



PRESS RELEASE

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First-time International Graduate Enrollment Continues to Rebound

Shifts in sending countries contributes to increase in enrollments for master's programs.

Washington, DC – International graduate applications increased for a fourth year in a row, according to the Council of Graduate Schools' International Graduate Applications and Enrollment: 2022 report. Data from the report also indicate a continued shift in sending countries from China, long the primary sending country of students to U.S. graduate programs, to India and the Sub-Saharan African region.

The annual report highlights data from the CGS International Graduate Admissions Survey. According to survey data between Fall 2021 and Fall 2022, the total number of international graduate applications received by U.S. degree-granting institutions participating in the survey increased by 26 percent. Other top findings include:

- **The overall representation of sending countries is shifting.** U.S. universities have witnessed a surge in applications and enrollments from India and countries in Sub-Saharan Africa since Fall 2020. Meanwhile, graduate applications have decreased two years in a row from Chinese nationals.
- **Enrollments in master's programs continue to grow as a share of total international enrollments in U.S. graduate programs.** Shifts in country representation are related to this growth: according to CGS's survey population, more than 8 out of 10 (85%) Indian students studying in U.S. graduate programs are master's students.
- **As the pandemic wanes, there is a decrease in remote-only delivery of programs.** Between Fall 2020 and Fall 2022, first-time enrollment for remote only courses for master's and certificate programs decreased from 5,183 to 2,457. At the same time, enrollments for master's and certificate programs that deliver a mixture of in-person, hybrid, and remote courses increased from nearly 17,000 in Fall 2020 to more than 52,000 in Fall 2022.

CGS President Suzanne T. Ortega said that she was glad to see continued demand for graduate education in the U.S., especially from a more diverse set of sending countries and regions. She thinks that this more expanded international pool of students will strengthen international scholarship and help universities create higher education networks in the Global South.

"It's clear that demand for higher education from international students is not only rebounding, but we are seeing a change in where the demand is coming from," Ortega said. "Our higher education institutions need to prepare for a more diverse set of countries and regions sending their students."

We need to think about diverse mentoring needs and support systems so all students can reach their fullest potential.”

While China remains as one of the top sending countries, there was a 3 percent decrease in applications and an 11 percent decrease in first-time enrollment. Ortega said that this trend is something for higher education institutions in the U.S. to watch.

“Potential reasons for this continued decrease could be Chinese students choosing to attend the new institutions of higher education in their own country and the growing geopolitical tensions between the U.S. and China,” Ortega said.

Between September and November 2022, the CGS International Graduate Admissions Survey was sent to 759 U.S. colleges and universities, which were CGS members as of January 2022, as well as other institutions that were members of Conference of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS), the Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools (MAGS), the Northeastern Association of Graduate Schools (NAGS), or the Western Association of Graduate Schools (WAGS). A total of 370 institutions, or 48.7%, responded to the survey.

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About CGS

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of approximately 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. The organization’s mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.

About the CGS International Graduate Admissions Survey

In 2004, CGS launched International Graduate Admissions Survey, an annual empirical examination of international graduate application, admission, and enrollment trends, in response to member institutions’ interest in changes in the enrollment of international students seeking master’s and doctoral degrees from U.S. colleges and universities. The survey is designed to capture information about application counts and offers of admission, as well as first-time and total graduate enrollment of international students for each fall admission cycle.