



For Immediate Release

Contact:
Melanie Gottlieb, Deputy Director, AACRAO
(202) 355-1055
gottlieb@aacrao.org

Largest Decrease in 2017 International Student Applications from Middle Eastern sending countries

Middle East, India, and Latin America are most concerned for the safety of international students in the U.S.

WASHINGTON, DC, – Over the past year, international educators expressed concern that the political discourse leading up to the November 2016 U.S. presidential election could be damaging to institutional recruitment efforts.

In response, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) partnered with four higher education associations, the Institute of International Education (IIE), the International Association for College Admission Counseling, the National Association for College Admission Counseling, and NAFSA: Association of International Educators, in February 2017 to launch an inter-associational member survey. Due to the increased and continued focus on immigration issues, an early release of key findings is available today to help institutions forecast and prepare for what might lie ahead. "[International Applicants for Fall 2017 – Institutional & Applicant Perceptions](#)" is intended to be a snapshot of international student and family perceptions, as well as institutional activities.

Key findings of the survey include:

- 39% of responding institutions reported a decline in international applications, 35% reported an increase, and 26% reported no change in applicant numbers.
- 39% of institutions have reported declines in undergraduate applications for Fall 2017 from the Middle East
- Institutions reported that applications from India and China have also been impacted. Open Doors 2016 indicates that these two countries currently make up 47% of our international student enrollment, with almost half a million students studying in the U.S.

"The survey results suggest a rising level of concern on the part of institutions that fall enrollments in the United States may be impacted by perceptions that the U.S. is becoming less welcoming of international students," said Michael Reilly, Executive Director, AACRAO. "Institutions are struggling to reassure students that their studies or travels will not be disrupted by future policy changes during this period of tremendous uncertainty."

After a full review of the data, a full report will be available by March 30, 2017.

AACRAO is a non-profit, voluntary, professional association of more than 11,000 higher education professionals representing approximately 2,600 institutions in more than 40 countries. Its commitment to the professional development of its members includes best practice guidance on admissions strategies to meet institutional diversity objectives, delivery of academic programs in innovative ways to meet the needs of a changing student body, and exemplary approaches to student retention and completion.

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