



29% of College Students Say COVID-19 Canceled Their Study Abroad Plans

Just Under Half (49%) Believe Study Abroad is Only Feasible For the Privileged

July 28, 2022 (Seattle, WA) - According to a new survey from BestColleges.com, 29% of currently enrolled undergraduate students say they had plans to study abroad but were unable to due to circumstances caused by COVID-19. The survey of 1,000 college students also found that 49% believe participating in a study abroad program is only feasible for the privileged.

Click here for more information:

<https://www.bestcolleges.com/research/covid19-canceled-students-study-abroad-plans/>

Most students (71%) did not have plans to study abroad and their top reason for not participating was cost (53%). An overwhelming majority (73%) agree that studying abroad is expensive.

"For many young people, participating in their college's study abroad program is their first opportunity to travel and reap the many benefits of such an experience," said Jessica Bryant, education analyst for BestColleges.com. "Institutions must strive to make their programs more affordable for students and be clear about cost in outreach to students."

Other common reasons students have for not participating in a study abroad program include a lack of desire (33%), concerns about language barriers (25%), and obligations at home (25%). Over 1 in 5 (21%) say concerns about COVID-19 or other health-related issues are why they have not or will not study abroad.

The most common study abroad goals of students who have done so or had plans to include discovering another culture (50%), developing an expanded view of the world (45%), and meeting people abroad (45%).

White students who have studied abroad or had plans to are more likely than BIPOC students to say one of their goals for studying abroad was to develop an expanded view of the world (51% vs. 39%) or visit a place they were unlikely to otherwise (46% vs. 36%). Students who have at least one parent with a college degree and have studied abroad or had plans to are significantly more likely than first-generation students to say one of their goals for studying abroad is self-discovery/development of life skills (55% vs. 35%).

Traveling during college outside of their school's study abroad program is desired by 60% of students, and they are most likely (63%) to use income from their job to pay for it. A majority plan to prioritize traveling in the near term after college (51%) and say that budgeting for travel is important to them (72%). Most students (66%) say that the experience of traveling is worth the expense.

Those who want to travel during college beyond a formal study abroad program are most likely to say their companions will be friends (76%) or family (49%). Nearly one-third (32%) say they will travel solo during college.

Methodology

The survey was conducted from May 31-June 3, 2022. Student respondents were fielded by Lucid LLC. Survey participants included 1,000 currently enrolled, first-time undergraduate students nationwide. Respondents were 18-26 years of age, enrolled at a college or university, and pursuing a bachelor's or associate degree. The respondents for the survey were screened by various quality checks, including systems like Relevant ID, and responses were manually reviewed to ensure consistency and accuracy.

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