

Physics Students From Abroad in the Post-9/11 Era

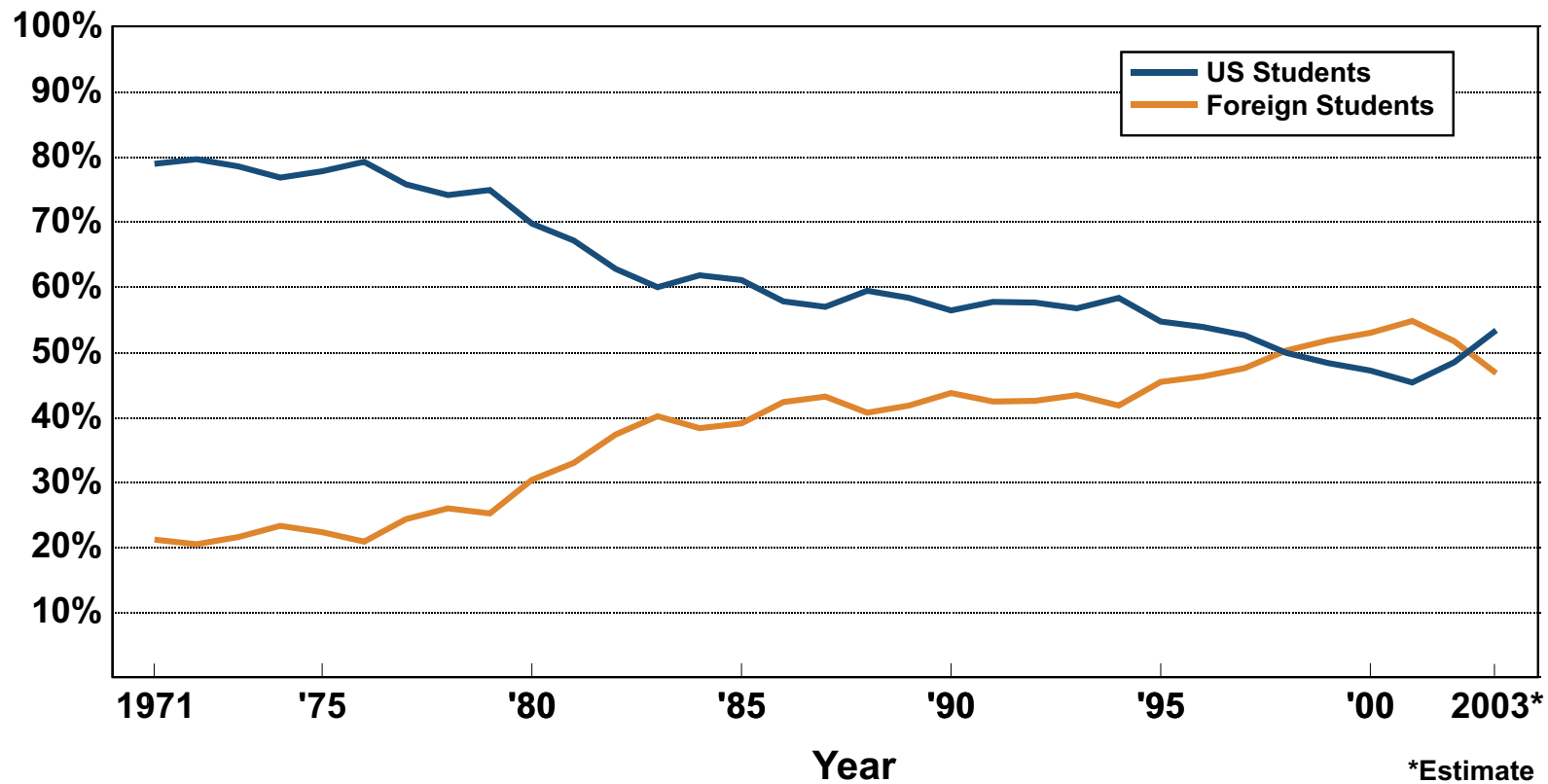
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Highlights

- After decades of steady increases to a peak of 55% in 2000-01, the population of foreign students entering graduate physics programs has declined noticeably in the past two years. (Figure 1)
- In the past year, two-thirds of the PhD-granting departments, and almost half of the Masters departments, report that they have accepted foreign students who were unable to attend because of visa difficulties. (Table 1)
- Overall, it appears that about 20% of admitted foreign students were at least initially prevented from attending in the fall of 2002. The highest-ranked PhD departments were least affected, but smaller PhD and Masters departments experienced a substantial enrollment impact. (Table 1)
- In numerical terms, Chinese students were by far the group most commonly denied entrance. Even in percentage terms, Chinese, along with middle eastern students, felt the greatest impact.
- Many departments report major effects on course enrollments, and on their ability to fill openings for RA's and especially TA's. (Figure 2)
- Most departments are maintaining their current admissions policies for now, with only a few reporting major changes in their stance on accepting students from abroad.

Figure 1. Citizenship of First-Year Physics Graduate Students, 1971-2003.

Percent of Students



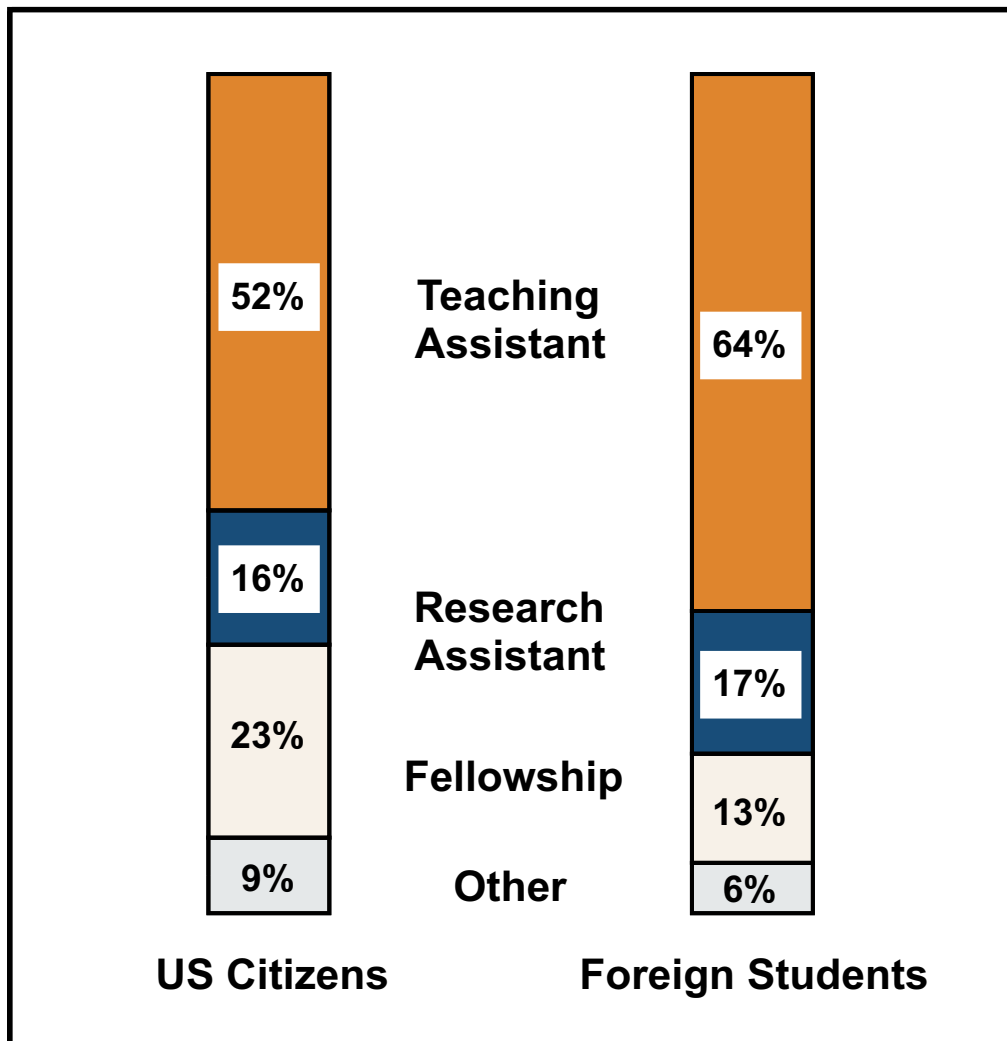
AIP Statistical Research Center: Graduate Student Surveys

Table 1. Number and Trend of Visa Problems and Trends in International Applications, Fall 2002.

	Top Ranked Physics Departments Among Schools Rated PhD-Extensive in Carnegie Classifications	Other Physics Doctorate Departments at Schools Rated PhD-Extensive in Carnegie Classifications	Physics Doctorate Departments at Schools Ranked PhD-Intensive in Carnegie Classifications	Physics Masters- Granting Departments
% of Departments with Accepted International Students Denied Entry	64	76	39	46
Average Number of Accepted International Students Denied Entry	1.4	1.9	0.7	1.0
Denials as a % of Total Non-Citizens Accepted	10%	22%	25%	40%
Reported Change in Visa Problems Over Past 2 Years	% Increase 67 % Stable 22 % Decrease 11	73 24 3	89 0 11	57 38 5
Reported Change in Overseas Apps. Over Past 2 Years	% Increase 46 % Stable 50 % Decrease 4	32 51 16	22 61 17	4 59 39

AIP Statistical Research Center 2003 International Visa Study

Figure 2. Sources of Support for First Year Physics Students by Citizenship, 1999, 2000 & 2001.



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