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AIP REPORT

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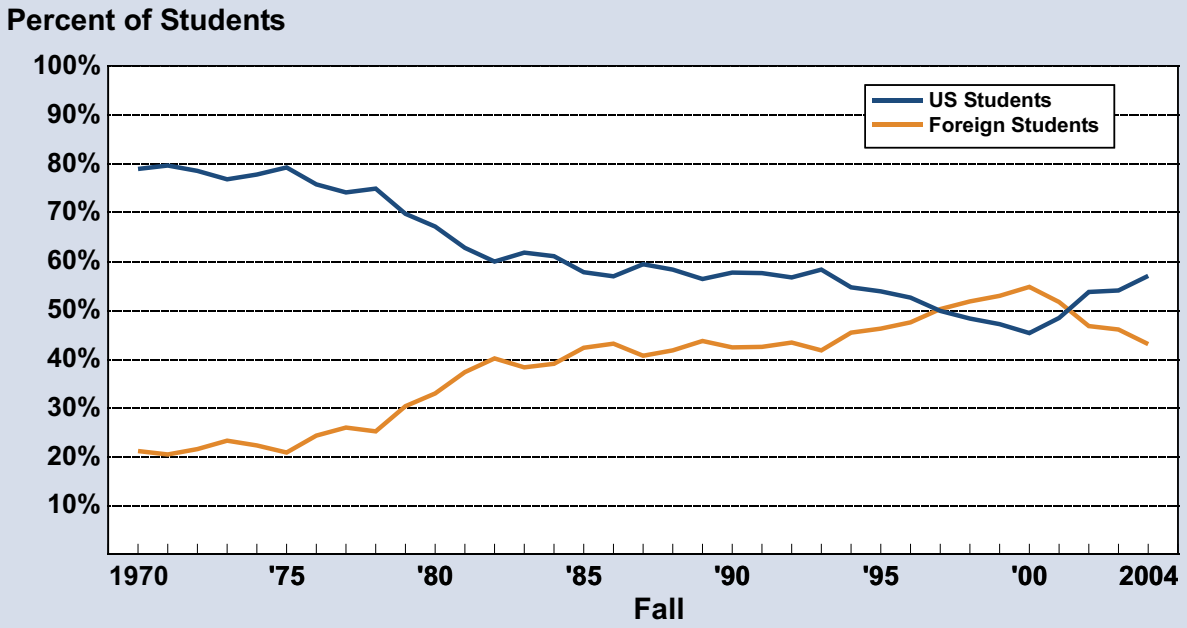
Physics Students From Abroad:
Monitoring the Continuing Impact of Visa Problems

Figure 1. Citizenship of First-Year Physics Graduate Students, Fall 1970-2004.



AIP Statistical Research Center: Physics Students from Abroad.

Highlights

- In the Fall of 2004, about half of the PhD-granting departments and about one-quarter of the Master's departments reported they had accepted one or more foreign students who were either denied entry or substantially delayed because of visa problems (**Table 3**). However, this is an improvement over what was reported two years earlier.

- Visa problems were not just restricted to entering students. Around 60% of PhD departments reported that currently enrolled foreign students had experienced problems securing return visas during the previous year after leaving the US to travel abroad. Almost a quarter of these departments also reported similar difficulties encountered by foreign faculty and staff researchers.

- Visa problems were not distributed equally among departments. Smaller PhD-granting departments and Master's departments continue to be the most adversely affected, with a substantially larger proportion of their accepted international students being denied entry than was the case among the larger PhD departments.

Highlights (Continued)

- Overall, we estimate that 12% of the admitted foreign students for the Fall of 2004 were at least initially prevented from gaining entry into a physics department because of complications in securing a visa. This is down from the 20% reported for the Fall of 2002.

- Changes in the number of applications departments receive continue to be a poor indicator of the number of international students they ultimately accept and enroll (**Table 2**). Many factors come into play that affect the number of applicants that ultimately enroll, and difficulties in obtaining a visa is just one of them.

- Despite the difficulty many international students encounter in securing a visa to enter the US in recent years, declines in the absolute number of foreign first-year physics graduate students have not been as great as one might expect. First-year foreign student enrollment for the Fall of 2004 fell 3% from the Fall of 2002 and a total of 13% since the Fall of 2000 (**Table 4**).

Introduction

For many years, foreign students have had a substantial and growing presence in graduate physics programs in the US. From a relatively small representation even as recently as 1980, foreign citizens rose to outnumber US citizens among entering physics graduate students by the Fall of 1998 (see **Figure 1**). This parallels a general growth in the participation of international students in US graduate-level education, with physics being one of the leaders, and it also mirrors a trend towards increasing globalization of physics at all levels generally.

Then, following the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, increased enforcement of existing rules and new, more restrictive regulations were introduced for visas granted to foreign citizens entering the US. Many in the physics community raised concerns about both the immediate impact on the students involved and the longer-term impact on physics programs and the physics enterprise in this country as a whole. At the same time, US graduate physics enrollments shot up rapidly, and in percentage terms, foreign students slipped back into a minority.

In early 2003, in response to concerns over these developments and with the aim of gauging the actual impact of heightened visa regulations on the inflow of international students into graduate physics studies in the US, the Statistical Research Center of the American Institute of Physics (**AIP**) conducted a targeted survey of all 248 graduate physics departments in this country. We sought to quantify how many departments had experienced difficulties with already-accepted foreign students gaining entry into this country for the Fall of 2002. We also wanted to develop an estimate of the proportion of all physics graduate students coming from abroad who were denied entry or substantially delayed that year. This past Fall, at the urging of a number of AIP Member Societies, Advisory Committees and

the AIP Governing Board, we revisited this question, conducting a follow-up study to examine how the situation may have changed in the intervening two years, and what problems still remain. This report documents the findings from the most recent study, and compares these to what was evidenced in the survey two years earlier.

The Situation Post-9/11

Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, the US government set in motion a broad set of measures whose aim was to screen foreign applicants for entrance into the US, to try to identify those who it was felt might attempt to carry out further attacks. Since the 2001-02 academic year had already begun in most schools, and since it took time for these new measures to be put in place, the first impact was on foreign students applying for entry in the Fall of 2002. Our initial survey of graduate physics departments on visa issues was conducted in January and February of 2003, and asked departments to recount the experience of the international students they had accepted the previous Fall. We heard from 75% of all US graduate physics departments, and found that visa difficulties were widespread.

Overall, a very high proportion of graduate physics programs accept one or more foreign students each year – around 90% in the Fall of 2002, and among these, 63% said they had students planning to come who were significantly delayed or, even more commonly, denied entry entirely. Based on the number of such students that physics departments reported, we estimated that this prevented approximately 20% of all accepted foreign physics graduate students from starting their studies in the Fall of 2002. The non-arrival or delay of an accepted student can be very disruptive for departments in any number of ways, but the impact on the individual student and their educational career is often nothing short of devastating.

However widespread they may be, it is important to be aware that these visa problems were not distributed equally among physics departments. To assess the differential impact, we drew on the widely-used classification of universities known as the Carnegie rankings, and added information from the nationwide assessment of graduate programs last conducted by the National Research Council in 1993, in order to identify the mostly highly ranked graduate physics departments. Using these sources we identified four different subsets of departments. (See page 5 for a detailed description of the classification criteria we used.)

Our survey, addressing enrollments for the Fall of 2002, showed that the higher ranked, generally larger departments seemed to fare far better than their less highly-ranked counterparts. While two-thirds of the top programs had at least some affected students, the numbers involved were a relatively small proportion of all their accepted international graduate students, and these departments similarly reported the least disruption to their programs. On the other hand, smaller PhD programs and Master's programs, also typically much smaller, experienced a much greater relative impact, and many of these reported severe disruption to enrollments in graduate-level courses and to the supply of teaching and research assistants. Many of

these departments were left scrambling to fill open positions with advanced physics undergraduates, or with graduate students from other disciplines, and some reported having to cancel courses or slow down research activities.

When we asked in early 2003 about how departments were responding to the problem, we found a marked lack of consensus. Many of the departments, including those severely affected as well as those feeling little impact, reported that they planned to continue as before in terms of seeking and enrolling foreign students. Among those who intended to change their approach, there was an almost equal division between one group who planned to increase acceptance of non-citizens, to compensate for a smaller proportion being allowed in, and another group who planned to reduce such acceptance, to lower their dependence on an uncertain pool of enrollees. The full report on students entering in the Fall of 2002 is available from the Statistical Research Center.

The Current Situation

The current study was carried out as part of AIP's annual Enrollments and Degrees survey, in which physics departments are queried each Fall about undergraduate and graduate-level enrollments and degrees conferred at all levels. In the Fall of 2004, we added supplemental questions to this survey addressing international students' experience with visa procedures. We heard back from 92% of all physics PhD programs and 75% of all Masters programs concerning visa issues.

In the interim between our two surveys, a number of organizations carried out their own studies of the impact on international graduate students. These studies make it clear that the problem extends across many disciplines, not just physics. For example, Chemical and Engineering News conducted a similar study for chemistry in 2003-04 (Gilman and Schulz, 2004) and reported a comparable number of graduate departments affected (74%) for that discipline. Another widely-reported study, conducted by the Council of Graduate Schools (**CGS**) and covering many disciplines in 2003, found a sharp decline between the Fall of 2003 and the Fall of 2004 (28%) in the number of applications from overseas candidates (CGS, 2004). This caused great alarm when initially reported in the press. Less noticed, but far more significant, were the numbers subsequently reported by the CGS showing that the decline in the number of *accepted* foreign students was far lower, only 18%, and the drop in the number of international students actually enrolling that year was lower still, at 6%. Indeed, when broken out by discipline, it turned out that the CGS study actually found that the physical and earth sciences registered an enrollment *increase* of 6% in foreign students between the Fall of 2003 and the Fall of 2004.

Our own 2004 survey was designed to provide much finer detail for physics alone for the same entering class as covered by the most recent CGS study, but the findings are not fully comparable, since ours covered the change since our previous survey two years earlier. **Table 1** provides background information on the departments involved. To allow us to track changes over time, we used the same classification system that we used in the Fall of 2002 study (see box on next page).

Column Headings for Tables in this Report

US graduate physics departments were divided into four categories by combining two well-known ranking methods:

1) "The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education" (http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/Classification) ranks research universities by the number of PhDs they award each year. Universities classified as *PhD*-Extensive are larger (50 or more doctoral degrees awarded) and have a more diverse offering of PhD fields (at least 15) while universities classified PhD-*Intensive* are smaller (10 or more PhDs) with fewer degree fields (3 or more) available.

2) The National Research Council's assessment of U.S. research-doctorate programs (last conducted in 1993) (http://www.nap.edu/readingroom/books/researchdoc/index.html) is a comprehensive ranking of the quality of doctoral programs in various disciplines.

The resulting categories were:

Top PhD-Extensive - Departments at universities rated as PhD-Extensive where the physics department ranked in the top quartile of the NRC departmental assessment.

Other PhD-Extensive - Departments at universities rated as PhD-Extensive where the physics department was *not* ranked in the top quartile of the NRC departmental assessment.

PhD-Intensive – Departments at universities rated PhD-Intensive regardless of their NRC departmental assessment.

Masters – Departments at which a physics Masters is the highest degree offered.

Departments Included, Fall 2004.

	Top PhD-Extensive	Other PhD-Extensive	PhD-Intensive	Masters
Number of Departments	35	110	38	67
Number of Responding Departments	30	103	35	50

The reason we initially divided up our target departments this way was because we knew from previous research how different the experiences of physics programs could be depending on factors like size and prestige. The first visa study amply demonstrated that this held true when it came to the participation of international students and the impact of the changing visa regulations. The figures in **Table 1** show a contrasting profile of the four categories consistent with the picture presented in the earlier report.

Table 2 provides, for these same four categories of departments, a picture of the current presence of non-citizens among prospective and enrolled graduate students, and compares that current situation to what we found two years earlier. To ensure accuracy in our assessment of the changes over time, we include, when appropriate, only departments in each category who responded to the surveys for both the Fall 2002 and the Fall 2004. The different conditions that departments in different categories face is readily apparent in the table. Not only has the impact of changing visa regulations varied greatly, but the direction of change in the past two years has also been in opposing directions.

Thus, in aggregate, the large, prestigious PhD departments at the top of the hierarchy received just as many applications from non-citizens as they had two years earlier, but actually enrolled 12% fewer. Remarks from the comment section indicated that this group continued to feel that it had an ample number of highly-qualified applicants, with many saying that they reduced the foreign component because there were so many excellent US citizen candidates from which to choose, and indeed the number of US citizen enrollees did rise modestly. The second-tier PhD departments actually experienced a substantial upsurge (+23%) in foreign applications compared with 2002, but, like the top-tier schools, still enrolled fewer (-4%) than they had earlier. And the very small Master's programs saw a considerable (21%) increase in foreign applications, but enrolled 9% or 9 fewer students.

The findings for the final category, the smaller PhD departments, are even more paradoxical. These departments, as well as the Master's-level programs, were the two groups that felt the impact of the visa changes most severely last time around. The smaller PhD programs saw a substantial 34% drop in applications, but surprisingly admitted many more foreign students (+50%) than they had before.

One of the ancillary lessons that the above figures make amply clear is that, as we pointed out in the prior report, fluctuations in applications data are a very poor predictor of actual changes in enrollment, especially for foreign citizens. This reflects the fact that the two quantities are quite independent of each other, with only loose feedback looping. Students, especially non-citizens, decide on their own whether to apply to US graduate schools, and to how many. The programs, based on course openings, the need for teaching and research assistants, and the level of support

Table 1. Enrollment Characteristics of Graduate Physics Departments, Fall 2004.

	Top PhD-Extensive	Other PhD-Extensive	PhD-Intensive	Masters
Total Number of Graduate Students	5,035	6,516	1,204	840
Average Number of Graduate Students Per Department	141	59	32	13
Total Number of *First-Year* Graduate Students	906	1,447	296	324
Average Number of *First-Year* Graduate Students Per Department	26	13	8	5

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funding available, decide how many candidates to accept. As **Table 2** demonstrates, the ratio of applications received to students actually enrolled is very high, allowing room for variations on either side that might not be registered on the other.

On the student side, candidates almost universally submit multiple applications. Foreign students who started their graduate studies in the Fall of 2001 and the Fall of 2002 indicated they had submitted an average of 6.3 applications (McFarling et al., 2004). The number of applications can vary with a student's financial circumstances and the cost to apply, the strength of the candidate, the likelihood of acceptance, standardized test requirements, and so on. For example, it is widely acknowledged that a recent crackdown on fraud in taking the Graduate Record Exam, and tightened passing levels for the TOEFL English exam, have reduced the number of applications by more marginal candidates, especially from China. And an important "external" factor intervening between application and enrollment for foreign citizens is the quality of the pool of US citizen applicants that they are competing against. As discussed above, a rising number of well-qualified US applicants in the past few years may have reduced the admissions chances of foreign citizens, independently of the overall increase in applications from the latter group.

Table 2. International Applications and Enrollments at US Graduate Physics Departments, Fall 2004.

Applications	**Top PhD-Extensive**	**Other PhD-Extensive**	**PhD-Intensive**	**Masters**
Total Number of Applications from International Students	7,900	10,100	1,100	600
Average Number of Applications from International Students per Department	225	92	29	9
Change from Fall 2002*	0%	23%	-34%	21%
Enrollments				
Total Number of Non-US Citizens Enrolling as *First-Year* Students	388	671	129	95
Average Number of Non-US Citizens Enrolling as *First-Year* Students per Department	11.1	6.1	3.4	1.4
Change from Fall 2002	-12%	-4%	50%	-9%
Percent of Non-US Citizens Among *First-Year* Students in Fall 2004	43%	46%	44%	29%
Percent of Non-Us Citizens Among *First-Year* Students in Fall 2002	45%	51%	38%	40%

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* Based on the subset of departments that responded in both 2002 and 2004.

The preceding two tables provide the background for the central issue of concern for this report, which is an effort to quantify the extent to which accepted students from overseas are either completely prevented from, or seriously delayed in, actually entering US physics departments due to difficulties in obtaining a

student visa. As the top rows in **Table 3** makes clear, the problem, which was widespread in the Fall of 2002, had diminished by this past Fall for all four categories of departments.

The greatest decline in visa problems is seen at the highest-ranked PhD programs, where the proportion of consistently responding departments reporting at least one hindered student fell by 37% from Fall 2002 to the Fall of 2004. Among the second-ranked set of PhD departments the proportion of departments reporting students who were denied or seriously delayed also fell substantially (21%). It was only among the generally small physics departments in PhD-Intensive schools and the Master's-granting departments that the proportion of schools with students encountering visa barriers fell more modestly, by 7% and 11% respectively.

These two department types, PhD-Intensive and especially the Master's departments, have a somewhat unique situation. Their relatively small size means that in many cases they have few or even no foreign students at all, which accounts for the high proportion indicating they did not encounter any visa problems in either 2002 or 2004. In the Fall of 2004, 14% of the PhD-Intensive and 38% of the Masters departments did not accept any international students into their programs. On the other hand, where they did accept international students and experienced visa problems, the same small size meant that these departments were often among the most severely impacted in proportional terms. Thus, out of all non-US citizens who were accepted into these departments, we estimate that 21% at the PhD-Intensive and 34% at Master's departments were either delayed or denied entry, as opposed to 4% of the accepted students at the top physics departments and 13% at the balance of the departments at research-extensive schools. Taking all graduate physics departments together, we found that the overall proportion of visa denials has dropped from around 20% of the admitted foreign students in 2002 to 12% in 2004.

These percent denial calculations are derived by using the first-year foreign student number supplied by physics departments in AIP's

Table 3. Visa Problems at Graduate Physics Departments, Fall 2004.

	Top PhD-Extensive	Other PhD-Extensive	PhD-Intensive	Masters
Percent of Departments with International Students Denied Entry in Fall 2004	27%	52%	54%	25%
Change in Percent from Fall 2002*	-37%	-21%	-7%	-11%
Percent of Departments with No Visa Problems in Fall 2002 & Fall 2004*	30%	15%	38%	52%
Denials as a Percent of Total Non-US Citizens Accepted in Fall 2004	4%	13%	21%	34%
Change in Percent from Fall 2002*	-5%	-10%	-8%	-4%

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* Based on the subset of departments that responded in both 2002 and 2004.

Enrollments and Degrees survey. However, not all foreign students need to go through an extensive visa screening process when they are entering their current graduate department. We estimate from other studies we conduct that 6% of the foreign citizens enrolling in the Fall of 2004 already held permanent resident visas, while perhaps another 6% were temporary visa holders who were already in the US as undergraduate physics students. Finally, around 4% or 5% of the newly enrolled foreign students at PhD programs were US physics Master's degree recipients transferring from a Masters-only department. Most of these non-US students are likely not subject to the same visa process as newly entering international students. Thus, our calculation of the percent of foreign students denied visas would be somewhat (about 2%) higher if we were able to isolate just the newly entering students

The surveys also tried to explore which international students were most likely to experience the greatest difficulties obtaining visas. Given the events of 9/11 and the build up to the invasion of Iraq, we had initially expected students from the Middle East would run into the greatest scrutiny. However, it turned out that students from China were the most likely to encounter visa difficulties. Given that China is the dominant source of international graduate students studying physics in the US, this might not seem surprising, but the most recent figures show that this was true not just in absolute numbers but also in the proportion of students affected. In 2004, physics chairpersons reported that 63% of their denied or delayed students were Chinese. The chemistry survey reported a similar finding among chemistry departments (Gilman and Schulz). This matches well with anecdotal reports of daily lines of student visa applicants at US consulates in certain large Chinese cities.

Impact of Changing Rules

Figure 1 illustrates the continuing reversal in recent years of the historical trend towards an ever-larger presence of international students in graduate physics programs in this country. After rising from around 20% of all incoming graduate students in the early 1970's to 55% in Fall of 2000, the proportion then fell off sharply to an estimated 43% in the Fall of 2004. Looking at the timing of the change, it might be reasonable to conclude that the drop-off must have been due to the visa barriers we have been highlighting in this report.

However, while changes in visa regulations certainly had an effect, a closer look at the figures suggests that other factors may have figured even more prominently. For one thing, looking just at percentages portrays a somewhat misleading picture. These same past four years occurred during a period of rising overall first-year enrollment in graduate physics programs. As a result, the actual number of first-year international students fell by only 191, or about 13%, from 2000 to 2004 (see **Table 4**). Even more importantly, this drop was more than made up for by a sharp rise of 518 in the number of US students admitted, an increase of 42% in only four years. Anecdotally, the chairpersons of many US departments, especially the larger PhD programs, reported that they were unexpectedly graced with a bumper crop of well-qualified US candidates in the past few years.

Nevertheless, the 2004 data show that a substantial number of foreign candidates continue to be impeded by the heightened stringency in visa regulations, and this often constitutes a personal disaster for the students involved, who are denied entry or significantly

Table 4. Number of First-Year Graduate Students Enrolling in US Physics Departments.

Fall of	US	Foreign	Total
2000	1228	1485	2713
2001	1343	1434	2777
2002	1535	1339	2875
2003	1711	1457	3168
2004	1746	1294	3040

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Source: AIP Enrollments and Degrees Survey.

held back while almost at the end of the admissions process, after many arrangements have already been made and many alternative options passed over. As we emphasized in the 2002 report, the denials also spelled the most trouble for the smaller and more vulnerable physics programs, which had the least flexibility when faced with a sudden hole in expected graduate course enrollments, or an unexpected vacancy in a research or teaching assistantship.

In an indirect way, the larger PhD programs may be a little more affected by visa difficulties than it would first appear. As noted above, about 5% of the foreign students enrolling in a PhD program transfer from a US physics Master's program. Although relatively few in number, these students still represent a non-negligible proportion of the foreign students entering PhD programs. Any rise in visa barriers that especially impedes foreign students seeking to enter physics masters programs may ultimately erode this source of future recruits to PhD programs as well.

Impact on Staff and Current Students

The Fall of 2004 survey also included two questions to probe the impact of visa rules on graduate students and post-graduate faculty or research staff who were already here. Specifically, we wanted to explore whether members of either of these groups had left the country and then experienced a delay of two weeks or more when trying to return. Regarding graduate students who had entered programs in a prior year, around 60% of PhD departments reported that at least one of their enrolled students had experienced such problems. But the number of students involved was quite small, only 3% of the roughly 6,500 currently-enrolled foreign students in PhD programs. Twenty-three percent of the PhD departments described similar difficulties for foreign faculty, postdocs, or staff researchers, although this involved even fewer individuals, totaling 40 at the responding PhD departments.

However, these statistics may not fully describe the extent to which increased visa scrutiny affects students or scholars that are already in this country. Without a doubt, the choices such individuals make with regards to travel have been affected. There were many comments on the survey indicating that international students and scholars had restricted their overseas travel for both professional and personal reasons due to fears that there might be problems obtaining re-entry visas.

Conclusion

The findings from our survey and background information from other sources provide a very mixed picture. On the one hand, after several decades of steady growth, the proportion of non-US citizens among physics graduate students seems to be stabilizing or declining a

bit, after having peaked at just over 50%. At the same time, it is difficult to make a clear connection between this change and the heightened visa barriers that have been put into place in the years following the 9/11 attacks, since the leveling off started before 9/11, and the drop-off has persisted in the latest data despite the reported easing of the visa strictures.

Still, despite apparent easing of the visa impediments and the up-tick in the number of entering international students in recent years, there maybe legitimate reasons for concern that the post-9/11 changes may compound with trends that were already at work to diminish the flow of overseas students to the US over the long term. The options for international students to pursue higher education have expanded in recent years. In many developing countries (e.g., China), potential students are able to attend new state-of-the-art universities in their home countries. There are also increasing options for pursing graduate education in other countries, Australia and some European countries being prime examples.

Bear in mind that AIP (and others) only began to gather this type of data following the 9/11 attacks. We have no way of knowing how many departments had incoming students who were denied entry visas in prior years, nor how many students were affected. What we do know is that it is likely the number rose immediately following 9/11, and that it has fallen substantially since then. But whether the current figure of 12% for the Fall of 2004 is in line with the pre-9/11 figure or whether it is still substantially higher (lower being unlikely) is something we may never be able to ascertain.

It is also important to note that these changes coincided with a reversal of the trend of fewer US citizens pursuing graduate physics study. Anecdotally, a number of chairpersons reported that, for them, the increase in the number of well-qualified US-citizen candidates went a long way towards easing the potential disruption caused by barriers to foreign student access.

Still, the findings of the study and the comments offered by the department chairpersons illustrates the unevenness of the impact and the severe disruption that has been felt by individual students and some departments caught up in the change. Less evident, but perhaps even more significant in the long run, may be the damage to the reputation of the US as a welcoming, desirable choice of destination in the decision about where to pursue higher academic studies in physics.

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Selected Verbatim Comments

Changes in international application patterns.

There were many varying comments concerning changes in enrollment patterns. For example, many departments reported a decrease in number and quality of applicants from China, although some reported just the opposite.

International applications are down in general for the university as a whole but have remained the same in physics.

In the 2002-2003 year our international applications were much lower due to immigration problem and due to the cheating scandal on the GRE. Our graduate school would only accept paper-based tests, so many applicants told us they couldn't apply.

Receiving more inquiries much earlier in the year than before.

A larger number of applicants were able to pay the application fee instead of requesting a fee waiver from the department. There are fewer applicants from the Middle East.

Declined - but [we] began to charge an application fee.

The quality of applications among domestic students has risen significantly while foreign student qualifications have risen slightly.

The number is similar, but the quality of students has dropped.

Fewer FSU students

Number of applicants increasing.

Applications from Europe, South America somewhat higher.

More students from Nepal.

Impact on departments.

In addition to these comments on newly entering students, there were a large number of comments describing the specific circumstances of previously enrolled students and visiting scholars who had left the US for travel and then had difficulty or were unable to return. As a result of these known re-entry visa difficulties, many departments reported that fewer graduate students and scholars leave the country temporarily for either personal or professional travel.

Little if at all. Contrary to expectations, all of the Chinese students received visas, thus we ended up with a larger than expected class.

Minimally, the number of applicants is still larger than the number of available assistantships.

For fall 2003, visa problems prevented all Iranian and half of the PRC students from coming. For fall 2004, no Iranian students applied. This is a serious loss for our department. We have had excellent Iranian students in the past.

We had to hire a non- physics TA for the semester – the [physics] student will come in January and does now have his visa.

. . . . Arriving late means missed orientation events, signing up late for classes, late registration fees and no chance to take English testing for a TA position.

The burden of time and effort on the physics faculty and staff as well as the university staff has increased substantially.

Departments approach to accepting international students.

It is difficult to ignore the practical implications of the heightened visa regulations - we have to consider the fact that some of the international students might have problems obtaining their visas.

So far only the Chinese students have had visa problems, so we make very few offers to Chinese students now. Last year we only made one offer to a Chinese student and that student was not able to get a visa.

We give priority to students who come from Shanghai area, rather than Beijing, because it's well known that the US consulate in Shanghai approves visa applications more readily.

Given the quality of our international students is higher than our American students, we try to accept more international students in order to maintain our current levels.

We experienced problems with Chinese students getting visas in 2002, 2003. As a result, we have decreased the number of offers to Chinese applicants so as to minimize the impact to our graduate program.

I am not sure if this decline in offers of admission to international applicants is attributable to visa difficulties. It may be more the result of seeing an increasing number of qualified US applicants.

The department has altered the number of international students that we admit not because of visa regulations, but mostly due to financial cost per foreign student.

We are accepting fewer PRC students. Visa problems are not the main issue however. Language skills are.