international students.

Given India's political and economic role in the global market, and its multitude of cultures and languages, it should be a more popular destination for international students, especially for U.S. students. The majority of Indian universities, particularly the most distinguished ones, offer challenging and enriching programs in English, resulting in great potential for increased partnerships with U.S. institutions. As host to numerous international and domestic nongovernment organizations, development groups and service agencies, India is an ideal location for study abroad programs focusing on issues of human rights, peace and social justice, as well as programs focused on business and entrepreneurship, with myriad internship opportunities in India's booming private sector.

¹ For more information on India as a host country of international students, see <http://www.iie.org/projectatlas>.

Recent Developments in U.S.-India Partnerships

India's leadership has indicated a desire to open the higher education system to foreign institutions to encourage increased access and quality assurances for potential partner institutions and programs. Proposals have been made for expansion and reform, including proposals to open India's higher education sector to foreign investment and collaboration, with the goal of adopting new ideas about educational organization and structural reform. However, progress has been stalled due to political and fiscal disputes between institutions, stakeholders and the ruling coalition government.

One of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's key education projects has been the introduction of the **Foreign Educational Institutions Bill** in Parliament, which would exempt accredited foreign providers from fee regulations, admissions quotas and regulatory oversight from the University Grants Commission. However, disputes within the Indian government, as well as with private providers, who currently control much of the international study abroad market in India, have slowed passage of the bill.

In 2009, President Obama and Prime Minister Singh signed a Global Strategic Partnership agreement that included cooperation between governments, citizens, business, universities and scientific institutions. The leaders pledged to expand the Nehru-Fulbright Programme, and created the **Obama-Singh 21st Century Knowledge Initiative**, which provides \$10 million to support linkages between U.S. and Indian faculties, students and institutions. In June 2011, the two governments announced a **U.S.-India Higher Education Summit** and Dialogue in Washington, DC on October 13, 2011. The Summit will explore how government, universities and business can collaborate to create innovative and sustained higher education partnerships between the United States and India.²

In addition to governmental initiatives, the U.S. higher education and NGO sectors have also been actively involved in addressing the growing demand for U.S.-India partnerships. IIE, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), piloted the **International Academic Partnership Program (IAPP)** in India in 2010. This initiative aimed to increase the number of international partnerships between U.S. and Indian higher education institutions by providing customized preparatory training to selected U.S. institutions, and developing a set of tools and best practices to be shared with the U.S. higher education community. The 2010 participants represented the diversity of the U.S. higher education system, including large research institutions, liberal arts colleges, community colleges, historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and women's colleges. The India program will be repeated as an independent, fee-based program in 2012.³

IIE's Institutional Academic Partnership Program (IAPP)

The *International Academic Partnership Program (IAPP)*, funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), is a major initiative of IIE's Center for International Partnerships in Higher Education that seeks to increase the number of international partnerships between higher education institutions in the U.S. and those in India and China.

2010 IAPP-India Participants: California State University, San Bernardino; College of William and Mary; Florida Atlantic University; Oakland Community College; Ohio Wesleyan University; Spelman College; St. Cloud State University; University of South Carolina; University of Tulsa; Winston-Salem State University

2012 IAPP-India Participants: Fort Hays State University; George Mason University; Northern Illinois University; Queens College, CUNY; Rollins College; Rutgers University; Suffolk University; Thomas College; University of Kentucky; University of Oregon

² For more information on Education and People-to-People Ties, see <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2011/07/168742.htm>

³ For more information on the IAPP program, please visit <http://www.iie.org/iapp>.

IIE's Study Abroad Capacity Project

Against the backdrop of new developments in Indo-U.S. higher education partnerships, India was chosen as the first pilot country for a new initiative launched by IIE with the support of the U.S. Department of State's *Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA)*. This new study abroad capacity project aims to increase the capacity of local institutions and study abroad programs in nontraditional destinations to host more U.S. students. The project has the following primary objectives:

- Assess the capacity of target countries to host expanded numbers of U.S. study abroad students;
- Assess the scope for expansion of U.S. study abroad in each target country;
- Collaborate with partners to strengthen EducationUSA advisers' capacity to serve as a key liaison between local institutions in the host country and U.S. institutions interested in expanding their study abroad programs in the country; and
- Disseminate the information to institutions interested in expanding their study abroad offerings in the target countries.

Project Partners

The project was carried out by IIE in India from December 2009 through summer 2011, in partnership with U.S. Department of State-funded *EducationUSA* advisers, the *U.S.-India Educational Foundation (USIEF)* and the *Forum on Education Abroad*. Each partner brought unique expertise to the project. IIE-New Delhi staff contributed to the training sessions and provided logistical support to the U.S.-based project leaders. EducationUSA advisers are uniquely positioned to serve as key resources and liaisons for U.S. study abroad students and U.S. higher education institutions that wish to build closer ties with higher education institutions in India. Advisers have traditionally focused on advising students coming to the U.S. Thus, the training of advisers regarding U.S. study abroad was an important aspect of the project, and advisers participated in educational visits to several local study abroad programs.

The *U.S.-India Educational Foundation (USIEF)*, formerly known as USEFI) was established under a bilateral agreement on educational exchange in 1950. Since its inception, USIEF has awarded approximately 17,000 Fulbright, Fulbright-Nehru and other grants and scholarships in almost every academic discipline. USIEF administers EducationUSA services in India and also consults with Indian and U.S. universities interested in developing linkages and exchanges through its office of *U.S.-India Higher Education Cooperation (USIHEC)*.⁴

⁴ For more information about USIEF, please see <http://www.usief.org.in>

EducationUSA

EducationUSA is a global network of over 400 advising centers around the world supported by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State (ECA). ECA fosters mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries by promoting personal, professional and institutional ties between private citizens and organizations in the U.S. and abroad.

EducationUSA centers actively promote U.S. higher education around the world by offering accurate, unbiased, comprehensive, objective and timely information about educational institutions in the United States, and guidance to qualified individuals on how best to access those opportunities.

U.S.-India Educational Foundation (USIEF)

USIEF was established in 1950 under a bilateral agreement on educational exchange signed between India and the U.S. USIEF promotes mutual understanding between U.S. Americans and Indians through the educational exchange. Since its inception, USIEF has awarded approximately 17,000 Fulbright, Fulbright-Nehru and other prestigious grants and scholarships in almost every academic discipline. In addition to fellowship support, USIEF services include advising Indian citizens on higher education opportunities in the U.S. USIEF also consults with Indian and U.S. universities interested in developing linkages and exchanges.

On the U.S. side, IIE worked closely with the *Forum on Education Abroad*, the organization that represents the field of education abroad in the U.S. The Forum is recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission as the Standards Development Organization (SDO) for the field of education abroad and the Forum's *Standards of Good Practice* are the recognized means by which the quality of education abroad programs may be judged.⁵

Methodology

The working definition of "study abroad capacity" used in this study includes three critical components. The first, and most obvious, component is the actual number of students. Increasing the total number of U.S. students studying abroad in nontraditional destinations is the overall goal of the project. However, as numbers increase, the quality of academic programs also needs to be maintained or enhanced. This is the second component of our definition of capacity. The third component relates to the ability of local programs to provide the necessary physical infrastructure to support increased numbers of U.S. students, especially with regard to student health and safety.

The **multipronged approach** used in this study addresses all three components of capacity mentioned above, with a special focus on the second component, maintaining quality, which is closely related to the third component: infrastructure. Key project strategies and activities included the following:

- **Capacity-building workshop in Delhi:** In order to disseminate the Forum *Standards* in India, IIE conducted a U.S. Study Abroad Capacity Building Workshop in New Delhi as part of the Association of U.S. Academic Programs in India (AUSAPI) Conference, hosted by the U.S.-India Educational Foundation in December 2009. Representatives of the most prominent existing study abroad programs in India were present, as well as EducationUSA advisers from across India.
- **Survey of U.S. study abroad in India:** Following the Capacity Building Workshop, a survey of U.S. study abroad programs operating in India was conducted by IIE and the Forum on Education Abroad. Programs surveyed included all members of the Association of U.S. Academic Programs in India (AUSAPI) and/or the Forum on Education Abroad; programs listed in the IIEPassport study abroad guide; and programs subscribed to the SECUSS-L listserv. Program types included those run by large universities, small colleges, consortia and third party providers.
- **Forum *Standards* Guided Assessments:** Select higher education institutions and study abroad programs in India were offered the opportunity to participate in a detailed training led by the Forum on the Forum *Standards* in order to assess their program offerings.
- **Educational site visits:** EducationUSA advisers visited U.S. study abroad programs in India to better understand how these programs operate on the ground.

The Forum on Education Abroad's *Standards of Good Practice*

The *Forum on Education Abroad* is recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission as the Standards Development Organization (SDO) for the field of education abroad.

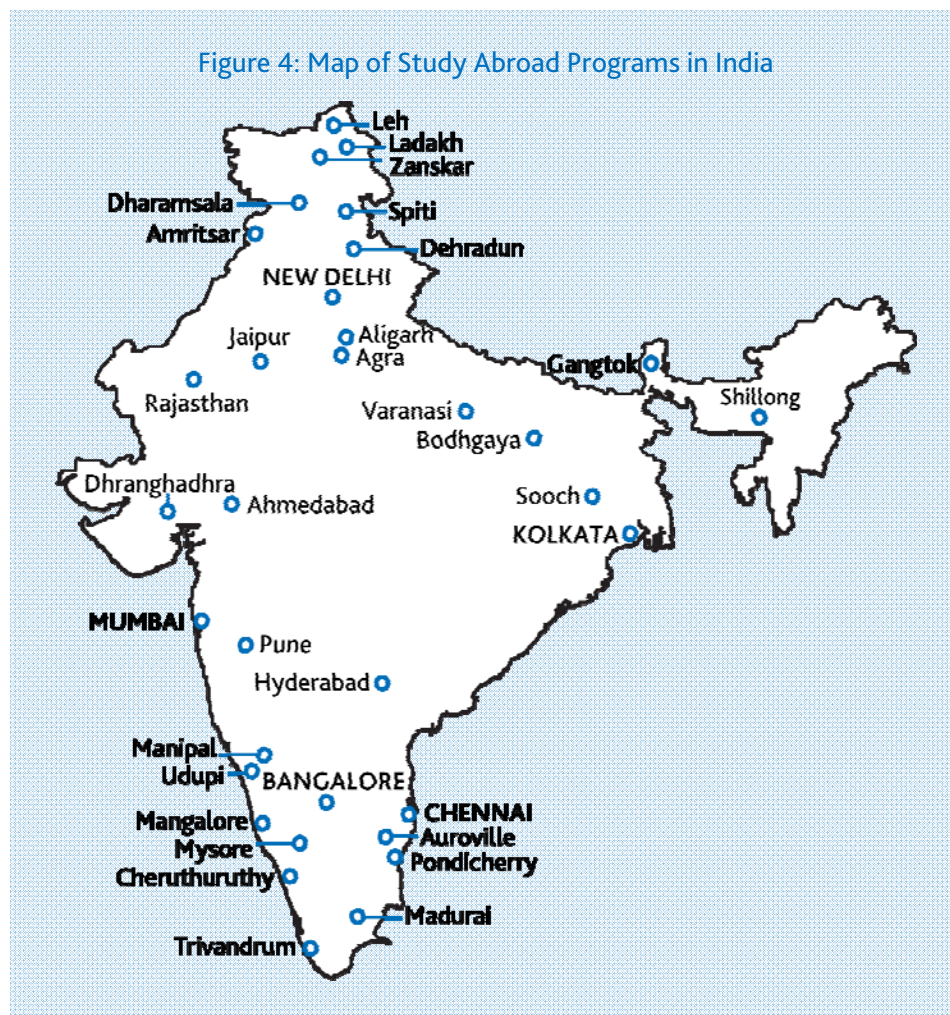
The Forum on Education Abroad's *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad* and its Quality Improvement Program (QUIP) are the only existing systematic resources for assessing and improving education abroad capacity and quality. In order for institutions to expand education abroad capacity, they must first assess their mission and goals for education abroad, and assess the status of their current programming against an objective measure. The Forum developed and tested the *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad* over the past several years, an effort that has involved hundreds of international education professionals from around the world as well as experts in standards development.

⁵ For more information about the Forum *Standards*, please see <http://www.forumea.org/standards.cfm>

Existing Study Abroad Programs and Potential for Expansion

Study abroad programs in India fall into four main groups based on their program mission statements: programs focusing on enhancing knowledge about India, programs promoting peace and understanding, programs developing leaders in global development, and programs focusing on academic and personal growth. Specific mission statements ranged from a focus on Indian history, culture or language to more interdisciplinary, global themes of justice, sustainability, leadership, and peace.

Several programs are directed specifically at enhancing knowledge about India in terms of its history, its political and social development, and its many cultures and art forms. These programs meet their missions through cultural immersion in locations considered most relevant to their programs of study. Many of these programs are based in the capital, New Delhi, where students can have substantial exposure to the vast social, economic and cultural diversity of one of the largest and most rapidly developing cities in the world. Most of these programs are situated on university campuses where U.S. and Indian students have opportunities to interact and attend the same classes. The types of programs represented in this group include third-party providers, small colleges and consortia, but no large university programs. All of the programs emphasize homestays as an essential part of their program, increasing opportunities for cultural and language immersion.



Many study abroad programs in India have a focus on service learning and promoting community awareness and understanding. These programs incorporate a combination of coursework and community engagement through internships, research opportunities and project placements in the community. Students who participate in service-centered programs typically have a particular interest in social and humanitarian issues such as poverty, public health, education and/or gender equity, and seek a more hands-on experience than they can find at their home institutions.

Other programs emphasize leadership, preparing youth for their roles in global development. Similar to service-centered programs, these programs focus on preparing students to become informed, culturally sensitive and engaged members of the global community, especially of the developing world. Programs offer internships and field research experience, or require students to participate in a service-learning project. In addition to attending classroom lectures, often given by visiting speakers, students are placed with a local organization or agency related to public health, education, poverty, women's issues, children's advocacy or other issues. All of these programs maintain positive relations with partner organizations and encourage students to continue their experiences back home, either through volunteering, working at NGOs or pursuing further related studies.

Plans for Expansion

Many of the programs responding to our survey indicated that they were pursuing plans for expansion. Some are adding an additional semester or summer term to their current programs. Others are creating completely new programs with unique themes and offerings. For example, one institution recently added a health and human rights program in New Delhi to their already diverse program offerings. As many students who choose to study in India are interested in humanitarian and development issues, having an interactive program specifically in the field of health and human rights capitalizes on the academic and service-related interests of prospective study abroad students. Another recently commenced program focuses on business in Mumbai, an important international hub for commerce. Other programs being developed include nursing, engineering and public health in Chennai.

Because our study coincided with the recent worldwide financial crisis, we also asked program administrators about the impact of the crisis on their programs and on their plans for expansion. Most programs reported that their enrollments were unaffected by the economic downturn (or that they were unable to determine any connection⁶). Among those who were affected, the majority cited the financial crisis as having significantly reduced application numbers. These programs enrolled 15 or fewer students, with maximum capacity at 20-30 students. All but one of the programs that reported being unaffected by the recession had enrollments of more than 15 students.

One third party provider indicated that following the start of the global recession, all of its study abroad programs dropped in enrollment numbers, but that its shorter programs were more popular, presumably because of the lower cost to students. Other programs reported that they had a larger number of withdrawn applications and drop-outs due to financial difficulties, or more specifically, due to parents being "less able to afford the additional cost of study abroad." Some university programs faced budget cuts due to lower institutional revenue. At the other end of the spectrum, one consortium optimistically noted that the financial crisis had a positive effect on enrollment, increasing the number of applications due to the program's "affordability."

⁶ A number of U.S. institutions cancelled study abroad programs during the winter 2008/09 and spring 2009 terms due to security concerns following the November 2008 Mumbai attacks.

Among the programs that were negatively affected, the cost of attendance was roughly the same as at the home institutions (roughly \$20,000-23,000 per semester), plus travel expenses. For the most part, these programs did not offer scholarships and only enrolled students from within their institution or consortium. In contrast, one consortium that reported positive effects from the recession had program costs that were roughly half of the cost of competing programs (about \$10,000 per semester), accepted students from both within and outside consortium schools and advertised program scholarships to students from both consortium and non-member schools.

The survey results reveal an interesting contrast: programs that were unaffected by the recession (the majority of programs) are already operating at or near capacity and need to expand their offerings in order to accommodate more students. Meanwhile, programs that were negatively affected by the financial crisis tended to be smaller programs which did not have a large number of spaces to begin with. Nevertheless, both situations point to the need to develop new programs and partnerships if study abroad to India is to be significantly expanded.

It is uncertain what the long-term effects of the recession will be on these programs. However, the results of survey suggest that introducing and expanding sources for scholarships and grants, as well as informing study abroad offices and undergraduate students of available funding options, contributes to increasing application numbers.

Students may not be fully aware of the many scholarships available to them, such as the *Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship*, funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and administered by IIE. The Gilman Scholarship Program offers awards of up to \$8,000 for U.S. citizen undergraduate students of limited financial means to pursue academic studies abroad.⁷ In 2008/09, 40 U.S. students received Gilman awards for study in India. IIE also administers the *David L. Boren Scholarships and Fellowships*, funded by the National Security Education Program (NSEP), which focus on geographic areas, languages and fields of study deemed critical to U.S. national security.⁸

Lastly, in spite of the challenges of balancing budgets in institutions large and small, continued investment in study abroad by universities, colleges, consortia and third party providers remains crucial in order to make studying abroad in India an economically realistic option for U.S. students.

Gilman Scholarship Program —

The *Gilman Scholarship Program* offers awards for undergraduate study abroad funded by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. It provides awards for U.S. undergraduate students who are receiving Federal Pell Grant funding at a two-year or four-year college or university to participate in study abroad programs worldwide.

The *Gilman Scholarship Program* is open to U.S. citizen undergraduate students who are planning to study abroad. The program aims to diversify the kinds of students who study abroad and the countries and regions where they go by supporting undergraduates who might otherwise not participate due to financial constraints.

Boren Scholarships and Fellowships —

Boren Scholarships and Fellowships are funded by the National Security Education Program (NSEP), which focuses on geographic areas, languages, and fields of study deemed critical to U.S. national security.

Boren Scholarships provide up to \$20,000 to U.S. undergraduate students, while Boren Fellowships provide up to \$30,000 to U.S. graduate students. Applicants identify how their study abroad programs or overseas projects, as well as their future academic and career goals, will contribute to U.S. national security, broadly defined.

⁷ For more information about the Gilman Scholarship Program, please see <http://www.iie.org/gilman>

⁸ For more information about the Boren Program, please see <http://www.iie.org/nsep>

Challenges to Expanding Study Abroad in India

Expanding programs in India and building new partnerships between Indian and U.S. universities involves several institutional challenges. U.S. institutions should be aware that bureaucracy and lack of infrastructure in India may present a significant challenge. Cultural differences will also need to be taken into account. Challenges can be grouped into three main areas: structural challenges in India, challenges within U.S. institutions and challenges for students.

Structural Challenges

Indian higher education suffers from both over-regulation and under-regulation. On the one hand, the lack of systematic quality assurance measures across India's higher education institutions make it extremely difficult to easily identify which of the thousands of existing institutions would be an appropriate match for specific U.S. institutions. On the other hand, the University Grants Commission (UGC) regulates all fees and admissions quotas across the higher education system, leaving little room for institutional autonomy. While a Foreign Educational Institutions Bill, which would exempt accredited foreign providers from much of this regulatory oversight, has been introduced in Parliament, actual passage of the bill has stalled.

The Indian academic calendar and the sequential nature of coursework in many disciplines is also a challenge for programs seeking to place students in university courses with local students. While U.S. students are used to being able to select their courses, including electives, Indian students have much less flexibility with regard to their coursework and generally do not take courses outside their major.

Lack of adequate infrastructure is also a problem, with facilities such as dormitories and cafeterias often deemed unsuitable for U.S. students who are accustomed to a different standard of living.

Challenges for U.S. Institutions

Although existing study abroad programs in India differ in length, course structures and enrollment size, "faculty crunch" is a consistent problem across the board for both U.S. and Indian institutions. Programs in India either utilize home institution faculty who travel to India, or hire local Indian professors. Home institutions often have difficulty finding professors who are interested in teaching in India, where they may have to take on the dual roles of instructor and program director without additional compensation. Meanwhile, programs that hire local professors often have difficulty finding instructors with adequate academic or language qualifications, and who are familiar with the learning styles of U.S. students.

In addition, many of the U.S. faculty members who have led some of the strongest and most successful programs in India are now approaching retirement age. Many programs are successful in large part because their leaders have formed a deep network of local partners and colleagues over many years. These extra hands often take care of critical logistical and technical issues such as transportation, housing, field trips and safety and security measures, and their assistance improves program operations while cutting costs. Building such connections within the community can take several years and losing key program staff risks ending all of those vital networks as well.

Lack of funding for infrastructure and personnel to manage study abroad programs at the home campus may also be a significant challenge. Due to lack of knowledge about India and its changing role in the global economy, India may not be highly prioritized by the U.S. home campus leadership when it comes to program development, and existing staff may be diverted to other programs.

The opposite situation may also hold; while institutional leadership may be interested in building partnerships with Indian institutions, there may not be a similar interest at the faculty and student level. Many U.S. institutions do not offer South Asian studies programs and the lack of faculty with expertise and interest in the area presents a challenge when searching for faculty to lead study abroad programs to India. In addition, there can be an outdated perception of India among U.S. faculty, many of whom are unaware of India's changing place in the global economy. Lack of South Asian studies courses and programs results in lower student interest in study abroad to India, and institutions may have difficulty motivating students to choose India as their study abroad destination when curricular offerings related to other countries may seem more directly applicable to a student's course of study. Furthermore, once programs and partnerships are created, sustaining them and developing them into long-term relationships can also be a challenge.

Community colleges and other institutions with large non-traditional student bodies face a unique set of challenges. Their students often have family and employment obligations which preclude them from being able to travel for long periods of time. Focusing on virtual collaborations and partnerships during the semester followed by a shorter field visit is often a more realistic option for these institutions, at least at the start.

Challenges for Students

The challenges for U.S. students studying abroad in India are primarily cultural and may apply to U.S. students studying abroad in developing nations generally. Challenges relate to curricular structure, different styles of communication and teaching and cultural differences between the U.S. and the host country.

U.S. students have specific expectations with regard to curricular structure, grading and assessment and approaches to pedagogy. As a result, U.S. students sometimes complain that host university courses in India lacked the academic rigor and organization of their courses at home, that they did not follow a fixed syllabus with a schedule of assignments and required readings, and/or that classes would be rescheduled or moved to different locations with little, if any, advanced notice. Indian professors, on the other hand, may be disappointed by the poor attitude of students who do not take their coursework seriously or skip class.

Many of the academic and cultural challenges listed above can be avoided by clearly communicating academic and cultural expectations to both U.S. students and Indian faculty during a program orientation. One program has approached this challenge by having the Indian faculty member ask students to write down their expectations of their instructor for the instructor to be able to better understand the learning needs and cultural values of the students. In addition, ongoing discussions among staff members and students should be encouraged throughout the duration of the program. Such initiatives and gestures, no matter what the scale, will be critical to improving the overall operation of the study abroad program.

With regard to general cultural differences, Indians, like many other Asians, tend to think and act with the view that the opinions of the group are more important than that of any individual, and the entire group participates in decision-making for the individual. This can result in a sense of invaded privacy for the U.S. student when Indian friends and/or host family members take an active interest in the student's life and decision-making. From the Indian perspective, U.S. students' expectations of independence and privacy can seem self-centered and selfish.

Another major cultural difference involves gender relations. In many parts of India, women do not enjoy the same freedoms as men, and Indian women tend to feel more pressure to conform to societal norms than U.S. women do. The safety of women is also an issue that affects the quality of the study abroad experience in India for female students. Students of both genders should be made aware of these differences prior to the commencement of the program during program orientation.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Though budget cuts have hindered capacity growth and have decreased enrollment numbers for many programs, opportunities for expansion are available, and India remains a viable study abroad destination for U.S. institutions. Currently only a relatively small number of programs exist on the ground in India, although these programs tend to draw students from multiple sources in the U.S., including different higher education institutions and study abroad organizations. Many of the existing programs are operating at or near capacity, resulting in the need to develop new programs and partnerships if the number of U.S. students studying abroad to India is to significantly expand. It is important to think creatively when developing new programs and to leverage all existing linkages with India. Furthermore, study abroad programs in India that have been flexible in accepting and funding outside students, have generally been better able to withstand financial challenges, regardless of the type of program or institutional sponsorship. A list of more concrete recommendations follows below.

- **Creative study abroad programming:** Expanding study abroad programming into more career-specific areas, such as business and management or IT, will have the potential to attract future professionals who may not otherwise be attracted to studying in India. As host to numerous international and domestic NGOs, development groups and service agencies, India is also an ideal location for study abroad programs focusing on issues of public health, human rights, peace and social justice.
- **Co-curricular activities:** In addition to pursuing unique and creative courses of study, incorporating opportunities for practical experiences, such as field visits, independent research and internships are an important component of study abroad in non-traditional destination, especially India, which hosts a large number of non-profit, development and service organizations.
- **Leverage all existing connections with India:** Take the time to research and ferret out all existing linkages your institution has with India. Faculty and research scholars from India, international students and alumni from India and alumni of previous study abroad programs in India can all assist in building interest in study abroad to India on campus and virtually. In addition, community members of Indian descent and state and local government contacts from visiting trade delegations from India may also be of assistance.
- **Gradually phase-in courses and programs on India:** Many U.S. institutions may not have a large number of faculty members with expertise on or experience with South Asia. This is not necessarily a barrier to developing a successful study abroad program in India. The key is to start small, and build interest gradually. For example, a faculty member interested in issues elsewhere in the developing world might lead a course on developmental issues that incorporates a short study tour to India during spring break, May term or the summer. This can be a first step toward the eventual goal of developing a semester-long program with a full course load.
- **Adequate pre-departure orientation in cultural differences:** As interest in study abroad in non-traditional destinations grows, more U.S. students will come into contact with cultures that are very different from their own. It is important for these students to be prepared prior to going abroad in order to fully capitalize from the experience. To that end, pre-departure orientations are a necessary and important part of any study abroad program. Given the degree of cultural distance between the U.S. and India, it is particularly important to prepare students before studying in India. For more information on specific cultural differences between the U.S. and India, see Deardorff et al. (2010)⁹.

⁹ Deardorff, Darla, Ranjini Manian and Shobha Naidu. (2010). Intercultural Competence: An Outcome of Student Exchange. In Bhandari, Rajika, ed. *International India: A Turning Point in Educational Exchange with the U.S.* New York: IIE.

- **Reciprocity:** When developing new study abroad programs in India, it is important to keep in mind the reciprocal nature of cultural exchange. U.S. students should be given the opportunity to give back to the communities they are studying in, and should also have the opportunity to engage in guided discussion about the unequal power distribution between the developed world and the developing world. U.S. students' feelings of guilt and/or superiority can contaminate relationships with host country faculty, administrators and homestay families, but the issue must be addressed from both perspectives.
- **Join a consortium:** Smaller institutions and institutions new to sending students to India may not have the resources to develop and sustain entire programs on their own. A useful solution to this problem is to join a consortium or to leverage existing partnerships with U.S. universities that have programs and linkages in India. This model also strengthens the existing program's ability to weather times of economic difficulty.
- **Incorporate study abroad into the overall internationalization strategy:** Creating a new program in India should be carefully analyzed in terms of its strategic importance within the overall structure of an institution's internationalization plan. If India is not of strategic importance in the overall internationalization strategy, study abroad administrators will need to explain why they have chosen to focus on India, especially if resources are scarce.
- **Joint and dual-degree programs:** Given the delay of the much-anticipated Foreign Providers' Bill in India, U.S. institutions interested in initiating large-scale operations in India may want to focus on joint- and dual degree programs in partnership with Indian institutions, rather than wait for future opportunities to establish brick-and-mortar branch campuses in India. The *Office of U.S.-India Higher Education Cooperation (USIHEC)* can assist institutions in determining whether an Indian institution has the capacity to accommodate U.S. students.¹⁰
- **Long-term perspective:** Building partnerships in India requires a long-term perspective incorporating intensive research and multiple trips to India to meet potential partners, educate U.S. administrators about India and ensure that in-country compliance requirements are met. The large size of the Indian higher education sector can make identifying appropriate partners time-consuming, but it is nevertheless necessary.
- **Health and safety:** Make sure that program staff, both at home in the U.S. and on the ground in India, are familiar with local health and safety regulations, and have been properly trained in the program's emergency protocols, including who to contact if a student, faculty or staff member is caught in an emergency situation. The health and safety of women should be specifically addressed. Attention should be paid to health, safety and security at all stages of the program, beginning with program development. It is important to establish clear policies and procedures and to make sure students are made aware of them during orientation, and that faculty and staff are properly trained and given periodic refresher courses.
- **Seek advice from others:** The following pages list some of the more experienced study abroad programs in India, as well as IIE resources that can be of help. The USIEF staff, both its EducationUSA advisers and USIHEC staff, can offer assistance on the ground in India. IIE's IAPP staff can also assist and share webinars and materials that IIE developed for the 2010 IAPP India program.

¹⁰ <http://www.usief.org.in/Scripts/EventsUSIHEC.aspx>

Appendix: Selected Study Abroad Programs in India¹¹

Alliance for Global Education in Pune - http://www.allianceglobaled.org/programs/pune_india/

Mission: "To turn highly-motivated, adventurous U.S. undergraduates into sensitive and sophisticated global citizens, with a nuanced understanding of complex international, regional, and local issues."

BCA Study Abroad in Pondicherry and Chennai - <http://www.bcanet.org/programs/>

Mission: "Rooted in the values of peace and justice, BCA promotes international understanding, awareness of global citizenship and academic scholarship through educational exchange."

CIEE in Hyderabad - <http://www.ciee.org/study/programOverview.aspx?PID=49#1rightForYou>

Mission: "The goal of the CIEE Arts and Sciences program at the University of Hyderabad is to enhance students' knowledge of India from interdisciplinary perspectives."

Davidson College in Chennai - <http://www3.davidson.edu/cms/x17266.xml>

Mission: "Davidson College emphasizes understanding the world and preparing students for the challenges of national and international leadership."

Emory University in Dharamsala - <http://www.cipa.emory.edu/tibetan/>

Mission: "CIPA develops, promotes and administers programming for undergraduate students that encourages both intellectual and personal growth through challenging scholarship and cultural immersion."

IES Abroad in Delhi - <https://www.iesabroad.org/IES/Programs/India/Delhi/delhi.html>

Mission: "To acquaint students with contemporary India in its cultural and historical context."

International Partnership for Service-Learning and Leadership (IPSL) in Kolkata - <http://www.ipsl.org/>

Mission: "To engage students, educators, and community members in the union of services and learning, so that all may become more civically engaged, interculturally literate, internationally aware, and responsive to the needs of others."

Lewis and Clark College Regional Area Study - <http://legacy.lclark.edu/~overseas/Info%20Sheets/11-12/India.pdf>

Mission: "To immerse students in a foreign culture so that they may become informed firsthand of the history, culture, and contemporary issues of the area; understand the way people of the host country view the rest of the world, and gain insights into their own culture by comparing and contrasting American institutions and values with those of the host country."

Minnesota Studies in International Development (MSID) in Jaipur - <http://www.umabroad.umn.edu/programs/asia-oceania/msid-india.php>

Mission: "Through collaboration and individual attention, the Learning Abroad Center continues to promote empowerment, development, understanding, and responsibility in the global community."

New York State Independent College Consortium for Study in India (NYSICCSI) - <http://www.hamilton.edu/india>

Mission: "offers student participants an interdisciplinary approach to the study of historical and contemporary India and explores India's evolving role within the international community."

SIT Study Abroad in Jaipur, New Delhi and Leh (Himalayas) - <http://www.sit.edu/studyabroad/>

Mission: "World Learning works globally to enhance the capacity and commitment of individuals, institutions, and communities to create a more peaceful and just world. SIT Study Abroad meets this by running academically engaging field-based study abroad programs that focus on critical global issues in undergraduate research."

South India Term Abroad (SITA) in Madurai - http://sitaprogram.org/?page_id=2

Mission: "By offering a multidisciplinary introduction to South India that combines traditional coursework, field-based research, home stays, field trips and extracurricular activities, the program seeks to foster a critical exploration of culture and cultural difference."

University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC) in Bangalore - <http://usac.unr.edu/programs/city.aspx?city=46>

Mission: "To provide students with the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills, experiences and attitudes to prepare them for the global society of the 21st century."

University of Iowa in Mysore - <http://international.uiowa.edu/study-abroad/programs/>

Mission: "To provide educational experiences abroad that are academically, financially and administratively accessible to all University of Iowa students, and for each student to have the longest, most culturally immersive and most academically rigorous experience for which s/he is prepared."

¹¹ For a more complete list of existing study abroad programs in India, see <http://www.IEPassport.org>.

IIE Resources for U.S. Study Abroad

IIE-ADMINISTERED SCHOLARSHIPS FOR U.S. STUDY ABROAD

Funded by the U.S. Department of State:

Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program www.iie.org/gilman
Fulbright U.S. Student Program www.fulbrightonline.org

Funded by the National Security Education Program:

David L. Boren Scholarships and Fellowships www.borenawards.org
The Language Flagship Fellowships www.thelanguageflagship.org

Funded by private sponsors:

Freeman Awards for Study in Asia www.iie.org/Freeman-ASIA
Global Engineering Education Exchange www.globale3.org
Whitaker International Fellows and Scholars Program www.whitakerawards.org

IIEPASSPORT: PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDY ABROAD: www.iiepassport.org

STUDY ABROAD FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS: www.studyabroadfunding.org

CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: www.iie.org/cip

The IIE Center for International Partnerships in Higher Education assists colleges and universities in developing and sustaining institutional partnerships with their counterparts around the world. A major initiative of the Center is the International Academic Partnerships Program (IAPP), funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE).

OPEN DOORS REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE: www.iie.org/opendoors

The *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange*, supported by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, provides an annual, comprehensive statistical analysis of academic mobility between the U.S. and other nations, with over 60 years of trend data.

IIE STUDY ABROAD WHITE PAPER SERIES: www.iie.org/StudyAbroadCapacity

- Issue 1: Current Trends in U.S. Study Abroad and the Impact of Strategic Diversity Initiatives (May 2007)
- Issue 2: Exploring Host Country Capacity for Increasing U.S. Study Abroad (May 2008)
- Issue 3: Expanding Education Abroad at Community Colleges (September 2008)
- Issue 4: Expanding U.S. Study Abroad in the Arab World: Challenges & Opportunities (February 2009)
- Issue 5: Promoting Study Abroad in Science and Technology Fields (March 2009)
- Issue 6: Expanding Study Abroad Capacity at U.S. Colleges and Universities (May 2009)
- Issue 7: U.S. Study Abroad in Thailand: Host Country Perspectives and Guidelines for Partners (August 2010)
- Issue 8: Expanding U.S. Study Abroad to India: A Guide for Institutions (July 2011)
- Issue 9: Expanding U.S. Study Abroad to Turkey: A Guide for Institutions (August 2011)

IIE/AIFS GLOBAL EDUCATION RESEARCH REPORTS: www.iie.org/gerr

- Report One: U.S.-China Educational Exchange: Perspectives on a Growing Partnership (2008)
- Report Two: Higher Education on the Move: New Developments in Global Mobility (2009)
- Report Three: International India: A Turning Point in Educational Exchange with the U.S. (2010)
- Report Four: Innovation through Education: Building the Knowledge Economy in the Middle East (2010)
- Report Five: Who Goes Where and Why? An Overview and Analysis of Global Educational Mobility (2011)

OTHER IIE PUBLICATIONS: www.iie.org/Research-and-Publications/Publications-and-Reports.aspx

Joint and Double-Degree Programs: An Emerging Model for Transatlantic Exchange

Student Mobility and the Internationalization of Higher Education: National Policies and Strategies from Six World Regions

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