

Strategic *International* Enrollment Management

Clayton Smith, Ed.D.
Vice-Provost, Students & Registrar
University of Windsor, Ontario
Senior Consultant, AACRAO Consulting
csmith@uwindsor.ca

A fundamental transformation is underway at Canadian universities as they seek to internationalize curricula, encourage students to study abroad and attract foreign students to Canadian campuses.

-Association of Universities & Colleges of Canada, 2007

We need to unpack what we mean by internationalization, get past the rhetoric and figure out what to do.

-David Turpin, President, University of Victoria, 2007

Outline

- **Strategic enrollment management (SEM) as a structure for addressing international enrollment issues.**
 - *Leading practices in international student recruitment*
 - *Creating linkages between international student support programs and SEM*
 - *Action steps for crafting an effective international enrollment strategy*



What is *International Strategic Enrollment Management*?



- Using SEM principles in the context of international students and how they relate to your institution's mission and the educational goals of the students recruited and enrolled.

-Braxton & Conroy, 2008

The Office of International Enrollment Management at the University at Buffalo

➤ **Mission includes:**

- *Increasing the enrollment of high-quality international students through recruitment activities abroad*
- *Manage the admission and enrollment process for international undergraduate students*
- *Work with the Graduate School, the Office of Undergraduate Education and the academic units to meet international enrollment targets and to ensure the retention of recruited students*

Strategic Objectives

- 1. Attracting top talent**
- 2. Enhancing diversity**
- 3. Improving yields**
- 4. Reducing cost**

Strategic Challenges

1. Competitive scenario

- *Destinations*
- *Modes*
- *Local education*

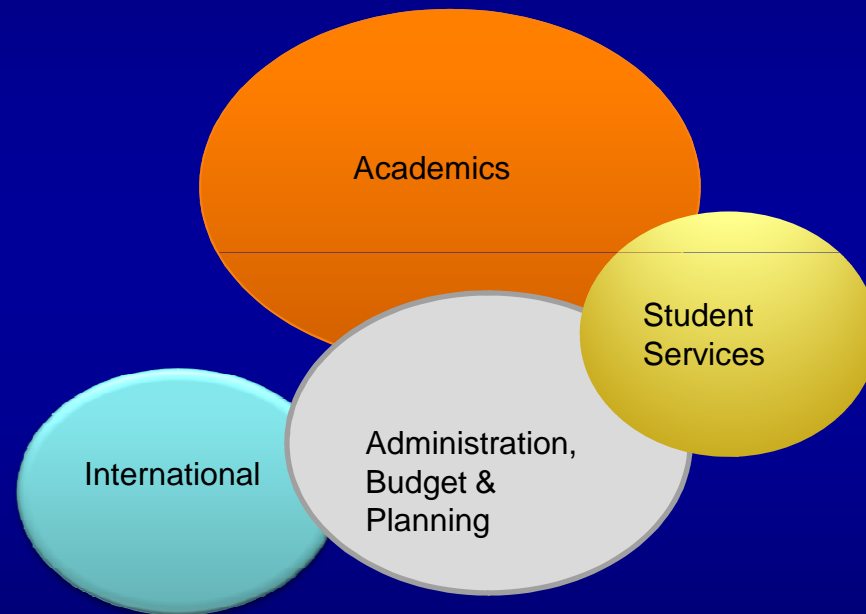
2. Clutter in the events & media

3. High cost of travel and marketing

4. Quest for quality of students

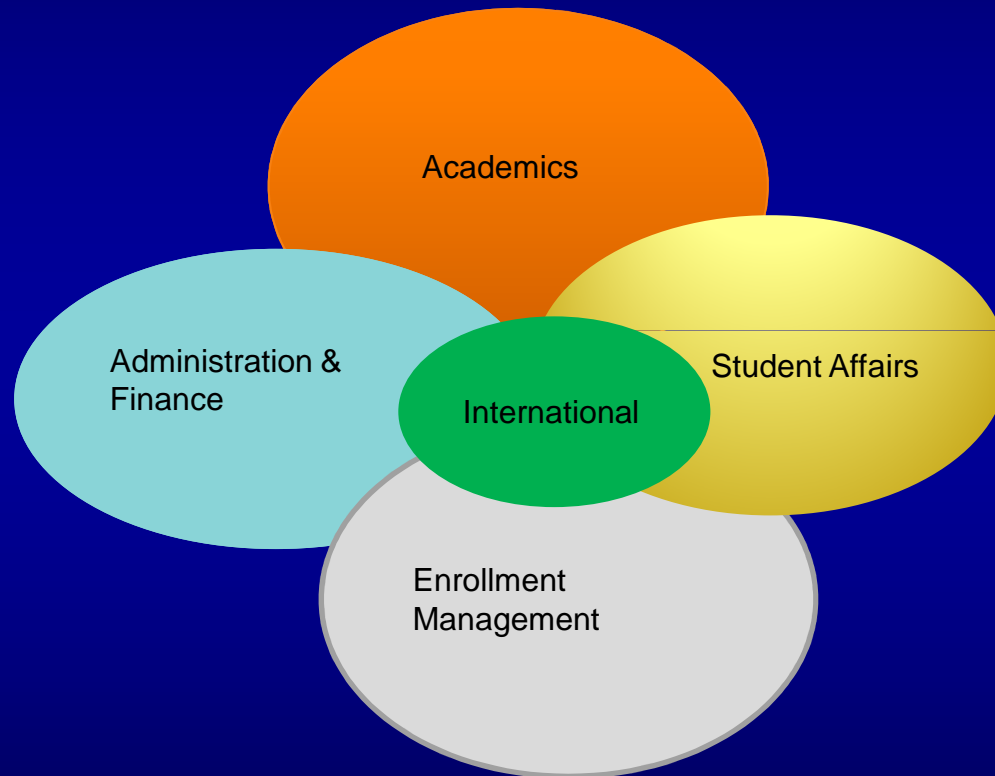
-Nelson & Choudaha, University of Denver, 2008

A Sample Diagram: Traditional Alignment of International SEM



-Baxton & Conroy, 2008

International SEM Organization



Commitment to Internationalization

- **Assess your institution's level of commitment to internationalization:**
 - *Is it referenced in your mission statement or strategic plan?*
 - *How frequently is it discussed by institutional leaders both internally and in public statements?*
 - *Do you have an institution-wide task force on internationalization?*
 - *What is the level of support for global awareness?*

ACE's 6 Dimensions of Internationalization

- **Articulated commitment**
- **Academic offerings**
- **Organization infrastructure**
- **External funding**
- **Institutional investment in faculty**
- **International students and programs**

Be Intentional

- **Adding the right internationally-focused programs or strengthening existing ones should be done intentionally. The goal should be an integrated group to create maximum institutional impact**

An Example

- **European Bologna Process Standard**
 - *3 year bachelor degree*
 - *2 year master degree*
 - *5 years of higher education study*

- **American Standard**
 - *4 year bachelor degree*
 - *1 year master degree*
 - *5 years of higher education study*

An Example (Cont.)

OPTION #1:

Accept the 3-year European bachelor degree and add 1-year American master degree for 4 years of higher education study

OPTION #2:

Accept the 3-year European degree as a body of knowledge, add capstone year and award American bachelor and continue in 1-year American master degree for 5 years of higher education study

THE CHALLENGES WE FACE IN INTERNATIONAL SEM...

...WHAT THE DATA SAYS

”Following a brief slump in the immediate post-9/11 years, international students have been enrolling at U.S. postsecondary institutions in near record numbers.”

-U.S. Dept. of State Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs, 2007

**But there is a whole lot of
competition out there...**

SEM

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The Competition

- **The competition is well organized:**
 - *British Council*
 - *Study in Australia*
 - *Education New Zealand*
 - *German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)*
 - *CampusFrance*
 - *Canadian Education Centre Network*

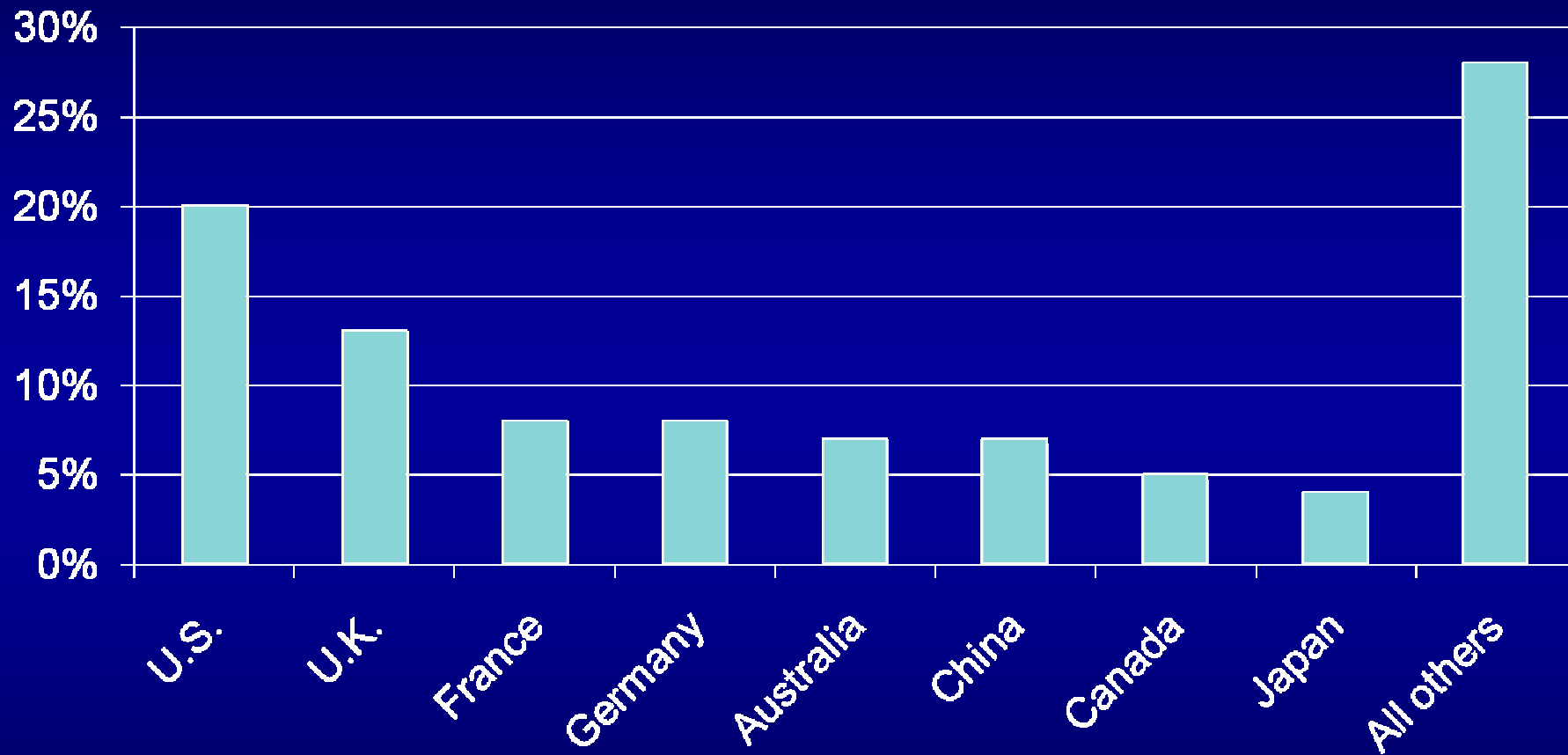
The Competition (Cont.)

- **Newer entrants to the market:**
 - *Education Ireland*
 - *Singapore Education*
 - *Malaysia Education Promotion Council*
 - *Spain, Singapore, Nordic Countries*

- **Other international student education destinations:**
 - *Russia*
 - *China*
 - *Japan*

*All have organized programs to
promote higher education study in their
countries!*

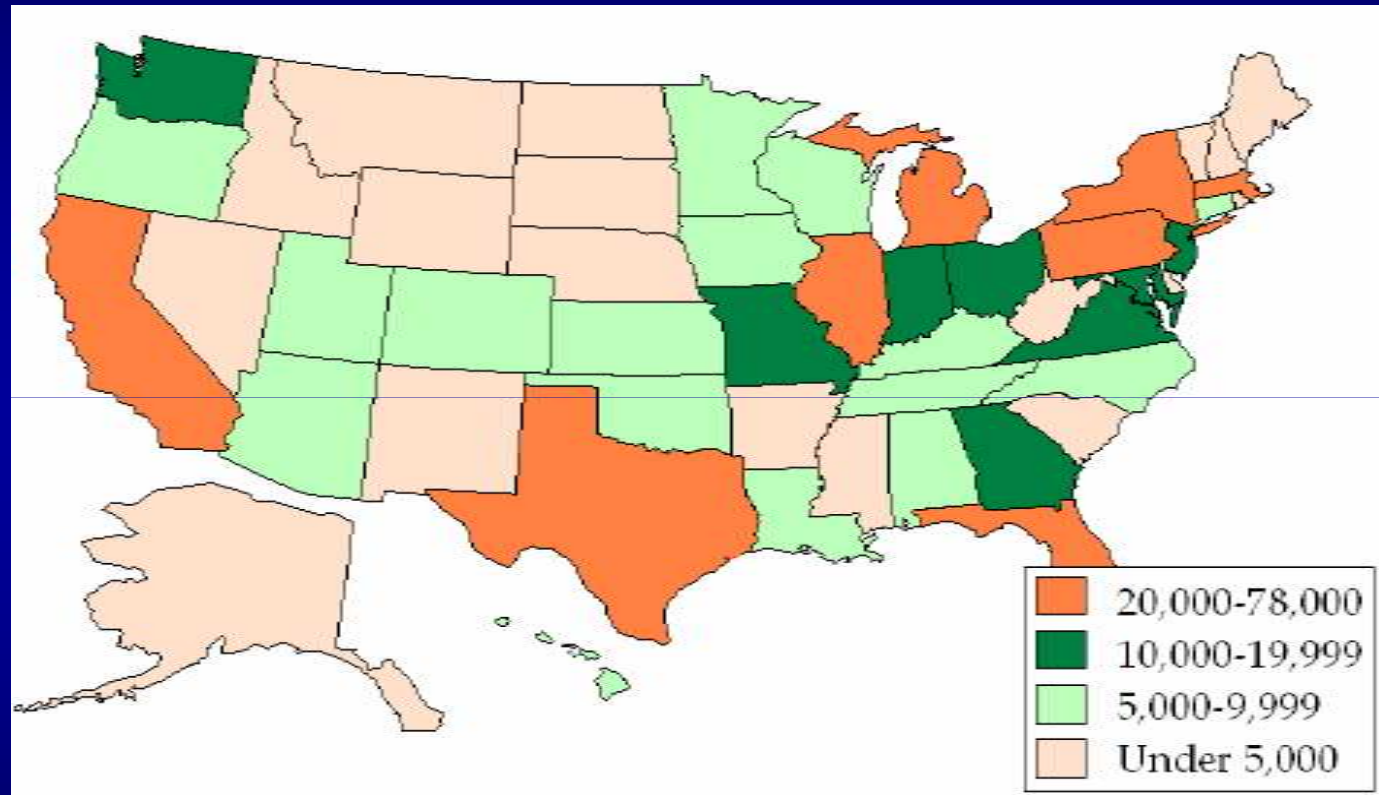
Where Do International Students Go?



-Institute of International Education, 2008

Where Do International Students Go?

Top 5 Host States overall: CA, NY, TX, MA & FL



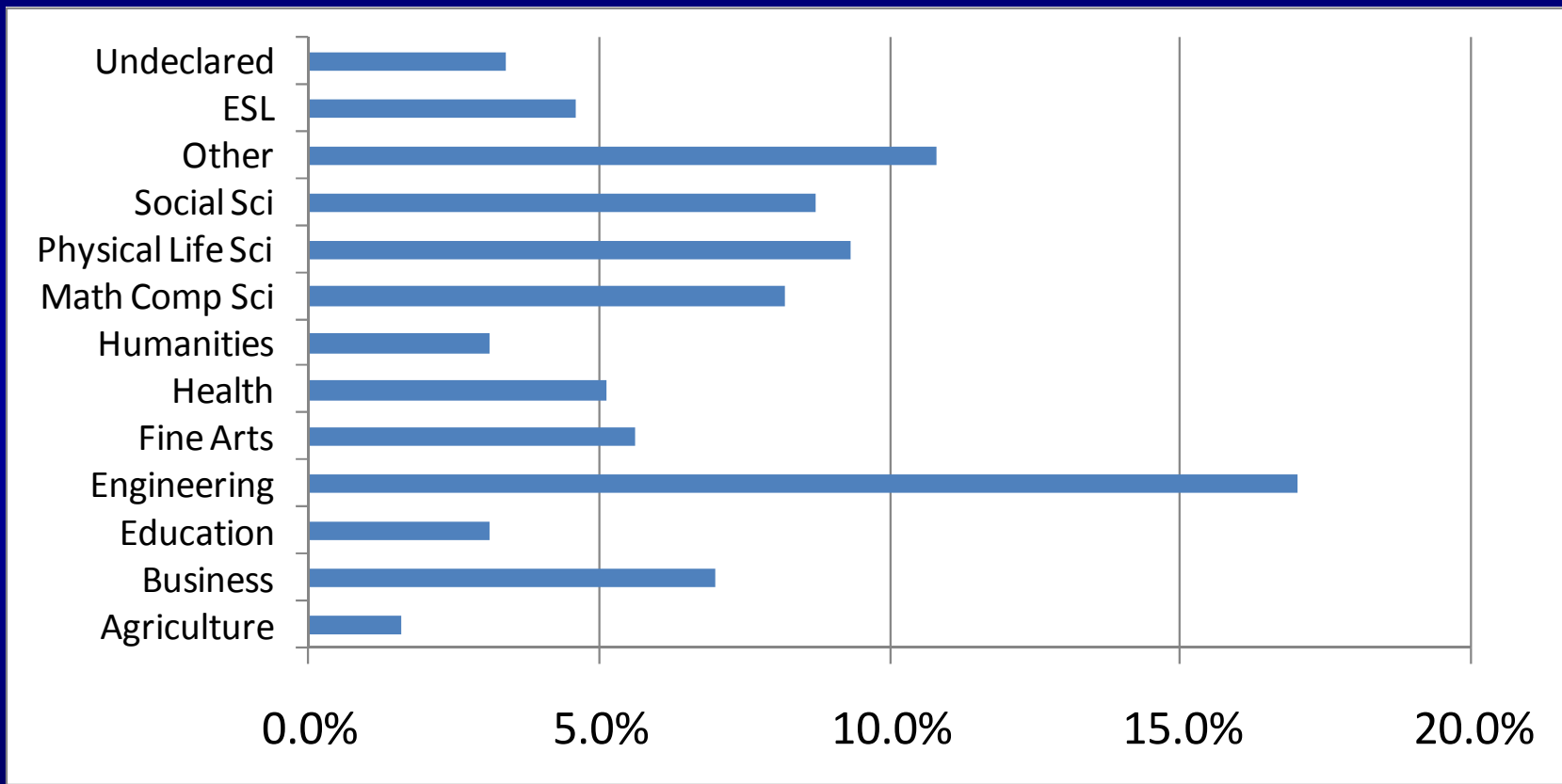
-Institute of International Education, 2008

Leading Countries of Origin



-Institute of International Education, 2008

What Do They Study?



-Institute of International Education, 2008

U.S. International Graduate Enrollment

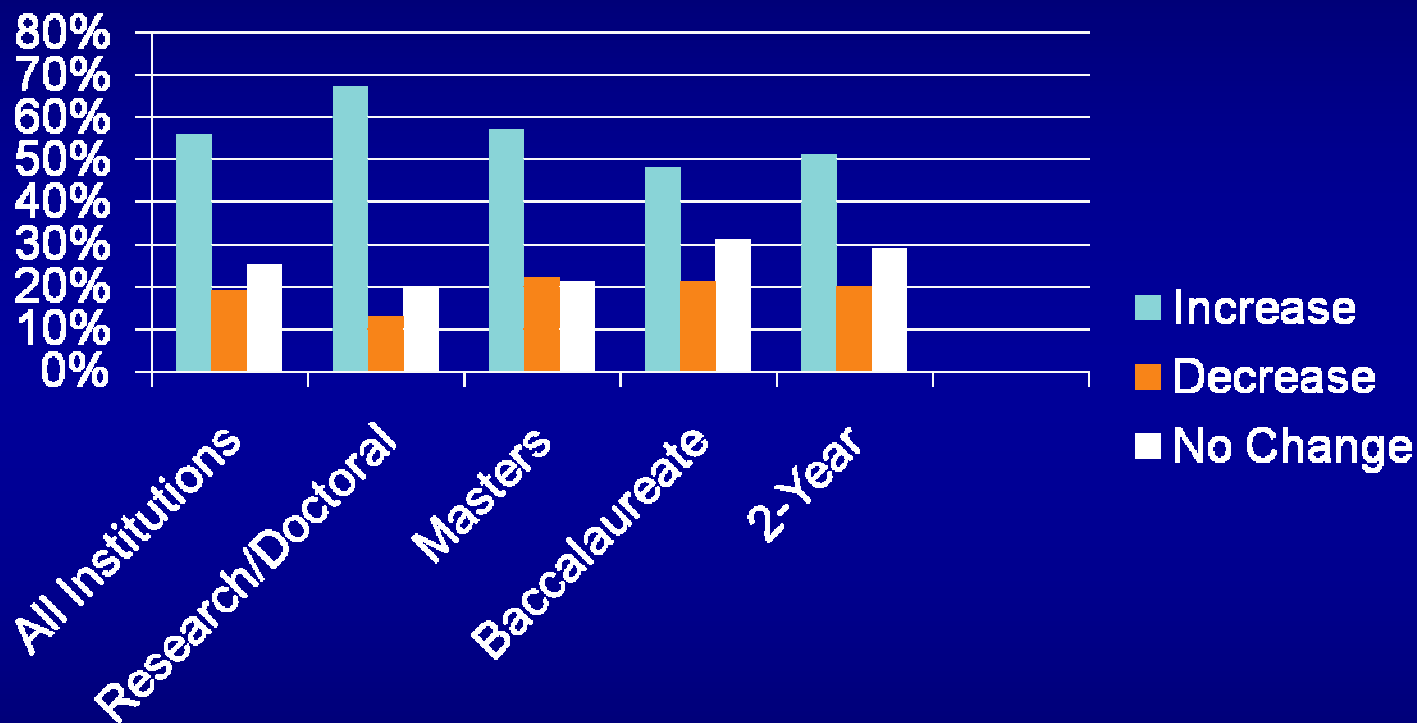
- **4% increase in first-time international graduate enrollment and a 7% increase in total enrollment between 2006 and 2007**
- **The rebound in total international enrollment still has not been large enough to reverse the declines that many institutions reported in 2004**

-Council of Graduate Schools, 2008

“The number of international students at US colleges and universities increased by 7% to an all-time high of 623,805 in the 2007-08 academic year.”

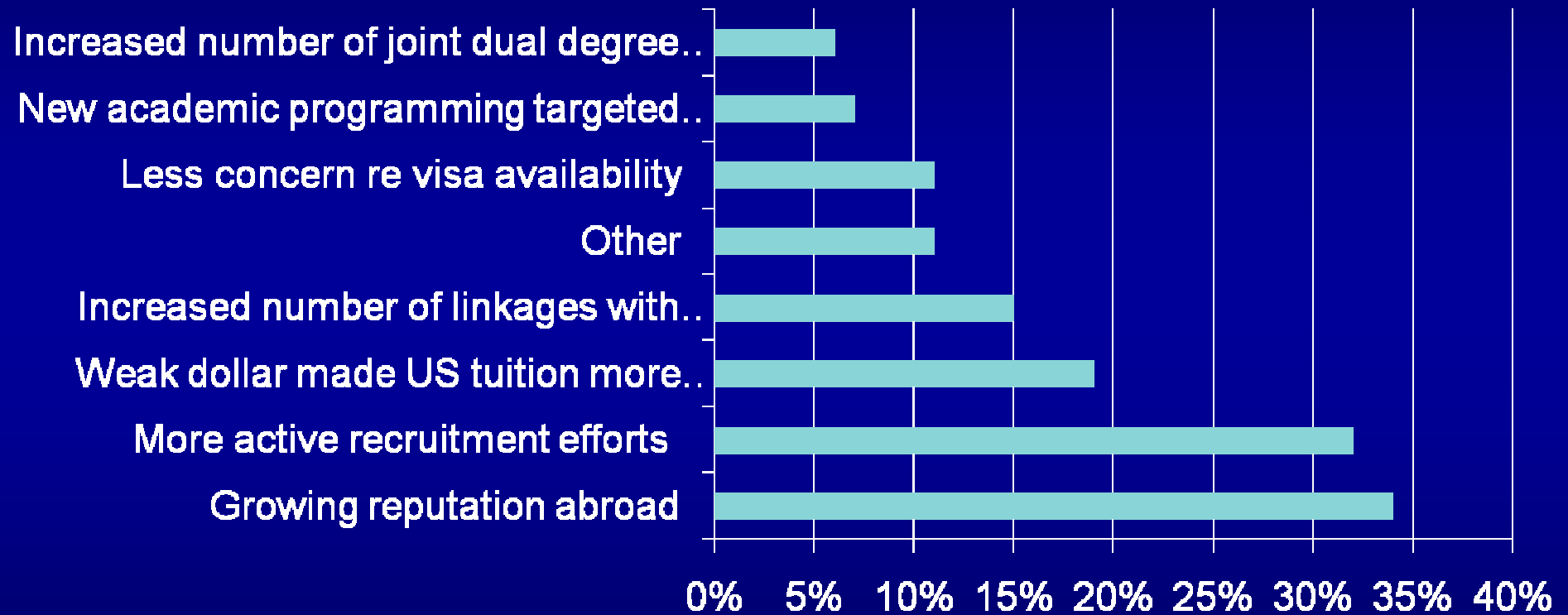
-Institute of International Education, 2008

But the Impact is Uneven...



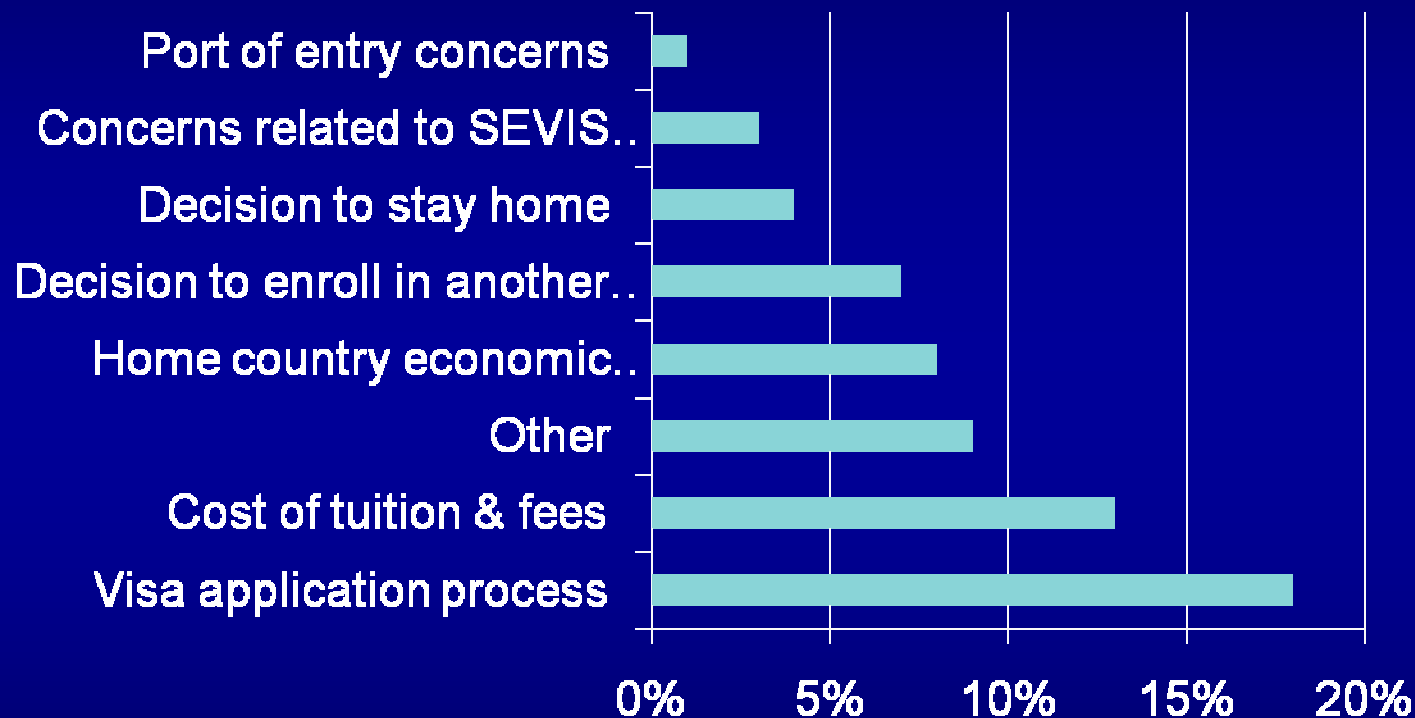
-Annual On-Line Snap Shot Survey conducted by 8 leading higher education Associations (AACCC, AASCU, ACE, AAU, CGS, IIE, NAFSA, NASULGC), 2008

Major Reasons for Increases



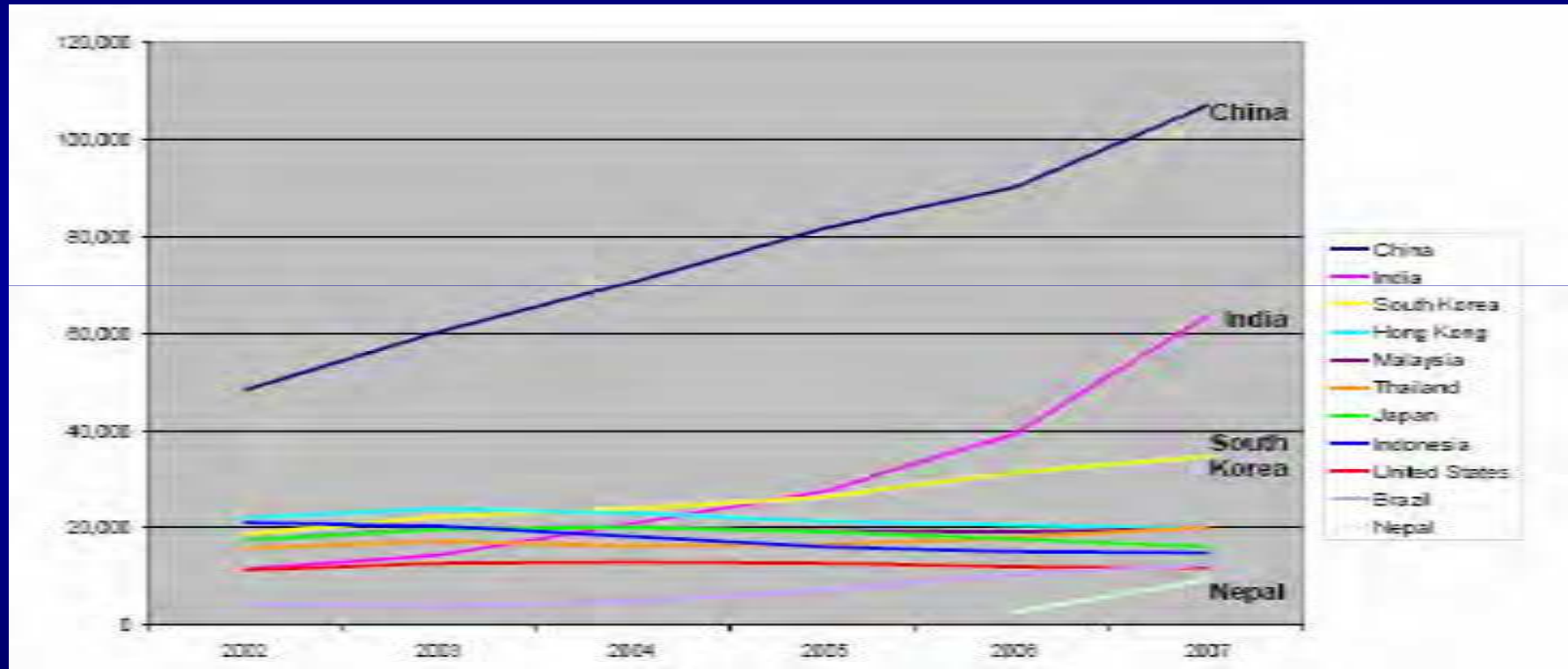
-Annual On-Line Snap Shot Survey conducted by 8 leading higher education associations, 2008

Major Reasons for Declines



-Annual On-Line Snap Shot Survey conducted by 8 leading higher education associations, 2008

Impact of Australia



-AEI Monthly Market Indicator Data, 2007

Our Biggest Challenge

- **We have no national educational system**
 - *Each state/province has its own system*
 - *Private institutions*
 - *Number and model of degree programs is infinite*

Leading Practices in International Recruitment

“Helicopter Marketing” –drop in and take off!

- **Some generalizations...**
 - ***Heavy reliance on Road Shows and Recruiting Fairs***
 - ***Little use of local recruiting teams –either professional or alumni-based***
 - ***High Cost / Short Half-Life / Low Impact***
 - ***Representatives who charge students for admission advisory services***
 - ***Long distance admissions counseling***

- **Not very strategic**



Leading Practices: Planning

- Incorporate international enrollment as part of the institution's strategic enrollment plan
- Develop an international student recruiting charge:
 - *Put someone in charge*
 - *A quantifiable enrollment goal*
 - *Protocol and processes to achieve goal*
 - *Review administrative processes*
 - *Develop specific student recruitment plans*

Leading Practices: Research

- **Consider the strategic issues:**
 - *Where will you find the most students who are a good fit for your programs?*
 - *What is the academic success rate of students from key international student markets?*
 - *What needs to be do to ensure students are ready for your learning environment (e.g., ESL, admission prerequisites, diet/housing)?*
 - *Are you concerned with regional balance?*

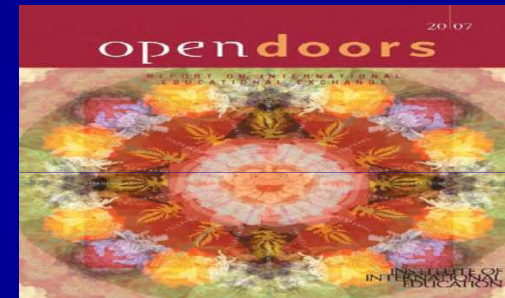
- **Regional differences should be taken into account**

Leading Practices: Research (Cont.)

➤ Utilize data to support outreach and travel

➤ American sources:

- AACRAO
- NAFSA
- *American Council for Education*
- *US Department of Commerce – Commercialization Service*
- *English language providers (ELS, Kaplan)*



Leading Practices: Research (Cont.)

➤ Non-American sources:

- *European Association for International Education*
- *Asian-Pacific Association for International Education*
- *British Council*
- *Australia Ministry of Education*
- *New Zealand Ministry of Education*

Leading Practices: Staff Development

- Developing an outreach staff where the staff members are regional specialists

Leading Practices: Engaging the Campus

- Engagement of campus personnel

Leading Practices: Recruitment

- **Print materials (multiple languages?)**
- **Create communication plans that resonate with international students**

Leading Practices: Alumni Development

- Use of alumni
- Liaise with alumni chapters abroad so that recruitment and retention efforts can benefit from each other

Leading Practices: Use of Technology

- Critical elements in your web pages
- Use of an international student recruitment micro-site
(<http://www.windsorwired.org>)
- Blogs
- Facebook
- Electronic newsletters

Leading Practices: Use of Technology (Cont.)

- Flash movie on the international site
- On-line chat for incoming international students

Leading Practices: Visa Screening

- Screening
- Visa process...with visa officers

Leading Practices: Admissions

- **Service, service, service; speed, speed, speed**
- **On-campus capacity to conduct foreign credential evaluation**
- **Centralized processing of inquiries, applications, etc.**

Leading Practices: English

- English support will most likely need to be built into condition of acceptance
- On-campus ESL option for students with no scores or low TOEFL scores
- Develop an English proficiency policy which is balanced between academic requirements and competition
- Consider regional differences

Regional Differences in English Proficiency

- Europe: English is widely spoken throughout the continent.
- Latin America: English is taught throughout. Many students attend ESL programs prior to enrollment. Test scores best indicator of proficiency.
- Asia: English is taught in most school systems, but instruction is uneven as is access to dependable testing instruments

Regional Differences in English Proficiency (Cont.)

- Japan, Korea, Thailand and Taiwan are traditional strong English preparation markets. Most of these students will need additional English preparation to persist.
- China: English is taught throughout China, but instruction is uneven. IELTS and IBT more popular than TOEFL. SAT is not available throughout the country (need to go to Hong Kong)

Regional Differences in English Proficiency (Cont.)

- Vietnam: English is taught, but weaker than in China

Leading Practices: Financial Aid

- **Strategic use of scholarship programs or other types of tuition reduction**
- **Assess income targets as well as altruistic goals for the enrollment of international students**

Leading Practices: Preparing for Arrival

➤ Pre-departure sessions

- *Send-off orientation programs held in the students' home country, which is attended by recruitment staff, parents of current students, and the dean of students*

➤ Safe Landing

- *Free taxi pick-up from the points of arrival (air, bus, train)*
- *Free night's stay at a local motel*
- *Early move-in to Residence if needed*



**The Key
Question: What is
Your Position on
Agents?**

Common Agent Models

- **University does not work with agents at all (it's illegal and agents are unethical)**
- **University works with agents, but pays them “marketing fees” rather than “commissions”**
- **University works with agents that do not charge the university any fees (because they are charging the student)**
- **University accepts applications from agents (but probably doesn't know that the application was submitted by an agent)**

“A lot of agents will just send out blanket e-mails to universities saying ‘Oh, I would like to be your representative.’ We don’t answer those e-mails typically.”

**Sabine Klahr
Director of International Programs
Boise State University**

“Its not amazing that agents will just send out blanket emails; it is amazing that universities will sign up with those agents without even a modicum of diligence.”

**Dani Zaretsky
Managing Partner
HigherEdge, Inc.
Toronto, ON**

New Model: Agents as Partners

- **Agent-University relationship is promoted**
- **University sees agents as instrumental to marketing and admissions efforts, provides necessary resources, training, site visits...**
- **Universities work together with the same trusted agents – strength in number and co-opetition**
- **Based on Australian model**

Benefits to Agents as Partners

- Empowers the student –students know who to trust
- Empowers the university –they have trusted representatives acting on their behalf
- Pay on a commission basis –university compensation is based on performance
- Use of agents offsets many of the initial costs of international student recruitment (keeps staff costs down)

An Example: Australia

- **Utilization of *commission-based recruiting agents***
- **Shifts marketing costs to back-end, instead of front-end**
- ***Outsourcing front-end admissions process to trusted third-party agent***
- **Reliance on *local experts, permanently in-country, operating on the same time and in the same language.***

Australia (Cont.)

- **Recruiting fairs as a supplemental (not central) activity –often staffed by local representatives and alumni.**
- **Focused visits to train agents/interview pre-screened candidates –no superficial “helicopter drops”**

Sustained, Success-based, Localized

American Exceptionalism

- **Fact**: *American admissions officers generally reject the utilization of commission-based agents –despite their proven effectiveness, first for the Aussies, and now for the Kiwis, Brits and Canadians.*
- **Why?** *The reasons given vary, but most reveal a near total misunderstanding of global developments and innovations in international student recruitment –most of which have initiated by the Australians. **False claims abound.***

American Exceptionalism (Cont.)

- 1. “It’s illegal. Title IV prohibits paying commissions to recruiters. And the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) prohibits the practice.”***
- 2. “It’s unethical. Agents do not work in the interest of the students.”***

Use of Agents is not Illegal

- *Title IV Explicitly Permits Commission-based Recruiting of Foreign Students*

- **From Title IV:**
 - *(b) By entering into a program participation agreement, an institution agrees that—*
 - *(22)(i) It will not provide any commission, bonus, or other incentive payment based directly or indirectly upon success in securing enrollments or financial aid to any person or entity engaged in any student recruiting or admission activities or in making decisions regarding the awarding of title IV, HEA program funds, **except that this limitation does not apply to the recruitment of foreign students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive title IV, HEA program funds.***

Not Illegal (Cont.)

➤ *Not Prohibited BY NACAC*

- *NACAC's Statement of Principles of Good Practice (SPGP) states under Mandatory Practices (section I.A.3) that Members agree to: "[N]ot offer or accept any reward or remuneration from a secondary school, college, university, agency, or organization for placement or recruitment of students".*
- *NACAC has stated "**our SPGP does not directly address commission payments for recruiters of foreign students.** Part of that limitation is due to the fact that federal law, which bans 'commissioned sales in admission' domestically, specifically exempts recruiters of foreign students."*

Not Unethical

- **A highly developed regulatory framework exists: the Australian Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) and its regulatory framework**
 - *“Registered providers take all reasonable measures to use educational agents that have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the Australian international education industry and do not use agents who are dishonest or lack integrity”*
 - The National Code: Outcome of Standard 4 (Education Agents)*

The University of Cincinnati Approach to Agents

- Dedicated representative in China (EduGlobal), who functions as an extension of the UC admissions office



The University of Cincinnati Approach to Agents

- Use recruiting representatives on a commission/success basis in a select number of countries in Asia, Africa, Europe, Australia

The University of Windsor Approach to Agents

- **Outsource undergraduate and graduate (course-based masters degrees) international student recruitment, outside of North America, to a single student recruitment agency (HigherEdge)**
- **The agency liaises with any needed agents. The University has no contact with agents.**
- **Payment is made only after students have completed one semester and have a zero balance.**

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Agents – 9 Principles

1. Partner with well-established commission-based agents
2. Refuse to work with agents who exclusively charge students
3. Always check the references of agencies under consideration
4. Establish a dedicated international admissions office to coordinate agency relationships

Agents – Some Principles (Cont.)

- 5. Do not appoint more than 3 agents in any given country, and avoid appointing fewer than 2**
- 6. Have a contract relationship with representatives**
- 7. Make regular visits to agents**
- 8. Host agents for training on your campus**

Agents – Some Principles (Cont.)

9. Have reasonable expectations

-Cushing & Weller, University of Cincinnati, 2008

Check Agent References

- Home Country Government

- Regulating organizations and agent associations, such as:
 - *Indonesian International Education Consultants Association (IKPII)*
 - *Japan Association of Overseas Study (JAOS)*
 - *Korean Overseas Study Association (KOSA)*
 - *Taiwan Overseas Study Association (TOSA)*
 - *Thai International Education Consultants Association (TIECA)*
 - *Vietnamese Agents Association (VIECA)*
 - *ICEF Online*

Check Agent References (Cont.)

- Other U.S. Institutions
- Australian Institutions (ESOS Act Compliance)

Accreditation Lite: Legitimizing Agency Recruiting

- **American International Recruitment Council**
 - *Founded in 2008*
 - *Now has 77 members*
 - *AIRC Certification will be piloted from June 1, 2009 through December 31, 2009. Normal certification processes will commence in early 2010*
 - *Builds on the notion of self-regulation*
 - *Mitch Leventhal (Vice-Provost for International Affairs, University of Cincinnati) is president and board chair*
 - *More information at www.airc-education.org*

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Another Option: Education Consortia (US Commerce Dept)



Education Consortia

- **Destination Indiana.**
 - *Est. 2001 with the help of the Indiana Trade Office. 31 members. www.destinationindiana.org*

- **Education Training and Export Consortium (ETEC) / Destination Southern California.**
 - *Est. 2003 with the help of matching grant from the Market Development Cooperator Program of the U.S. Dept. of Commerce. Also funded by the California Community College's Economic & Workforce Development Program. 65 members. Targets Asia only. www.educationsocal.com*

Education Consortia (Cont.)

➤ International Education Exchange

- *Est. ca. 1995. Members are 5 community colleges from across the U.S., including CA, FL, PA, & Moraine Valley CC in Illinois, www.ieeccc.com.*

➤ Study Iowa

- *Est. 2002. 19 members. www.studyiowa.org*

➤ Study Oregon

- *Est. 1999 with the help of the Portland Export Assistance Center. 19 members. www.studyoregon.com*

Education Consortia (Cont.)

➤ Study Washington

- *Est. 1999 with the help of the Seattle Export Assistance Center. 41 members. Also supported by the Washington Trade Office. www.studywashington.org*

➤ Study Illinois

- *Est. July 2003 with help of the Chicago Export Assistance Center. 45 members. Also supported by the Illinois Trade Office. www.studyillinois.org*

Education Consortia (Cont.)

➤ Study Wisconsin

- *Est. 2005 with help of the Milwaukee Export Assistance Center. 35 members.*

www.studywisconsin.org

➤ Lonestar Education Coalition

- *Est. 2003 by North Dallas Export Assistance Center & the North TX District Export Council.*

<http://www.buyusa.gov/northtexas/education.html>

A Few Words About Countries in Conflict...

Countries in Conflict

- Countries like Somalia, Kenya, Sudan, Myanmar, Ethiopia, Palestine, Kuwait, former Yugoslavia

- May include:
 - *Foreign invasion/occupation*
 - *Civil war*
 - *Political oppression*
 - *Ethnic/cultural violence*

Countries in Conflict (Cont.)

- **Students do not generally come for education purposes**
- **May have funding issues**
- **May not have access to required testing**
- **May have fraudulent credentials**
- **May have psychological issues as a result of the conflict**

Countries in Conflict (Cont.)

➤ **Options:**

- *Offer placement exams to verify academic preparation*
- *Offer remediation courses or bridge programs*
- *Conditional admission or admit on probation*
- *Admit with a support plan*

➤ **If you admit the student, focus on making the student a success on your campus, not on simply verifying admissibility**

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**Creating Linkages Between
International Support Programs
& SEM through Success &
Retention Plans**

“My fear is that we are going to do internationalization on the backs of students,” charging them hefty tuition fees and providing little support in return.

“What is more substantive is actually what is happening within institutions to integrate international into policies and practices and to reshape the mindset and behaviour of the people making decisions and/or serving the students in the institution so that new and diverse opinions and activities are accommodated more easily.”

-Wayne Myles, Director, International Centre, Queens University, 2005

“A large part of UB’s success in recruiting and retaining international students is a result of the welcoming environment it provides students from other countries.”

-Pauline Anastesia Phoa, North Sumatra, Indonesia, Graduate Student,
University of Buffalo

...committed to providing leadership and support that contributes to the academic, cultural, social, and personal experiences of students and scholars from around the world during their stay...We accomplish this by offering a wide range of quality support services, including pre-arrival services, orientation programs, immigration and general advising, workshops, and cultural programs to enable students to develop and practice the skills necessary to become world citizens.

-Penn State International Student Services, <http://www.international.psu.edu/>

What is important to international students?

1. Academic quality
2. Campus safety and security
3. Commitment to racial harmony on campus
4. Health services
5. Academic advising
6. Adequate selection of food available

-Noel-Levitz, Inc., 2008

Success Plans: New International Student Orientation

- **Hold each semester and include current students**
- **Make it comprehensive**
- **Provide cultural and social activities to foster friendships**
- **Allow students the opportunity to create relationships and learn campus before other new students arrive**
- **Utilize host families in the circle of communications**

Success Plans: Student Communications

- **Develop a list serve for communication between the international office and international students, with an opt-out**

Success Plans: Academic Success Initiatives



- International Passport for Academic and Social Success (IPASS), a speakers program to address success issues
- Language conversation groups
- Establish relationships between international students and disability services

Success Plans: Academic Success Initiatives (Cont.)

- **Determining how international students are handled within academic warning processes**
- **Assuring strength in ESL for international students**
- **Developing a mid-term alert program so that international student advisors learn if international students are having trouble in their class**

Success Plans: Peer Mentor Programs



- Match incoming international students with upper-level students of same nationality...a “buddy” program
- Designed to facilitate transition and combat homesickness and culture shock
 - *Also encourages involvement and volunteerism from upper-level students*
 - *Create training for mentors focusing on possible questions, active listening, emotional issues as well as what NOT to talk about*

Success Plans: Cultural Events & Programming

- Weekly coffee hour (International Wednesdays)
- International student speakers program
- Newsletter – central location for all things international
- Life at “X” University workshops
- Student organizations (international and domestic/international organizations)

Support Linkages

- **Build strategic capabilities in partnership with other units on campus**
 - *Conduct inter-office protocols for addressing student needs between offices on campus*
 - *Conduct reviews of where key functions should be housed*
 - *Consult and develop relocation, renaming and redesign of staff and duties*
 - *Review services across campus for international students and develop department processes for student services functions*

Making Connections

- **Global connections:**
 - *Local United Way agencies*
 - *Co-sponsor community international events*

- **Connections with Student Affairs and University support services**
 - *Advocate for international student interests and inclusion in larger university community*
 - *Conduct cross-cultural training programs*

Making Connections (Cont.)

➤ **Connections with faculty**

- *Annual report to the faculty senate on international student recruitment and retention efforts*

**Action Steps:
Crafting an Effective
International Enrollment
Strategy**

8 Possible Action Steps

- 1. Assure that international student recruitment and retention is in your institution's strategic plan**
- 2. Set clear international student recruitment goals**
- 3. Assure that the SEM committee includes a chief international specialist**

Action Steps (Cont.)

4. **Collect campus data and conduct an environmental scan of trends at other colleges, as well as a political-economic scan of the globe**
5. **Determine desired balance among short-term training programs, government sponsored programs, enrollment of independent students, undergrad, grad and ESL**

Action Steps (Cont.)

- 6. Manage your international financial aid awarding more strategically**
- 7. Integrated delivery of enrollment and advising processes**

Action Steps (Cont.)

8. Measure success:

- *Increase in desired enrollments*
- *Increase in persistence and graduation*
- *Faculty satisfaction*
- *Research funding*
- *Successful WOM (word of mouth)*



Tips from a Recruiter

Dani Zaretsky
Managing Partner
HigherEdge, Inc.
Toronto

Tips from a Recruiter

➤ Whether

- *Do you want to engage in the recruitment of international students? Be purposeful.*

➤ Develop clear objectives

- *More students?*
- *How many more students?*
- *More students for certain programs?*
- *More students from certain countries, regions, ethnicities, linguistic groups*
- *More students in certain years?*
- *Mile wide and inch deep or inch wide and mile deep?*

Tips (Cont.)

➤ Establish a Budget:

- *Determine the acceptable return on investment*
- *Time commitment for funds*
- *Plan to obtain support from senior administration*

➤ Assess institutional advantages:

- *Region/country-specific connections*
- *Brand awareness*
- *Program strengths*
- *Defining or distinguishing attributes*

Tips (Cont.)

➤ How?

- *Recruitment fairs*
- *Paid advertising*
- *Free advertising*
- *Agents, consultants or own staff...or a mix*
- *Communication strategies (print, media, other)*
- *Timetable for activities*
- *Year round plan for execution*

Tips (Cont.)

➤ Who?

- *Institutional staff*
- *Agents*
- *All inclusive recruitment agency*
- *Hybrid model*

➤ When (timeline)?

- *Constant representation*

Tips (Cont.)

- How do you evaluate?
 - *More students*
 - *On-budget*
 - *Campus involvement*
 - *Satisfied students*

Comments & Questions

Thank you!

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