

OVERSEAS OVERWHELMED

HIGHER
EDGE

Issue 4.26
September 29, 2004

A Bulletin for
Canadian International
Education Professionals

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

South Africa Exporting Education

South Africa may not be the first choice for students looking to study overseas, but various experts in the nation's higher education system hope that changes in the future. In 2003, the country was the destination of choice for 47,000 international students. Government officials and university administrators argue that international education opportunities lead to positive economic results. International students contributed 1.2 billion rand (\$237 million CAD) to the South African economy last year, particularly in the retail and tourist sectors. South African universities are expanding their recruitment efforts overseas to bring more foreign students their campuses. Other South Africans are using existing networks and business connections to promote education. Whether its English language courses for Chinese students and businessmen, or a degree in pharmacology for Namibians, South Africa is determined to benefit from international students.

Source: ["SA Varsities Cash in On Foreign Students," Sunday Times, 29 August 2004](#); ["Chinese students can help bring jobs and trade to SA," Cape Argus, 27 September 2004](#).

OVER THE COUNTER

Education Agent Practices

When relying on overseas education agents, should educational institutions be concerned about "misinformation"? One example lies in New Delhi, India, where an immigration agency announced in May 2004 that it had agreements to recruit students to eight Canadian institutions. Those institutions include one university, one university-college, five colleges and one K-12 boarding school. According to a representative at the agency however, all institutions are being promoted as universities. On one Indian news website reporting on the agreements between the agency and the institutions, the headline stated "Canadian degree in India" and all of the institutions were identified as universities (the report has since been removed).

Was this "misinformation" merely an innocent mistake or a deliberate ploy to attract more students? While it is difficult to ascertain the motives of this particular agency, the lack of clarity and sophistication in the Indian news media means that some students are misled. Misled students often result in unsatisfied students, increased visa rejection rates and a participating institution's reputation can be adversely affected.

LET'S GO CANADA

Chinese Student Numbers Dropping

Are Chinese students losing interest in Canada? This was the question posed by the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada (APFC) in a bulletin released in August 2004. According to their research, the first quarter of 2004 saw 3,170 applications for study permits, representing a 30% drop from the same period in 2003. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) painted a similar picture in their Summer 2004 issue of *The Monitor*, which said that in the first quarter of 2004, only 1,019 Chinese students, of which 850 were at the post-secondary level, came to Canada.

The APFC believe that this is not "a blip on the screen," and assess the causes of falling numbers through the notion of demand and supply. Diminishing prospects for employment and increasing costs have led to some Chinese forgoing the foreign degree route, while the growing number of available university seats in China means that students can earn a degree at home.

While the APFC briefly notes competitor countries, more emphasis could be placed on the student visa process. As Higher-Edge covered in [Overseas, Overwhelmed 4.17](#), the British embassy in Beijing is processing student visas in one day. The Canadian embassy, on the other hand, can take months. Significant numbers of Chinese students are choosing their study abroad destinations based on the ease of the student visa process.

Source: ["Are Chinese Students Losing Interest in Canada?" Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, 6 August 2004](#); ["Foreign Students," The Monitor, Summer 2004](#).

EYE-ON MEDIA SERIES

Overseas, Overwhelmed readers now have an opportunity to subscribe to a special offer of Higher-Edge's *Eye-On Media Series*. Each one-year subscription delivers to your inbox weekly summaries of Indian, Chinese and West African news stories, as well as feature pieces.

One series = \$99
Two series = \$150 (Regular price \$198)
All three series = \$200 (Regular price \$297)

This special offer ends on **October 31, 2004**.
For more information email: editor@higher-edge.com.