Bologna-Compliant Bachelor Degrees

The Evolving U.S. Perspective

ENIC-NARIC 2017

Copenhagen, Denmark

Jasmin Saidi-Kuehnert
President & CEO, ACEI
Chair, AACRAO International Education Standards Council

Melanie Gottlieb
Deputy Director, AACRAO
Jasmin Saidi-Kuehnert
President & CEO, ACEI
Chair, AACRAO International
Education Standards Council

Melanie Gottlieb
Deputy Director, AACRAO
## Context – The numbers

| International Students from EHEA | US Students Studying in EHEA |
Students increased by 23% in OPT, the fastest growing academic level.

Source: https://www.iie.org/Research-and-Insights/Open-Doors/Fact-Sheets-and-Infographics/Infographics/International-Student-Data
Top 20 Countries of Origin - 2015

Country
China
India
South Korea
Saudi Arabia
Canada
Brazil
Taiwan
Japan
Vietnam
Mexico
Iran
United Kingdom
Turkey
Germany
Nigeria
France
Indonesia
Hong Kong
Malaysia
Thailand

Source:
https://www.goschoolwise.com/datavis/international-students-usa
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/Country of Origin</th>
<th>Total Counts</th>
<th>% Shares by Region/Country of Origin</th>
<th>% Shares by Degree Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Master's &amp; Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>838,627</td>
<td>838,627</td>
<td>568,391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>667,389</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>320,486</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>246,951</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>4,650</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>31,846</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>19,979</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Europe</strong></td>
<td><strong>39,807</strong></td>
<td><strong>5%</strong></td>
<td><strong>3%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America &amp; Caribbean</td>
<td>25,438</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>5,074</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>5,209</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East &amp; North Africa</td>
<td>57,875</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>26,484</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>17,918</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America (Canada only)</td>
<td>11,960</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>2,520</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>21,388</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: 2016 CGS International Graduate Admissions Survey: Final Applications, Admissions, and Enrollment
Perspective Timeline

Council of Graduate Schools (2005 & 2006 survey)
• 40% (2005) & 44% (2006) considered holders of the 3-year Bologna-compliant degrees for admission to graduate programs under specific conditions
• 22% (2005) & 29% (2006) required a four-year degree

View CGS 2005 Survey results: www.cgsnet.org

• 33% considered three-year undergraduate Bologna-compliant degrees for admission to graduate programs
• 35% indicated admission determination varied by department/field*
• 14% did not consider the three-year degree equivalent to U.S. undergraduate degree
• 18% relied on various factors for admissions consideration*
  (*academic faculty viewed the applicant’s preparation for study in the specific field as more important than degree length) https://www.iie.org/en/Research-and-Insights/Publications/Three-Year-Bologna-Compliant-Degrees
The View Today – Survey Results

• Joint Survey between AACRAO & Association of International Educators (AICE) 2016
Q1 - Does your institution require completed undergraduate programs to be at least four years in duration for admissions eligibility into your graduate programs?

A third of institutions do not require a 4-year bachelor for admission; another quarter will evaluate on a case-by-case basis.
Q2 - If your institution ever considers 3-year bachelor's programs as eligible for graduate admissions, please select the type of 3-year programs below that you believe to be eligible:

- Twenty percent of institutions clearly recognize the bologna-compliant bachelor as eligible for consideration for admission.
Q3 - For graduate admissions eligibility, does your institution require that completed undergraduate programs include specific General Education coursework?

Half of institutions do not consider general education as a requirement for admission
Q4 - For graduate admissions eligibility, does your institution require that completed undergraduate programs include Major-specific coursework?

At least forty percent of institutions have requirements regarding the undergraduate major.
Q5 - For graduate admissions eligibility, does your institution require that completed undergraduate programs include specific **Elective coursework**?

![Pie chart showing the distribution of responses to the question: The majority of institutions do not consider electives in the admission process.](image)

**The majority of institutions do not consider electives in the admission process.**
Q6 - Does your institution consider how international undergraduate programs provide access to graduate programs in the home country when determining eligibility for admissions to your graduate programs?

Only sixteen percent of institutions report that they are benchmarking at the graduate level.
Q7 - From countries where undergraduate programs have multiple stages during the degree conferral processes, does your institution require that the **entire degree conferral process** be completed for graduate admissions eligibility or will you consider completed undergraduate academic requirements (such as coursework, thesis, etc.) as sufficient for eligibility?

The majority of institutions recognize the value of the earned credential over accumulation of years
Key Take-aways from recent Survey

- The U.S. perspective is still evolving
  - Qualitative v quantitative
- Institutional policies reflect inconsistent knowledge and understanding of bologna-compliant degrees
2017 AICE Milwaukee Symposium: 3-Year Bologna Compliant Bachelor’s Degree (Take-aways)

- Decisions made by admissions offices don’t always match those of faculty
- The graduate college of institutions place more emphasis on the educational system of a country
- Graduate schools pace more emphasis on U.S. GPA in final admission decision
- Where there is a 13-year of “high school,” the 3-year degree is more routinely accepted.
2017 AICE Milwaukee Symposium: 3-Year Bologna Compliant Bachelor’s Degree (Take-aways)

- 3-year Bologna-compliant bachelor’s degree may not meet the # of credits required for professional licensure
- U.S. regional accreditation bodies do not have standards that prescribe specific admission practices; universities are autonomous
Context

The Graduate Admissions Process
Models & Factors at Play: Selectivity

Admissions Type:

• **Open Admission:** Anyone and everyone

• **Threshold Admission:** Defined minimum academic requirements

• **Holistic Admission:** Comprehensive review of applicant’s academic suitability
## Required Level of Study

The chart below shows the minimum level of study required of applicants with degrees from certain countries or regions. Please contact Office of Graduate Education Student Services if your country is not listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY / REGION</th>
<th>REQUIRED LEVEL OF STUDY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>4-6 year bachelor's degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia, Canada, South Africa</td>
<td>four-year bachelor's degree or honours bachelor's degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom or British-patterned systems</td>
<td>honours bachelor's degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East European States</td>
<td>first university degree requiring four years or more of post-secondary study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>Bologna-compliant three-year bachelor's degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian Federation and former Soviet Union</td>
<td>four-year bakalavr or diplom/professional qualification requiring five years of post-secondary study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan</td>
<td>completed master's degree at the time of application or a four to five-year bachelor's degree such as the B. Agriculture, B. Architecture, B. Engineering, B. Technology, or MBBS degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and Latin America, Mexico, Portugal, Spain</td>
<td>licenciado or titulo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>four-year bachelor's degree from recognized post-secondary Institutions (after completion of 12 years of secondary education)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Full-time MBA

Germany
A university Diploma, Magister Artium, Staatsexamen, three-year Bachelor's degree or five-year Master's degree. Graduates of Fachhochschulen and Berufsakademies are eligible. The Vordiplom by itself is not sufficient.

India
All three-year Bachelor's degrees are sufficient to apply. Please note the degree conferral requirements for international transcripts as described in the Transcript Requirements for the Interview section.

Indonesia
Sarjana or Sarjana Legkap, awarded after five years of university study.

Italy
Diploma di laurea, requiring four to six years of study or the three-year business degree.

Mexico
Completion of all courses and thesis or professional exams required for the título or degree of Licenciado or Bachiller.
Listing requirements by country

Portugal

Official academic records must arrive in a sealed envelope from the university of study in both the original language and the English translation.

- Submit transcripts/certificados de estudos for all studies (i.e., Licenciado, Bacharel, Mestre, Bachelor, Doutor, etc.), with years of study, course titles, credits and grades.
- Submit Titulos earned for all studies.
- Submit diploma supplements, if available.

Three-year Bachelor’s degrees are accepted if all coursework is completed and the final diploma has been issued. Three-year degrees that are in progress will not be accepted.
Bridge Programs

• Average of 1 year of full-time study prior to joining the graduate program
• Conditionally or fully admitted as a graduate student
• Designed for international students holding three-year degrees, or domestic students lacking pre-requisites
• Customizable – work with academic advisor with the goal of earning a graduate degree
Models & Factors at Play: Faculty & Politics

- Admission Offices
- International Offices
- Graduate Deans
- Individual Faculty
Factors in Evaluation for Admission

- Benchmarking versus Year-Counting
- Access in the home country
  - (Australia Bachelor’s vs. Honors Bachelor)
- Competencies required for success in the graduate program
- Functional outcomes
  - (Licensure or Professional Qualification)
The Function of Placement Recommendations in the US

The **EDGE** Audience:

- Universities
- U. S. Customs & Immigration Service (USCIS)
- Credential Evaluations Agencies
- Law Firms
Navigating the Conversation
Challenges & Opportunities
Challenges

U.S.

• Absence of nationwide admissions policy for graduate studies
• Absence of cohesiveness in policy even within universities
• Various players with their own set of requirements and criteria (e.g. universities vs. state licensing boards vs USCIS vs employers [especially in state & federal job sectors])

Bologna-Compliant Countries*

• Not all countries are moving in the same direction at the same pace
• The 3 degree model isn’t always used in a coherent way, especially in fields such as law, teacher training or medicine
• Lack of consistency in how ECTS credits are used (especially in master’s degree programs where designating credits for student-centered learning remains unclear)

Opportunities

More institutions are becoming familiar with the three-year Bologna-compliant Bachelor’s degrees and modifying their policies.

Survey outcomes available to holders of the 3-year Bologna compliant bachelor’s degrees in terms of access to graduate studies and the job market in their home countries or other countries.

More countries outside the EU are expressing interest in emulating the Bologna Process.
2017-2018 Academic Year

- AACRAO September Symposium
- Collaborative publication
- Webinar series
- CGS engagement
- USCIS engagement
- Evolution of EDGE placement recommendations