



UnicEN
CENTRAL ASIA UNIVERSITY
PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

UNICEN WEBINAR FOR U.S. GRANTEES

SEPTEMBER 21, 2020



AGENDA

Greetings from the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, U.S. Department of State; U.S. Embassy in Kazakhstan; U.S. Embassy in Uzbekistan; American Councils for International Education

UniCEN Overview and Program Updates

COVID-19 and Travel Updates by Country

How to communicate effectively with Central Asian Universities

M&E and Program Reporting

Q&A



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UNICEN NETWORK 2020:

US: 47 UNIVERSITY TEAMS

KZ: 20 (+5) UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

KG: 3 UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

TJ: 2 UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

UZ: 22 UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS



KSENIA IVANENKO

Kyrgyzstan 2002



Kazakhstan 2016



Uzbekistan 2020



American Councils Kazakhstan

- Offices in *Almaty* and *Nur-Sultan* (EducationUSA only!)
- October 1 – start of the EducationUSA office in *Shymkent*
- **18 professional staff**



Programs

- **Global:** FLEX, U.S.-Central Asia Education Foundation, EducationUSA, RLASP, Russian Flagship, ERLP
- **Local:** Spelling Bee, AUBG, grants from US Mission to KZ



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- 5 partnership grants completed
- 15 active partnership grants
- Currently accepting applications for
- **5 additional grants**



KAZAKHSTAN: COVID-19 AND TRAVEL UPDATES

Level 4 Travel Advisory: Do Not Travel

Visa free travel is suspended until November 1

- For visa information visit the KZ Embassy & Consulates websites*

Border remains closed with highly limited exceptions

- PCR test is required (no more than 5 days)*

Regular international commercial flights: Egypt, Germany, Kyrgyzstan, South Korea, the Netherlands, Turkey, U.A.E., Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

Travel within the country is permitted with some restrictions

*For more information please visit:
<https://kz.usembassy.gov/covid-19-information/>*



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American Councils Uzbekistan



American Councils has a long history in Uzbekistan, with its Tashkent office running programs from 1991-2006.

*In 2018, American Councils became the **first U.S. NGO** registered in Uzbekistan in more than a decade.*

*AC Uzbekistan runs more than 9 programs including: **FLEX, YPI, Open World, UBL, FEP, ESN, U.S.-CAEF, UniCEN, American Windows***

***17 professional staff members** are working on these programs.*

*At the moment, there are **22 UniCEN award winners** among Uzbekistan Higher Education Institutions that are running active partnership projects with US HEIs.*



UZBEKISTAN: COVID-19 AND TRAVEL UPDATES

Uzbekistan – Level 3: Reconsider Travel - [link](#)

Entry and Exit Requirements:

- U.S. citizens are permitted to enter Uzbekistan but need a visa. Please see the Country Specific Information on travel.state.gov for more details.
- If a person has not been tested for coronavirus in the last 72 hours or has symptoms of coronavirus infection (cough, fever, etc.), he/she will be tested for coronavirus PCR or express test or undergoes antigen testing upon arrival in Uzbekistan at the checkpoint (airport, train station, etc.) at his own expense and placed in the territory of Uzbekistan and sent to a hotel or home quarantine for 14 days.
- Receipts are issued to persons arriving in Uzbekistan to undertake to stay in a hotel or house quarantine for 14 days.
- If the results of the inspection are positive, the person is quarantined in the quarantine center or at the hotel in the prescribed manner.

Transportation Options:

- As of September 1, limited, regular commercial flights will begin operating on September 1 to and from Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Russia, and Frankfurt.
- **October 1 - all restrictions on air, ground travel lifted**
- Public transportation is operating, with masks and proper social distancing measures mandatory. Taxis should have plastic screens between the front and back seats.

For more information visit: <https://uz.usembassy.gov/covid-19-information/>



* The rules are indicated according to the policies announced on September 17, 2020.

American Councils Kyrgyzstan

- **About:** American Councils has operated in the Kyrgyz Republic since 1994. The office is located in the capital city of Bishkek.
- Our office is represented by 12 staff members

Current programs: Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX), U.S.-Central Asia Education Foundation (U.S.-CAEF) EducationUSA, FLEX Exchanges to Internships, USG Alumni Engagement, USG Alumni Small Grants, Central Asia University Partnerships (UniCEN), Critical Language Scholarship (CLS), Central Asia Spelling Bee

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- 3 partnership grants are currently in progress with 3 local universities



KYRGYZSTAN: COVID-19 AND TRAVEL UPDATES

U.S. Embassy Bishkek Advisory - Level 4: Do Not Travel

International restrictions:

- Flights being operated between Bishkek, Istanbul and Dubai. All land borders are closed.
- As of August 1, 2020, all passengers, including transit passengers, traveling through Dubai will require a negative COVID-19 test certificate
- Most foreign nationals are banned from entering the country, including permanent residence holders

Exceptions MAY be given for:

- Foreign citizens who are specialist workers on W1 and W2 visas
- Employees of diplomatic missions and their family members
- Members of foreign delegations and international organizations
- Those who have an immediate Kyrgyz relative and proof of relationship (original documents only, no copies)
- University students (with visas and original proof of enrollment)

Local restrictions:

- No curfew
- No restrictions on intercity or interstate travel
- Public transportation operating on usual schedule

For more up-to-date info and updates, please visit:

<https://kg.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/security-and-travel-information/>



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American Councils *in Tajikistan*

Established programming: FLEX Tajikistan, FLEX Alumni Program, EducationUSA, NSLI-Y, Critical Language Scholarship Program, University Partnerships Program (UniCen), US-Central Asia Enterprise Foundation (USCAEF), Language Acquisitions Abroad, English Resource Centers, ETS Academic and Professional Testing.

- Established our first office in Country in 1994, based in Dushanbe.
- 17 Current staff members
- 2 current UniCEN Partnerships



Past programming: Summer Camp America, Study With US, Open World, Community Connections, and more.

TAJIKISTAN: COVID-19 AND TRAVEL UPDATES

Level 4 Travel Advisory: Do Not Travel

- *Land borders remain closed*
- *Airport remains closed to commercial carriers (except for FlyDubai)*
- *Tourist visas are not being issued*
- *For visa information visit the Tajik Embassy and Ministry of Foreign Affairs websites*
- *PCR test is required (no more than 4 days)*

Travel Updates:

- *Currently only FlyDubai and Somon Air twice per week*
- *Airport reopening is assessed every two weeks*

For visa information, please visit:

<https://mfa.tj/en/washington>

and

<https://www.visa.gov.tj/>



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HOW TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH UZBEK PARTNER UNIVERSITIES



Use as official conversation method



Use Zoom calls to make in-depth discussions



Open a telegram group chat for closer integration

If you have issues reaching your partners in Central Asia please contact regional American Councils staff members



HOW TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH CENTRAL ASIAN UNIVERSITIES

- ❖ Different time dimension and approach to time management
- ❖ With more autonomy given, the systems of highly education are still centralized
- ❖ High hierarchy at HEIs
- ❖ High power distance
- ❖ Transition of staff
- ❖ Lack of confidence
- ❖ MoUs and Certificates are very important



HOW TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH CENTRAL ASIAN UNIVERSITIES

- *Keep on discussing your plans with the U.S. university partner regularly: biweekly conference calls on skype, WhatsApp, telegram*
- *Respond to the emails timely (check your spam box)*
- *Travel arrangements*
- *MoUs, official documents, etc might be requested*

Reach out to us if any questions or concerns arise



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Monitoring and Evaluation Goals

- 1) Central Asian university administrators apply knowledge and skills learned through UniCEN to adapt faculty policies, practices, and administrative structure
- 2) Central Asian university administrators increase international student exchanges with the U.S.
- 3) Central Asian university faculty increase collaboration and partnerships with U.S. counterparts that support the role of universities in society and economic and workforce development
- 4) Central Asian university faculty apply knowledge and skills learned through UniCEN to adapt their curriculum, teaching and assessment methods for improved student outcomes



Goal 4: to apply knowledge and skills learned through UniCEN to adapt curriculum, teaching and assessment methods for improved student outcomes

Outcomes	Indicators	Data Source
Faculty <u>introduce or revise undergraduate courses</u> based on U.S. teaching methods or curriculum	Number of undergraduate courses improved	Improved course syllabi
Faculty <u>introduce or revise graduate courses</u> based on U.S. teaching methods or curriculum	Number of graduate programs improved	Undergraduate program structure
U.S. faculty <u>have jointly supervised graduate dissertations</u>	Number of shared supervision of graduate students	Lists of joint supervision
Faculty <u>have introduced new student assessment methods</u>	Number of faculty who report introducing new assessment methods	Course syllabi
Departments have introduced <u>faculty evaluations</u> by at the end of the course	Number of faculty evaluated by students at the end of the course	Faculty evaluations



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Goal 3: to increase collaboration and partnerships with U.S. counterparts that support the role of universities in society and economic and workforce development

Outcomes	Indicators	Data Source
Faculty have submitted <u>proposals for international conferences and professional workshops</u>	Number of joint papers and sessions submitted	Paper or session submission confirmation
Faculty have (co)submitted <u>papers to international peer-reviewed journals</u>	Number of submissions	Paper abstracts/submission confirmation
Faculty have presented their <u>research at international conferences/workshops</u>	Number of presentations	Conference/workshop programs
Faculty successfully published <u>papers in peer-reviewed journals</u>	Number of papers accepted for publication in peer-reviewed journals	Acceptance confirmations/papers in peer-reviewed journals
Faculty submitted <u>joint proposals to international funding agencies</u>	Number of joint proposals submitted	Joint proposal abstracts



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Goal 2: to increase international student exchanges with the U.S.

Outcomes	Indicators	Data Source
Administrators have included <u>targets and goals for student exchange with U.S. partners</u>	Number of administrators who included targets and goals for student exchange to strategic planning	Names of administrators
Students have been advised on <u>exchange and study opportunities in U.S.</u>	Number of students advised on exchange and study opportunities in U.S.	Names of students
Students participate in <u>outgoing exchange programs in U.S.</u>	Number of students who participated in international exchanges in U.S.	Names of students
<u>U.S. students participate on exchange programs</u> at Central Asian universities	Number of incoming U.S. students in the university	Names of U.S. students
MoUs are signed with U.S. universities <u>on student exchange</u>	Numbers of MoUs signed	MoUs



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Goal 1: to adapt faculty policies, practices, and administrative structure

Outcomes	Indicators	Data Source
Senior leadership has included international activity in the <u>university mission and vision statements</u>	Number of mission and vision statements adapted to include internationalization	University mission and vision statements
The university has formed an <u>internationalization committee with established roles and responsibilities</u>	Number of universities that established Committee/Board	List of Committee/Board members
Administrators have introduced <u>new internationalization policies and practices</u>	Number of universities that adopted policies and practices	Policy documents/In-person meetings
Administrators implement <u>recommendations of U.S. internationalization policies</u> and practices to senior leadership	Number of administrators that implement recommendations	Policy documents/In-person meetings
The university has <u>integrated US practices into administrative structure</u> with support from professional networks	Number of universities that built in U.S. practices	Practices confirmation documents/In-person meetings



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QUATERLY UPDATES (October 20, January 20, April 20, July 20)

- Activities in the reported period
 - Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment Methods Revisions
 - Joint Research, Conferences and Publications with the C.A. Partner
 - Faculty and Student (Virtual) Exchanges
 - New Faculty Policies and Practices introduced to C.A. university
 - Other Activities with Central Asian University Partner

- Outcomes

- Links of information about the project (university website, newsletter, social media, etc.)

- Project Concerns and Limitations. Is it on track/schedule to be completed within the estimated period of performance? If not, how do you plan to get the program back on schedule?

- Sustainability (plans for future activity or funding beyond project end)

- How can American Councils help support your partnership?



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UNICEN WEBSITE: UNICEN.AMERICANCOUNCILS.ORG

The image shows a screenshot of the UniCEN website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the following elements: the United States flag, the official seal of the United States Department of Education, the UniCEN logo (a blue star-like shape with a globe inside), and the text "UniCEN CENTRAL ASIA UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM". To the right of the logo is a "Join the Network" button. Below the navigation bar is a blue menu bar with the following items: "ABOUT UNICEN", "NEWS", "RESOURCES", "NETWORK", "OPPORTUNITIES", and "CONTACTS". A search icon is located on the right side of the menu bar. The main content area features a large group photograph of approximately 30 people, mostly men in suits and women in professional attire, standing in front of a blue backdrop with the UniCEN logo. Overlaid on the photograph is the text "Central Asia University Partnerships Program (UniCEN)" in a large, white, serif font. Below the photograph, there is a caption: "The Central Asia University Partnerships Program (UniCEN) is a platform to increase sustainable".

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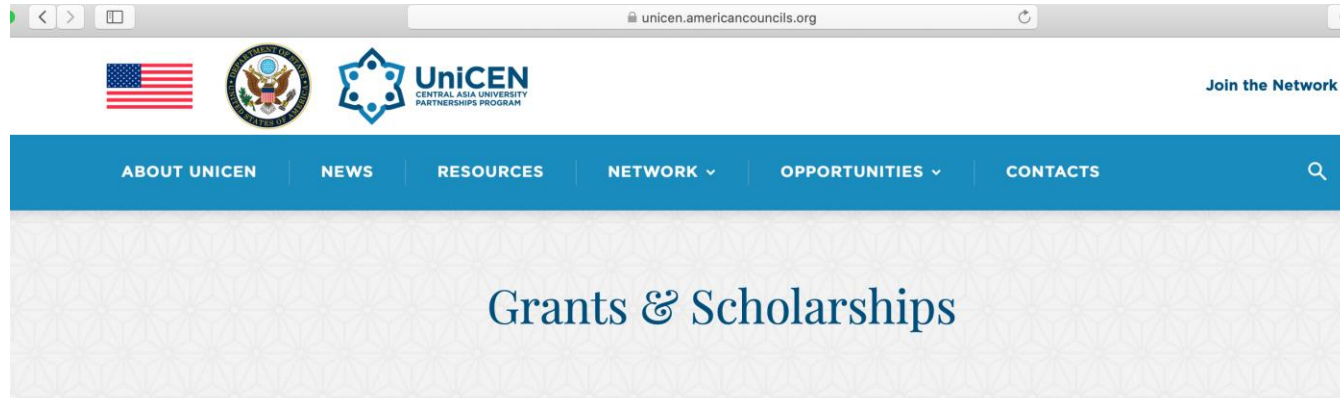
Join the Network

ABOUT UNICEN | NEWS | RESOURCES | NETWORK | OPPORTUNITIES | CONTACTS

Central Asia University Partnerships Program (UniCEN)

The Central Asia University Partnerships Program (UniCEN) is a platform to increase sustainable

RESOURCES, OPPORTUNITIES



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL unicen.americancouncils.org. The page features a blue navigation bar with the following menu items: ABOUT UNICEN, NEWS, RESOURCES, NETWORK (with a dropdown arrow), OPPORTUNITIES (with a dropdown arrow), and CONTACTS. A search icon is located on the right side of the navigation bar. Below the navigation bar, the main content area has a light gray background with a subtle geometric pattern. The heading 'Grants & Scholarships' is centered in a large, blue, serif font. Below this heading, there are two white boxes, each containing a Fulbright program description.



Fulbright Scholar in Residence Program

Through the Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence (S-I-R) Program, U.S. colleges and universities host scholars from other countries to assist in internationalizing U.S. campuses, institutional...



Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) Program

The FLTA Program provides an opportunity for young, international teachers of English to refine their teaching skills, increase their English-language proficiency and extend their

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