



## THE LEARNING LENS

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## Thinking of Studying in the US? Here's What You Need to Consider



There is no denying that the US higher education landscape has become more complicated for international students. Changes around student visas, OPT, CPT, travel, and immigration policies have created uncertainty, and many families are understandably asking whether studying in the US still makes sense.

For students on an F-1 visa, OPT (Optional Practical Training) currently allows them to gain work experience related to their field of study, usually for up to 12 months after completing their degree. Students in eligible STEM fields can apply for a further 24-month STEM OPT extension. CPT (Curricular Practical Training) allows students to take up internships or other practical training that forms part of their university curriculum while they are still studying. Since September 2026, however, students are admitted for a fixed period of stay and may need an extension of stay approved before they can start OPT. The US government has also said it is reviewing OPT and STEM OPT and has proposed new fees, so these rules may change further.

Students need to understand the rules carefully, plan ahead,

and confirm the current position with their university's international student office before making decisions. My advice is to look beyond the headlines and focus on what has not changed. US universities continue to value strong academic preparation, intellectual engagement, diverse perspectives, and students who contribute to campus life.

A Spring 2026 survey of 585 US colleges and universities by the Institute of International Education found that 82% still consider international recruitment a priority. Yes, the process requires more planning today, but students should not step away from their ambitions. If you have strong academics, a clear sense of purpose, and a profile that reflects who you are beyond your grades, continue building it. India remains one of the largest sources of international students.

Be strategic about your choices. Look beyond university names and consider your programme, internships, practical experience opportunities, total cost, scholarships, and how the course fits your longer-term plans. A well-researched university list and a strong application matter more than ever.

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# Highlights from PHDCCI Roundtable on Internationalisation of Higher Education in India

Building Smarter Pathways to Higher Education



**Mr. DNV Kumara Guru**  
(Senior Director - Alumni Engagement,  
Advancement and External Relations, ISB)



**Mr. Shreevats Jaipuria**  
(Chair, PHDCCI Education Committee)



**Dr. M. Jagadesh Kumar**  
(Chairman, Review Committee for NEP  
2020)



**Dr. Shashank Shah**  
(Director & Senior Specialist,  
Higher Education, NITI Aayog)



**Ms. Sunaina Kumar**  
(Director - Centre for New Economic  
Diplomacy, ORF)



**Ms. Esther Benjamin**  
(CEO, World Education  
Services (WES))

What happens when millions of Indian students go global, but very few international students come here? That was a key question at the PHDCCI roundtable on Internationalisation of Higher Education in India. One number stood out: for every one international student who comes to India, 28 Indian students leave to study abroad. In 2025, over 1.2 million Indian students studied overseas, spending nearly ₹2.9 lakh crore, or about \$35 billion. Ajay Bisaria, former High Commissioner of India to Canada, highlighted the larger opportunity. By 2047, the world could face a major worker shortage while India will still have one of the youngest populations. Kuldeep Dagar of the Association of Indian Universities offered another perspective: we have talent. We need better systems to channel it. DNV Kumara Guru of the Indian School of Business spoke about resident faculty teaching alongside visiting faculty from institutions like Wharton, Kellogg and LBS, while Sunaina Kumar of the Observer Research Foundation highlighted the value of global engagement across diplomacy, policy and academia. Vineet Gupta of Ashoka University also stressed infrastructure and safety. Internationalisation is more than visiting faculty or MoUs. It means globally benchmarked curricula, diverse cohorts, two-way exchange and research partnerships. As a counsellor, I hear the same concerns every week. Families want a diverse cohort, research exposure and a credible global career path. Right now, the honest answer is that the fastest route still runs through an airport. Internationalisation is not a study abroad problem. It is a design problem.

# We Did Not Teach Art. We Changed How Students Think.

How a T-shirt design workshop showed students that creative thinking begins with experimentation.



At EdNet School of Art & Design, we often ask when creative thinking really begins. For us, it starts much earlier than portfolios or studios, in how young minds learn to observe, question and interpret the world.

Our recent workshop at Seth Anandram Jaipuria School Vasundhara, Ghaziabad, on Creative Abstract Doodling for T-Shirt Design brought this idea to life. What started as playful doodling soon became a process of thinking visually, turning spontaneous marks into intent, experimenting with composition, and discovering that even the simplest lines can carry meaning.

The most interesting shift was seeing students move from trying to 'get it right' to thinking differently. That is where design thinking begins.

This is what we want to build at EdNet School of Art & Design: early experiences that make creativity feel natural, personal and exploratory, while encouraging independent creative thought.

Grateful to Principal Anit Arora, Sheetal Sharma, HOD and School Counselor, and Dr Ritu Sharma, Academic Head, for their warmth and openness, and to the students for their endless energy. We look forward to continuing this work with schools.

# College Life Comes With a Few Surprises: Beyond the Brochure, Lessons From Our Alumni

The everyday advice that no university ranking or checklist can prepare you for



No brochure tells you not to dangle your handbag in Chicago because someone might grab it with a knife. An alum does!

As our students prepare to leave home, we invited Sudiksha Khemka (Syracuse University), Aashmin Gulati (Singapore Management University), and Palakshi Singh (University of St Andrews) to share lessons that only experience teaches.

From choosing a bank and taking buses over Uber to saying 'yes' during Orientation Week, keeping your location on, respecting the 20-hour work limit, and understanding local rules and cultural norms, their advice covered the realities no brochure can.

Palakshi shared one lesson that stayed with everyone. She thought she was struggling academically, only to realise the grading system was different and she was actually doing well. Sometimes, understanding the system matters as much as succeeding in it.

A heartfelt thank you to our alumni for returning to guide the next batch of EdNet students.

# The Biggest Mistake Design Students Can Make With AI

Why the fundamentals of design must come before AI-assisted execution.



The biggest mistake design students can make is not using AI. It is letting AI do the thinking.

In our session on 'Idea Development with AI' at our Gurgaon centre, we discussed how AI should be an execution tool, not a creative partner. Let it resize images, remove backgrounds, build mood boards, gather references, or generate layout variations. But creativity comes from observation, experimentation, failure, and understanding why one idea works while another does not.

At EdNet School of Art & Design, we encourage students to use AI for execution, not substitution. When AI starts doing the sketching, questioning, and decision-making, students risk losing the chance to develop their own visual voice and develop the judgement to know whether it is actually good. That judgement comes from sketches, failed ideas, critiques, and revisions. It cannot be downloaded.

My question has never been, "Should students use AI?" It is, "When should they use it?" Learn the fundamentals, build your eye and judgement, struggle with the blank page, then let AI execute your ideas faster, not replace the process of creating them.

# Celebrating Our Crest Gold Winners

When strong ideas meet thoughtful design, recognition follows.



# CONGRATULATIONS!

## EDNET IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE OUR STUDENTS



**ARHAAN AHUJA**



**SAMRIDH PATNI**

## WIN THE PRESTIGIOUS CREST GOLD AWARD



# LET'S GET QUIZZICAL



## Are You Application Ready?

Think You're Application Ready? Let's Find Out.

Separate the common myths from the facts in this quick-fire quiz.

### 1. How ready is your SOP?

- A. Finalised, proofread & ready to submit
- B. Drafted but needs some polishing (3 points)
- C. I have the ideas, but have not started writing
- D. I have not thought about it yet (1 point)

### 2. Where do your LORs stand?

- A. Confirmed and recommenders have everything they need
- B. Recommenders have agreed, but I still need to share details/materials
- C. I know whom I want to ask, but have not approached them
- D. I have not decided yet

### 3. If your course requires a portfolio, how ready is yours?

- A. Finalised, organised and reviewed
- B. Mostly ready, but needs refinement
- C. I have work but need to build the portfolio
- D. I have not started it yet

### 4. How are you doing with standardised tests?

- A. Scores are ready and meet my target
- B. Test taken, but I am considering another attempt
- C. Test booked or preparation is underway
- D. I have not started preparing yet

### 5. How clear is your university list?

- A. Final list with deadlines, requirements and application plans mapped out
- B. I have a shortlist but still need to research requirements
- C. I have a few universities in mind
- D. I am still figuring out where to apply

### 6. How confident are you about your overall application?

- A. I know my strengths and what stands out
- B. Strong profile, but need help presenting it
- C. Know my strengths, but unsure how to build my application
- D. Not sure where my profile stands

### Mostly As | READY

**Your application is in strong shape. Focus on final checks, deadlines, and submitting well.**

### Mostly Bs | ALMOST THERE

**You have done a lot of the groundwork. A little polishing and planning can get you submission-ready.**

### Mostly Cs | NEEDS WORK

**You have a foundation, but several important pieces still need attention. Start by prioritising your biggest gaps.**

### Mostly Ds | START HERE

**There is still plenty to build. Begin with your university list, deadlines and application requirements, then work through each component systematically.**

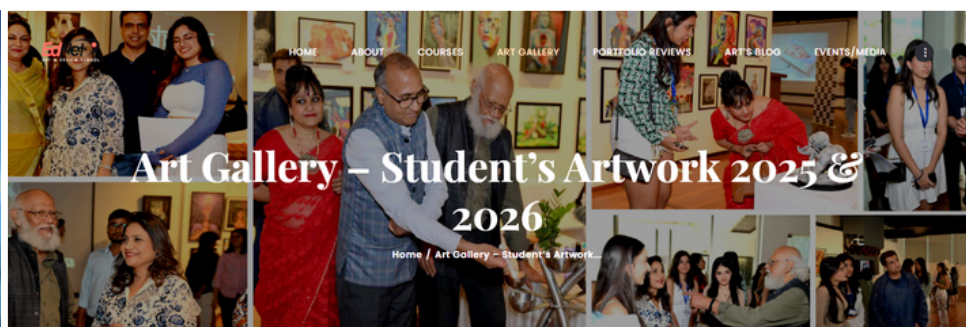
So, how did you do?

If some answers surprised you, you're not alone.

Many study-abroad decisions begin with misconceptions—but the right information changes everything.

# Our Virtual Art Gallery Is Live – Shop NOW

Featuring original works by high school students soon heading to leading global institutions



The gallery showcases original works by high school students from the Classes of 2025 and 2026 created after months of dedication and creative exploration. Many of these young artists are set to begin their journeys at leading global institutions including Rhode Island School of Design, Parsons School of Design, Pratt Institute, University of the Arts, and New York University.

What makes the showcase special is the process behind every piece. Each artwork reflects moments of experimentation, uncertainty and personal growth as these students prepare to take their creativity onto an international stage.

Step inside the virtual gallery and pick your piece now!

<http://www.ednetartschool.com/art-gallery/>



## Will Your Master's Degree Still Matter in the Next 10 Years?



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# This Is Your Moment! EdNet Consultants Brings You the Opportunity to Explore Dual Enrollment

**Saish Khanna**

**From:- Vivek High School, Chandigarh**  
**Accepted in: USF & UMass Boston**

In Grade 10, I struggled with math so dropped it in Grade 11. Later, I realized it was vital for business management programs abroad. I sought guidance from EdNet and took CALCULUS 1001, a four-credit course from Marquette University, thereby eliciting offers from top universities like USF and UMass, Boston.

**Anushree**

**PhD Student**  
**Accepted in Washington University in St. Louis**

Studying abroad was my dream, but I lacked the credits for PhD applications. My courses did not meet the requirements. At EdNet I was advised to pursue Marquette Credit Courses. My efforts paid off when I received acceptance letters from top U.S. universities.

**Prakarsh Jain**

**From:- New York University**  
**Accepted in Indiana University Bloomington, NUS**

When I started my application process, I realized that business programs required a strong foundation in math, something my bachelor's did not cover. I reached out to EdNet, who recommended a 4-credit Calculus course from Marquette University, which turned out to be exactly what I needed.

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- BIOL 1001: GENERAL BIOLOGY 1
- AND MANY MORE...

## Applying to Top Undergraduate Programs? Talent Opens Doors – Strategy Sets You Apart



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**IT TAKES MORE THAN TALENT**

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