

Will the virus make students choose virtual?

Survey highlights prospective graduate students' concerns over visa delays, travel restrictions, and fully online education.

New Delhi, Apr 9, 2020 (Issuewire.com) - A recent survey of prospective graduate students conducted by GlobalShala in response to the recent COVID-19 outbreak highlights some of the concerns and expectations of students aiming to study abroad next fall. The survey, which targeted prospective applicants who are aspiring to study in the United States for graduate school shows that, while most respondents would feel comfortable traveling abroad after travel restrictions are lifted, there is an equal level of concern that they will not be able to attend their institution of choice due to global travel restrictions still being in place. Additionally, with visa application centers currently remaining closed in India, more than half of the respondents reported being concerned about their ability to secure a visa appointment in time to travel to the United States for the Fall.

[Anushika Jain](#), Founder, and CEO of GlobalShala felt that the [survey](#) was important to commission as a way to gauge the current international education climate amid the global health crisis. "The current pandemic facing the world is impacting all sectors of the economy, including higher education. To better prepare the students I work with, I felt it was important to better understand how they are feeling and what they are expecting in the coming year" says Jain.

While many institutions across the globe are racing to put together online program options as a way to serve students who may be unable to travel, the survey highlighted that many prospective students show reluctance towards enrolling in fully online programs. Rather, respondents expressed a much stronger interest in only enrolling in online courses until the global travel situation returns to normal or even in deferring enrollment by a semester. Moreover, respondents indicated that they would expect to pay upwards of 55% less for online courses should they be provided with that option.

These results don't necessarily come as a surprise to international education experts who have not observed a rise in online education seekers from India in recent years. According to [Mallik Sundaram](#), Associate Vice President of International Enrollment Management at Northeastern University, "students who are seeking a degree from a U.S. institution are often motivated not only by a quality educational opportunity but also by the experience to travel to a new country to have a fully immersive post-baccalaureate experience." Online education, continues Sundaram, "will only likely provide a 'hold over' solution for students during these turbulent times until they are able to safely travel to their intended global destination." Institutions like Northeastern that recognize these preferences are working to create modified versions of their graduate programs that will enable students to leverage high-quality online content to begin their program of study while still allowing them to transition to on-ground classes when travel and social distancing restrictions are eased.

About GlobalShala: GlobalShala is an organization that aims to assist students with finding global educational opportunities that are the right for them. Leveraging a growing network of university partners, the company seeks to facilitate lifelong learners throughout the world.

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