

Fall 2024 Snapshot on International Student Enrollment

Introduction

The *Fall 2024 Snapshot on International Student Enrollment* presents the responses of over 690 U.S. higher education institutions on international student enrollments for the 2024/25 academic year. The report, conducted by IIE and ten partner higher education associations, complements *Open Doors 2024*, which provides comprehensive data on international students from the previous year (2023/24). As the Snapshot Survey represents a subset of the nearly 3,000 institutions surveyed by *Open Doors*, the full picture of 2024/25 enrollment will be analyzed in *Open Doors 2025*.

Key Findings

The *Fall 2024 Snapshot* indicates continued growth of the international student population in 2024/25.

International student totals grow by 3% in the 2024/25 academic year.

- A 3% growth in international student totals (undergraduate, graduate, non-degree, and Optional Practical Training [OPT]) builds on the 7% growth in 2023/24 and the 12% growth in 2022/23 (*Open Doors*). This marks four years of international student increases since the COVID-19 pandemic.
- International student enrollment has grown at the undergraduate level (+6%) and slightly declined at the graduate level (-2%).
- New enrollments, a subset of total enrollments, indicate a 5% decrease for international students studying at their college or university for the first time. 46% of institutions report an increase in new international student enrollment, 12% indicate the number to be the same as last year, and 42% report a decrease.

OPT continues to see record growth and gains by another 12% in 2024/25.

- OPT is an important opportunity for international students to gain work experience in their fields of study after completing their degree.
- The 12% growth builds on the last two years of increases and is driven by large numbers of international graduate students, particularly in the STEM fields.
- U.S. institutions report that OPT is important for recruiting international students interested in work experiences (77%) and enabling U.S. businesses to recruit and retain international student talent (70%). Further, 66% of institutions believe that OPT presents an economic benefit to U.S. businesses.
- 84% of U.S. institutions reported that if OPT were not available, international students would likely look to other destinations for their education abroad experiences.

India remains the highest priority for international recruitment among all places of origin.

- Institutions are prioritizing undergraduate outreach in India (65%), Vietnam (58%), China (48%), and South Korea (44%). Graduate recruitment is focused on India (81%), China (43%), Ghana (41%), and Nigeria (41%).
- 84% of reporting institutions indicate that financial support for their international student recruitment efforts is the same or higher than in the previous year. U.S. institutions report working with current international students, collaborating with agents, building international partnerships, and conducting in-person recruitment events to support outreach and recruitment.