

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

New Foreign Student Numbers Fall in U.K.

For the second year in a row, the number of foreign, non-E.U. students starting first degrees in the U.K. is down, according to figures released this week by the Higher Education Statistics Agency. Undergraduate enrollments fell from 48,600 in 2004-2005 to 45,900 in 2005-2006, or by nearly six per cent. The previous year they had fallen by three per cent. The two consecutive years of declines mean a total financial loss to British universities estimated at between £30 million and £40 million.

The findings seem to confirm the fears of many university officials, who have fretted that new visa costs and delays would combine with stepped-up competition from North America, Australia and new players like Singapore to stem the flow of new students to Britain.

The total number of foreign, non-E.U. undergraduate students in the U.K. edged up by one per cent over last year, to 99,300.

Source: "[Figures Show Drop in Overseas Undergraduates](#)," *Guardian*, Jan. 9, 2007

OVER THE COUNTER

In China, 11,000 Scholarships for Foreign Students

The Chinese government is planning to grant scholarships to a record 11,000 foreign students, the country's vice minister of Education announced last month. The funding, Zhang Xincheng said, will come via higher education institutes, big cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin and Chongqing, and the provinces of Yunnan, Hubei and Liaoning.

According to China's state-owned news media, there were more than 140,000 foreign students from 197 countries in China in 2005. Many of the country's foreign students are from Japan and Korea.

Observers at Higher-Edge say China is especially keen to attract foreign students because its tertiary education system is currently under considerable financial pressure.

Source: "[Gov't to offer record 11,000 scholarships in 2007](#)," *China View*, Dec. 22, 2006

THE PLAYING FIELD

U.S. Schools Opening Branch Campuses in Persian Gulf, Australia

Drawn partly by generous subsidies, increasing numbers of U.S. universities are setting up branch campuses in wealthy Persian Gulf states.

Five have already established campuses in Qatar: Georgetown University, Virginia Commonwealth University, Cornell University, Texas A&M University and Carnegie Mellon University. The Qatari government is said to be in talks with three more. Harvard Medical School last year opened a postgraduate research center in Dubai, and George Mason University, based in Virginia, has opened a branch campus in another of the United Arab Emirates, Ras al-Khaimah.

Meanwhile, in Australia, Northeastern University is poised to start offering classes, joining two other U.S.-based universities that have already opened branch campuses in that country. One of Australia's draws, an official with Northeastern said recently, is the high proportion of international students graduating from its universities—students Northeastern hopes to recruit for its graduate programs.

Sources: "[U.S. Universities Set up Shop in Arab Lands](#)," *IndyStar.com* (sourced from AP), Dec. 2, 2006; "[Third U.S. Uni Open for Australian Students](#)," *News.com* (sourced from *The Australian*, Dec. 2, 2006)

GLOBE TIPPING

Wireless Internet Cafes in Russia

Need to get connected while you're on the go in Russia? You might want to look for coffee shops and other stores posting signs indicating that there's wireless Internet service available. For the cost of about \$2, you'll be able to access wireless in these shops for one hour.

Even better, the service allows you to stop and start, unlike many services in which, once the time is activated, there is no provision for disconnecting and saving the time for later.