

higher education development is poor quantitatively and qualitatively in China's less-developed areas.

Despite recent spectacular economic development, 6.7 percent of the Chinese population still lives in poverty. The introduction of university fees does not favor students living in remote areas with little money. As higher education is becoming more expensive, the gap in higher education opportunities between the developed and underdeveloped areas is rapidly widening.

Most affected are the impoverished areas, which are often those with large minority populations. For instance, by the end of 2000, the number of students studying at higher education institutions in Tibet was 5,400; whereas in 2001, 38.8 percent of the 18-to-22-year age cohort in Shanghai went to universities; and 70 percent of secondary school graduates in Beijing went directly to universities.

To make the situation in poorer areas worse, China is still practicing a discriminative university admissions policy, which gives preference to students from the major cities. Top universities have a quota system and admissions requirements that favor local students. Such a policy was originally designed to ensure that the best students in underdeveloped areas would have a chance to attend key institutions and enjoy the same quality of education. As academic qualifications become more important in China's job market, the disparity in access to higher education in different regions will have an even greater negative impact. A distribution of quotas between the central and local governments will be even more of a problem as the Chinese government begins to decentralize.

Conclusion

Parallel to international changes in the philosophy of governance and the way higher education is managed, there has been a strong trend toward diversification and decentralization in China's higher education. Meanwhile, the latest developments confirm findings reported by many comparative studies that decentralization can be a mechanism for tightening the control of the central government over higher education. Thus there is a co-existence between decentralizing and centralizing trends in higher education governance. While higher education in China is under increasing pressure to follow international trends, the lingering influence of the country's longstanding centrally planned system and the complex domestic situation combine to create difficulties in easing China's ongoing social transformation. The role of the state, while still strong, is undergoing change. Considering China's social, cultural, and historical realities, the state remains necessary as a regulator, facilitator, and negotiator. Currently, the state performs all these roles, although arguably such diverse roles often do not play out in a consistently beneficial way. ■

Trends in International Student Flows to the United States

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The year 1999–2000 was a milestone year. For the first time since the Institute of International Education began collecting data on international student flows to the United States, the number of international students in the United States passed the half-million mark, rising to 514,723. This past year, in 2000–2001, 547,867 international students were studying in the United States. The institute has been collecting this data since its founding in 1919 and began publishing this data independently in 1948 and, with United States Department of State funding, since the early 1970s in the annual *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange*.

In 2000–2001, over half, or 55 percent, of these students came from places of origin in Asia, followed by Europe (15 percent), Latin America (12 percent), the Middle East (7 percent), Africa (6 percent), North America (6 percent), and Oceania (6 percent). China is the leading place of origin for the third year in a row, with 59,939 students, or 10.9 percent of the foreign student total. India is ranked second, with 54,464 students, or 10 percent of the total; this number represents a 29.1 percent increase from the previous year, the largest percent increase of all the places of origin.

Although international students are studying throughout the United States, they are mainly concentrated in just a few metropolitan areas. Over one-fifth of all international students are found in seven states and the nation's capital. The New York metropolitan area hosts the most international students (49,283), followed by the Los Angeles area (27,426). In comparisons by county, Los Angeles County hosts the most international students, with New York County (Manhattan) a close second. Regionally, the Northeast hosts the most international students (25 percent), followed by the Midwest (22 percent), the South (21 percent), the Pacific (18 percent), the Southwest (11 percent), and the Mountain Region (11 percent).

The overwhelming majority of international students are at Research I universities, Master's I institutions, and community colleges. These three institutional types host more international students than the other 16 Carnegie Classification types combined, with 368,169, or 67.2 percent of the total. Business and

management continues to be the most popular field of study among international students in the United States, with 106,043, or 19.4 percent, of all international students enrolled. Engineering and mathematics-computer sciences are the next largest fields of study, with 83,186, or 15.2 percent, and 67,825, or 12.4 percent, respectively.

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Enrollment Trends Over Time

The numbers of international students in the United States have for the most part grown steadily since 1954–1955, the year that the present form of the *Open Doors Report* came into being. Two of the exceptions to the periods of growth, and at times of steep growth, in the foreign student totals were plateaus in the mid-1980s and mid-1990s. Changes in enrollment flows have been relatively stable over the past 10 years, with significant growth since 1998. This past year's international student total, 547,867, represents a 6.4 percent increase over the previous academic year. This is the largest percentage growth in over two decades, since 1980.

At present, even though there are over a half million international students, in the United States they represent less than 4 percent of all U.S. higher education enrollments. In 1954–1955, there were 34,232 foreign students studying in the United States; they represented 1.4 percent of the 2,499,800 total U.S. higher education enrollment. Fifty years later, the foreign student population has increased tenfold to 547,867, but represents only 3.9 percent of the 14,046,659 total enrollment. However, at the more advanced degree levels, and in certain disciplines, foreign students comprise a high percentage of total U.S. graduate student enrollments, with 13.1 percent of all graduate enrollments. More than half of all international students study at the undergraduate level. Historically, they have always outnumbered graduate students, though in recent years the gap has been closing.

Even though the overall foreign student enrollment percentages are small, their presence both on campuses and throughout the United States is significant and felt in a variety of ways. They are an important factor in the internationalization of U.S. higher education, especially for colleges and universities that do not offer study abroad

opportunities for the students or have students who are not able to study abroad. In addition, international students' financial contributions to both U.S. institutions of higher education and the U.S. economy are significant. In an analysis prepared for NAFSA, the Association of International Educators, Lynn Schoch and Jason Baumgartner of Indiana University estimated that they contributed over \$11 billion to the U.S. economy through tuition and living expenses last year.

Regional Trends

Enrollment trends during the time period 1954–1955 to 2000–2001 differ greatly by region of the world. Asia has always been the leading source of foreign student enrollments in the United States, with the exception of one year, 1979–1980. The percentage of enrollment from Asia has ranged from a low of 29.7 percent in 1954–1955 to over 55.1 percent in 2000–2001; the highest percentage was nearly 60 percent (59.4 percent) in 1992–1993. There have been very sharp percentage increases since the late 1970s and early 1980s, especially beginning in 1983–1984.

In the Americas, the general trend over the years has been a decreasing percentage of enrollments from Latin America, from 24.7 percent in 1954–1955 to 11.6 percent in 2000–2001, with fluctuations throughout the years. In the 1970s, the Middle East surpassed Latin America in its number-two ranking; then in the 1990s, Europe surpassed them both. Though actual numbers have been increasing over the years, the percentage of enrollments from North America have, in general, seen steady declines, from 13.8 percent in 1954–1955 to 4.7 percent in 2000–2001. There were double-digit percentages from 1954–1955 to 1968–1969, but they have been 4 to 5 percent since 1979–1980.

Percentages of enrollments from Europe have generally been in the double digits, in the range of 10 to 15 percent, except in the decade from 1974–1975 to 1984–1985. These percentage of enrollment decreases were taking place simultaneously with increasing African enrollments in that same decade. The percentage of total enrollment each year from Africa was in the double digits for a decade, from 1974–1975 to 1984–1985, with the peak in the early 1980s, when enrollments doubled. International students from Oceania have always constituted less than 2 percent of international student enrollments; they have for the most part constituted less than 1 percent of the foreign student total in the United States since the 1991–1992. As in the case of North America, there have been total number increases, but percentage decreases, since the early 1980s (1979–1980).

In comparing top regional enrollments from 1954–1955 to 2000–2001, several patterns emerge. In the early years, from 1954–1955 to 1974–1975, Asia was the leading

region of origin, followed by Latin America, which saw its peak in 1954–1955 (24.7 percent). However, the ranking changed in 1975–1976. Asia was still the top region of origin, but the Middle East displaced Latin America as the second-ranked region in the 1970s. Asia has been the leading region of origin for international students in the United States, but in 1978–1979, the percentage of students from the Middle East (26.6 percent) grew quite close to that of students from Asia (29.1 percent). In 1979–1980, the Middle East percentage (29.2 percent) surpassed that of Asia (28.6 percent), the only year that Asia was not the leading region. In 1982–1983, Latin America began catching up to the Middle East percentages. In 1987–1988, Latin American enrollment percentages (12.5 percent) passed the Middle East (6 percent). Since then, it has dropped down in the rankings as the number-four region, surpassed by Europe in the 1990s, and has seen a steady decline to almost 6 percent since 1991–1992. In 1990–1991, Asia was still ranked the leading region of origin, followed by Europe, for the first time, and then Latin America. They have remained the top three regions since then.

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The Future of International Student Flows

The United States continues to be the destination of choice among international students wishing either to pursue or continue higher education abroad. However, the U.S. market share of international students has been decreasing from 36.7 percent of the world's total enrollment in 1970 to 30.2 percent in 1995. The proportion of international students studying in the United States has decreased by approximately 10 percent since the 1980s.

Reasons for this decrease in market share are varied and include internal and external factors. There has been increased competition for full-fee-paying international students from other English-speaking countries, notably the United Kingdom and Australia, which have national international education policies and international student recruitment strategies in place. While these nations' total international enrollments do not reach the level of enrollments in the United States, the international enrollments in these countries are proportionally much greater, as are the percentage increases. Compared to the United States, these

countries have a smaller number of institutions and enrollments in total. In addition, a number of countries have emerged as regional players in the international student marketplace that hope to attract a growing number of students from within their world region. These countries include, among others, Australia, Japan, Malaysia, and South Africa.

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More recently, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 have impacted international student flows, but in unexpected ways. Though the final impact on the number of students studying in the United States remains to be seen until the data are collected and analyzed for the next *Open Doors Report*, an initial on-line survey conducted by the institute through its on-line membership network website during a two-week time period a month after September 11 indicates that there was little immediate impact. Contrary to people's fears that international students would return to their home countries in droves after the terrorist attacks, very few institutions reported much "negative" activity related to September 11. Of the 577 international educators surveyed, 99 percent reported that there was little (less than 10 percent) or no change regarding the numbers of international students returning home. Moreover, 97 percent reported that international education was equally or more important in the aftermath of September 11.

These findings revealed that the desire to seek an international educational experience has not been eradicated among international students wishing to study in the United States and American students wishing to study abroad, and that it is still considered an important dimension of education. The events of September 11 underscored the fact that the world is interconnected and interdependent. The positive outcome of the events was that they created an awareness of the need to promote better understanding among peoples and cultures and to become more internationally educated. In this global world, the best way to promote peace, understanding, and "open minds to the world" is to continue international education—not despite, or in spite of, the events of September 11, but because of those events. It is the institute's hope that the post-September 11 levels of international student enrollment will continue to build on the growing trend since 1954–1955.