



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR
COLLEGE ADMISSION COUNSELING

WEBINAR WEDNESDAY

TITLE: Supporting student transitions
during Covid-19 community crisis

DATE: May 6, 2020

7:00 PM EST





INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR
COLLEGE ADMISSION COUNSELING

Introduction of Panelists

- Aleka Bilan
- Ellen Mahoney
- Bernie Lenoue

Our intentions

And our limitations

Reconciliation

Affirmation

Farewell

Think Destination

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Reconciliation (to the situation)

How to help ourselves, our students and our parents come to terms with the difficulties of this uncertain situation.

Q5: Are there other topics or questions that you would like to see covered in this webinar?

resources work see take help senior support attend class 2020 changes Yes want look
deferral semester graduates virtual summer parents considering know make
Class 2021 Counselors fall fall semester visas think year graduation
transition 2020 schools issue universities
COVID-19 students open fall will high school online prepare
colleges commit plans given start academic year classes fall 2020
ideas ones concerned able also first semester US SAT admissions sharing
Gap year cancelled go times will universities impact campus international students decide
helpful

Answered: 125

Sharing Ideas

How can we reconcile ourselves to this ending?

- Let go of having all the answers
 - Our instinct is to rush in with the answers & then we lose our sense of efficacy when we don't have the answers.
 - Lean in to “counseling” part of role -- listening and empathizing
- Connect with friends and colleagues -- walk & talk
- Breathe, brain breaks from screen time

How can we help students reconcile themselves to their situation?

- Individual meetings, check-ins
- Small group work for transitions by destination
- Hold space

How can we support and enlist the support of parents in reconciliation?

- Webinars on transition emotions so they know what to expect
- Mental-health resources for your community, globally

206

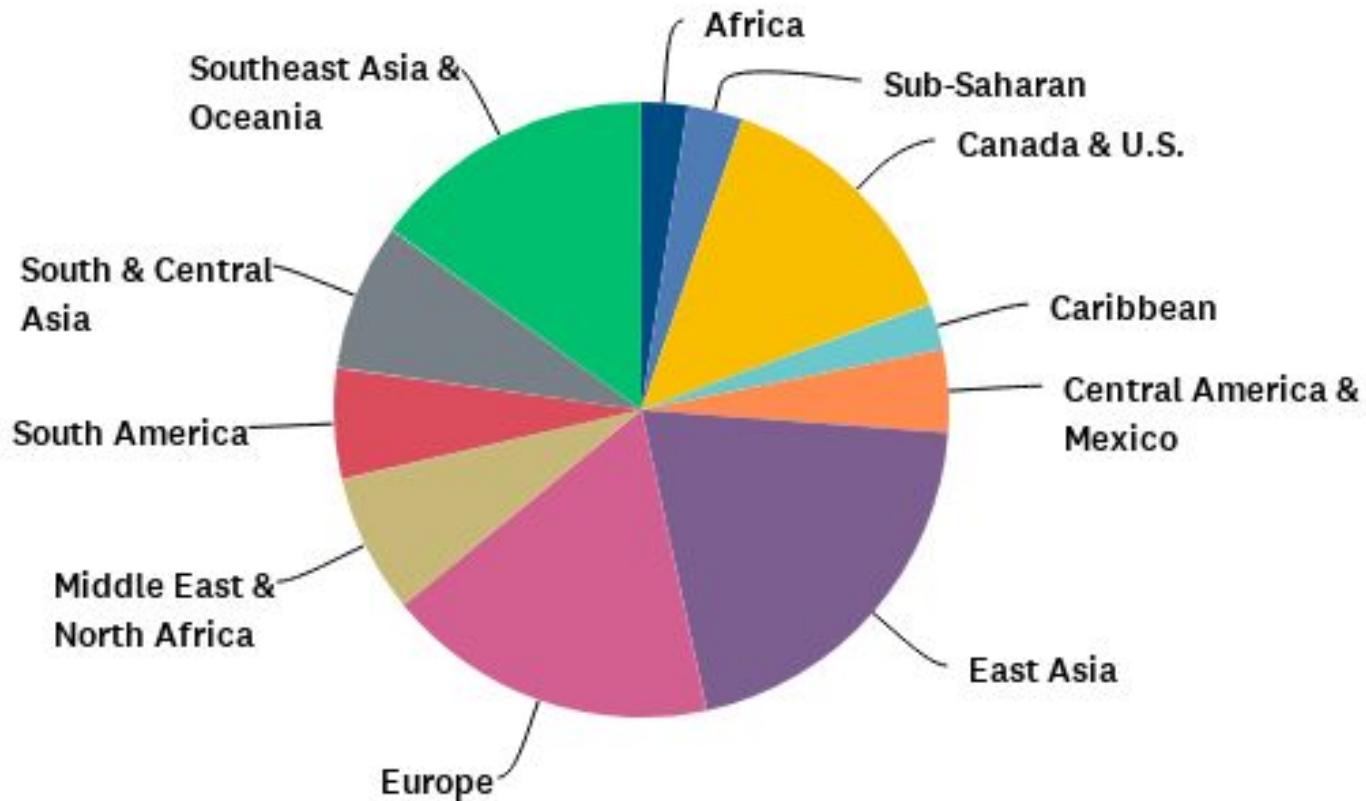
Total Responses

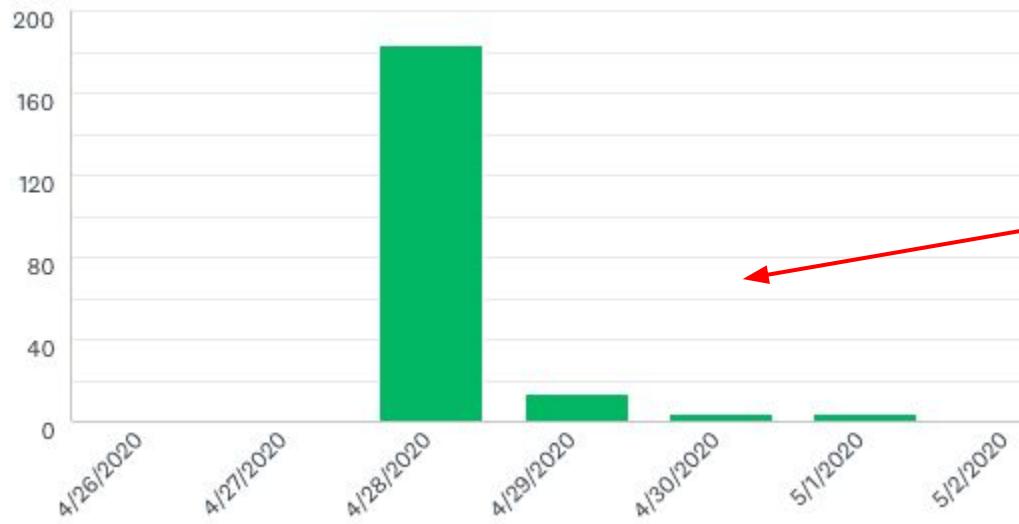
Powered by  SurveyMonkey

Affirmation (of the universality of this experience)

Knowing that we're all connected & we're each doing the best we can.

Q1 In which region is your school community located?



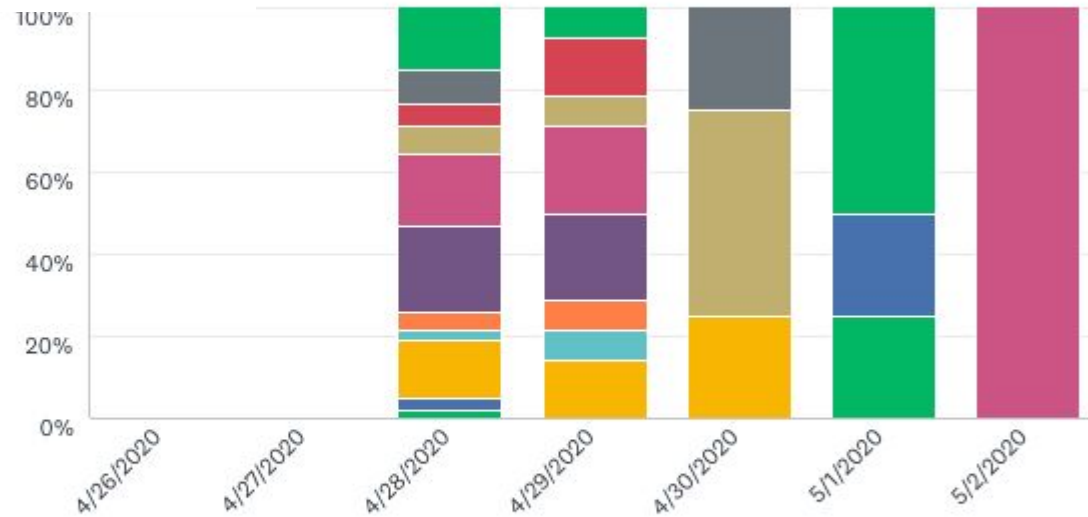


Most survey responses before the US May 1st deposit deadline.

However, several US universities have moved deadline later. And, no questions were asked regarding *destination* countries of students.

Larger variety of regions and respondents within 24 hours of survey sent by email.

Last few responses from Europe only, via Facebook link.



Q3 How have you prepared the Class of 2020 students for their transition from secondary school?

Answered: 200

continues presentations parents taking gap year life skills back keep much focusing US support still trying semester individual lot information series held understand run latest program country virtual use email month resources graduating help students still counseling programme year given week prepared webinars hosting offer online sessions meetings questions will Zoom online visa students senior transition day university Weekly college best sessions including class many school working plan admission workshops next weeks starting engaging also shared going newsletters May individual meetings Yes since providing topics well counselors talk attending seminars communication now virtually Zoom meetings yet campus high school updates institutions usual know will activities look regular closer course study



Sharing Ideas -- Transition Programming

What can counselors do to prepare students for transitioning well to higher education?

- Do something, even given constraints
 - webinar, podcast, or screencast
 - virtual coffee for parents
 - curated list of community-specific resources
- Parents/caregivers can help with life skills practice (cooking, sewing, laundry, budgeting...)
- Ask for help as “guest speakers”
 - alumni students -- how to manage online learning in college
 - experts (physicians, psychologists)
 - other teachers from school -- can even group by time zone
 - university or EducationUSA reps for specific pre-departure webinars
 - collaborate with other schools in region/city to offer one session (could include Embassy reps to answer latest visa questions?)

Q4 What are the plans or ideas for graduation for the Class of 2020?

Answered: 195

awards Maybe later year part postpone right virtually wanted going photo left 2021 country fall
made present person short one host year 2020 celebration formal time cap gown
graduate far teachers take place hoping watch yet will able June July still
senior class event early virtual two Virtual graduation back
graduation ceremony work plans allowed
graduation small will will take students possible
school gathering ceremony None online likely hold situation
video end seniors also parents diploma class sort online graduation
messages later November campus government May better grad late June Since hopefully N
includes might days waiting home in-person us families decided zoom live speeches point
Class 2020 now students parents

Sharing Ideas -- Ceremonies

How can we make a virtual graduation more celebratory?

- Student voice and choice in the planning
- Care-package, gift-giving so can display, take photos
- Videos to each other, teachers posted on Flipgrid or Padlet
- Survey students/parents - what is the *core* of this ritual?

Class of 2020 Graduation Ideas & Alternatives

- <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1j2pLclVMDvtYKvmQoFjqnKXirjhweWwK4EdKs-ALQ3s/edit#gid=0>

Online Graduation Collaboration

- <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Cwwgg55a-YE5gDFFu-3WcPPTO6zX7ny2yNgs6fYX6lc/edit?pli=1#gid=0>



Farewells

How to name the losses and define the grief.

Grief in different forms

- **Ambiguous:** Being in limbo; psychological absence with physical presence or vice versa
- **Disenfranchised:** Not acknowledged by society
- **Anticipatory:** Occurs before an impending loss
- **Traumatic:** Prolonged trauma symptoms

What are we grieving?

- Our loved ones
- Our homes
- Physical connection
- Routines
- Ceremonies and rituals
- In-person goodbyes
- Sense of safety
- Comfort
- Identity
- Freedom
- The world as we knew it
- Our future selves



What grieving looks like

- Appetite changes
- Sleeping habits change
- Decreased ability to concentrate
- Sadness
- Social withdrawal
- Emotional detachment
- Immaturity/Regressive behavior
- Anger/short-fuse
- Re-experience past grief
- Difficulty sitting still

How can we grieve well and help others do the same

- **Acknowledge your own loss and grief**
- **Acknowledge others**
- **Avoid euphemisms and promises you can't keep**
- **Practice patience and compassion**
- **Practice mindfulness or other activities that help us to be present**
- **Actively listen and be present alongside the griever**
- **Express your own feelings, calmly**
- **Don't assume or project your own feelings**
- **Practice self-care**
- **Avoid comparing loss or pain to others'**
- **Connect**



"Today was a Difficult Day," said Pooh.

There was a pause.

"Do you want to talk about it?" asked Piglet.

"No," said Pooh after a bit. "No, I don't think I do."

"That's okay," said Piglet, and he came and sat beside his friend.

"What are you doing?" asked Pooh.

"Nothing, really," said Piglet. "Only, I know what Difficult Days are like. I quite often don't feel like talking about it on my Difficult Days either.

"But goodness," continued Piglet, "Difficult Days are so much easier when you know you've got someone there for you. And I'll always be here for you, Pooh."

And as Pooh sat there, working through in his head his Difficult Day, while the solid, reliable Piglet sat next to him quietly, swinging his little legs...he thought that his best friend had never been more right.



If you need help

- National Association for School Psychologists
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network
- International Therapists Directory - “With over 200 members, in more than 35 different countries, this resource lists therapists, counselors, psychologists, and psychiatrists interested in providing culturally sensitive cross-cultural treatment and care for today’s international expat community.”
 - <https://internationaltherapistdirectory.com/>
- The Truman Group (therapists offering remote psychotherapy, specializing in the international community)
 - <https://truman-group.com/>

Think Destination

How to reframe the uncertainty to invite student ownership?

*Is the glass
half empty
or half full?*

Tips for Reframing

#thedanishway

Reframe to the positive

Using positive, optimistic language

As counselors we can help people reframe self talk, conversations with others, and our general outlook.

GAP Year?

respected, positive choice, many opportunities

Online start in the fall?

In three years the online start will be a memory and you will still be at your chosen university

Be part of the solution - an opportunity to make a difference

Think about your destination as a long-term commitment

Assume best intentions of all involved

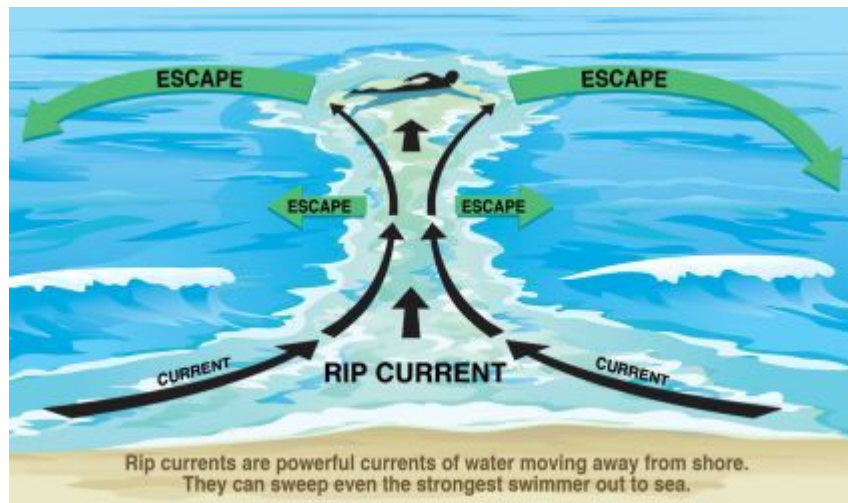
Student ownership of journey

Class of 2020

Encourage students to:

- Press in to your chosen university
- Avoid broad brush strokes
- Ask the university staff questions directly
- Respond to their emails, initiate emails or phone calls
- Shift their focus from you to their university admissions, international staff, fellow students
- Honor the time and research that went into their university choices and stick with your choice.

The Riptide



Turn over, face up, slow easy kick, breath, parallel to the shore

Strategies for coping when the situation is beyond our control

“What can we do?” vs. What we can do?”

“Lean back into counseling” - listen, ask open ended questions, student-centered approach, we are not the expert (even if we are), empower students

Sharing Ideas

- Empowering young people on the path toward independence
- Encouraging self-advocacy
- Asking open-ended questions
- Listening

Personal notes on staying positive:

Music, dance, poetry, art, journaling, water, gardening, campfires

“Smile” by Charlie Chaplin

“I Hope You Dance” by Lee Ann Womack

“SGN” with John Krasinski on YouTube

Resources

- **International School Counselors Association (ISCA)** - curated list of social-emotional resources
 - <https://iscainfo.com/Covid-19-Resources/>
- **Council of International Schools (CIS)** - Wellbeing report & member webinars
 - <https://www.cois.org/about-cis/perspectives-blog/blog-post/~board/perspectives-blog/post/advice-for-school-and-university-leaders-how-to-support-your-communitys-mental-health-and-well-being-during-coronavirus>
 - members-only community webinars on university admissions
- **Sea Change Mentoring** - Support for schools in ending the year and opening the year with wellbeing in mind
 - <https://seachangementoring.com/covid19/>
- **Safe Passage Across Networks (SPAN) “The Nest” Episode 2**, a conversation on graduation ritual ideas (in-person & virtual)
 - <https://www.spanschools.org/the-nest-episode-recordings>
- **The Times Educational Supplement** article
 - <https://www.tes.com/news/five-ways-help-children-heal-after-pandemic>

Thank you!

- **Ellen Mahoney**, Relationship-Based Learning and Wellbeing for International Schools
 - <https://seachangementoring.com/schools/>
- **Bernie Lenoue**, Supporting and encouraging international education. Supporting students, families, schools, and colleges.
 - <https://collegesupportinternational.com/>
- **Aleka Bilan**, Coaching students to thrive in their transition to university. Consulting with international schools to improve transition programming.
 - <https://alekabilanconsulting.com>