

Increased Interest in Graduate and Doctoral Programs Reflects Changing Priorities Among International Students

Proposed Immigration Policy Changes and Practical Training Focused Education Driving Demand for Graduate Programs with CPT

CHICAGO, IL, UNITED STATES, June 4, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As

international students navigate an increasingly complex U.S. immigration landscape, [Howell Management](#)

[Services \(HMS\)](#) reports growing interest

in graduate and doctoral programs that combine academic advancement with practical, career-focused learning opportunities.



Recent discussions surrounding potential changes to the F-1 student visa framework—including proposals that could replace the long-standing Duration of Status (D/S) model with fixed periods of authorized stay—have prompted many students to evaluate educational pathways that provide both academic progression and structured experiential learning opportunities.

At the same time, employers across industries continue to place greater value on advanced degrees, specialized technical skills, and leadership experience. As a result, many international students are pursuing master's and doctoral programs that offer opportunities to apply classroom learning in real-world professional environments through curricular training and experiential learning components.

International students are becoming increasingly strategic in their educational planning. Students are looking beyond simply obtaining a degree. They want programs that provide advanced academic credentials, meaningful professional experience, and career growth while remaining fully aligned with federal regulations.”

Growing Demand for Graduate Programs with Integrated Experiential Learning

[Graduate programs that incorporate Curricular Practical Training \(CPT\)](#) as an integral part of the

curriculum continue to attract significant interest from international students seeking to gain practical experience while completing their studies.

Federal regulations require CPT to be directly related to a student's field of study and integrated into an established academic curriculum. When properly structured, these programs allow students to connect academic theory with workplace application.

According to HMS, students increasingly cite several factors when selecting graduate programs:

Opportunities to gain relevant professional experience while studying

Advanced credentials that support long-term career goals

Flexible formats designed for working professionals

Strong institutional compliance practices

Clear documentation of CPT policies and procedures

Graduate programs in business, technology, analytics, healthcare administration, organizational leadership, cybersecurity, nursing, computer science, and artificial intelligence remain among the most sought-after fields.

Increased Interest in Doctoral Programs Among International Students

HMS has also observed rising interest in Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) programs and other applied doctoral degrees.

For many international students who have already completed a master's degree in the United States, doctoral education represents an opportunity to continue advancing academically while developing executive-level leadership skills and specialized expertise.

The trend appears to be influenced by several factors, including evolving immigration discussions, heightened competition in the labor market, and a desire among professionals to differentiate themselves through terminal degrees.

Applied doctoral programs that focus on organizational strategy, business analytics, innovation, technology leadership, and operational effectiveness are attracting particular attention among international students seeking career advancement.

Compliance Remains a Critical Consideration

While interest in graduate and doctoral programs continues to grow, HMS emphasizes that compliance must remain central to institutional program design and student decision-making.

[Universities offering CPT](#)-integrated programs should ensure that experiential learning opportunities are academically justified, documented, supervised by faculty, and aligned with

established curricular objectives. Students are encouraged to carefully review university policies and consult with Designated School Officials (DSOs) regarding employment authorization and immigration compliance requirements.

As federal agencies continue to evaluate immigration policies affecting international students, transparency and regulatory adherence remain essential components of sustainable international education programs.

Supporting International Student Success

Through its university partnerships, HMS continues to support international students seeking graduate and doctoral educational opportunities that combine academic excellence, practical learning experiences, and regulatory compliance.

The organization works closely with accredited U.S. universities to expand access to master's and doctoral programs designed to meet the evolving needs of international students and global employers.

As the higher education landscape continues to evolve, students are seeking institutions that provide both academic quality and clarity. Universities that demonstrate strong compliance practices and meaningful educational outcomes will continue to be well-positioned to serve the international student community.

About Howell Management Services

Howell Management Services (HMS) is an international education consulting and enrollment management organization that partners exclusively with accredited U.S. universities to support international student recruitment, graduate program development, institutional partnerships, compliance education, and global enrollment growth. HMS works with universities to expand access to career-focused master's and doctoral programs while helping students navigate admissions, immigration considerations, and academic planning.

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