

# OVERSEAS OVERWHELMED

## LET'S GO CANADA

### *Australian varsities suffer setback in international student market*

Universities in Australia are facing a financial crisis due to a significant drop in the numbers of overseas students at their campuses. Several universities, such as Deakin University, Edith Cowan University and Charles Sturt University among others, have also incurred heavy losses in their offshore education programs.

Australian universities are dependent on revenues earned from overseas students. In 2004, around AUD \$ 1.7 billion (CDN 1.6 billion) of universities' AUD \$ 12.4 billion (CDN 11.9 billion) revenue came from international students. Institutions such as Curtin University in Western Australia, the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and Wollongong University receive a large percentage of their revenue from overseas students. However, with a drop in international student enrolments, universities have been forced to cut down on expenses and, in some cases, compromise on academic standards. Universities are rumoured to have lowered entry requirements and revamped course structures, grading and English language requirements to attract foreign students.

The decline in undergraduate program standards have coincided with an increase of foreign students in commercial subjects. These influxes have skewed the university curriculum towards lucrative subjects, rendering beleaguered programs such as languages in precarious positions.

Source: ["Unis dumb down for foreign cash," Sydney Morning Herald, May 7, 2005](#)

## GLOBE TIPPING

### *Air India to launch flight to Toronto*

India's national airline Air India will launch three flights a week from Delhi to Birmingham and Toronto via Amritsar starting May 15. With this, the airline will be directing flights to Toronto after an eight-year absence. The Delhi-Amritsar-Birmingham-Toronto route will provide the people of Punjab "direct and convenient services to Birmingham, the heartland of industrial and economic activity in the U.K., and to Toronto, the financial capital of Canada," the airline said.

## ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

### *U.S. accreditation database released*

The U.S. Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), a private, non-profit national organization that coordinates accreditation activity in the United States, has released an updated database of all institutions/programs accredited by its members. The database lists around 7,000 degree-granting and non-degree-granting institutions and over 16,000 programs that are authorized by any U.S. accrediting organisations recognised by either CHEA or the United States Department of Education (USDE).

An increasing number of educational institutions worldwide are trying to consolidate their position in the international marketplace by securing accreditation by an established body in the U.S. The CHEA database reveals examples of U.S. accreditation obtained by higher education institutions in 31 countries/ territories outside the United States — including Australia, Canada, Germany, New Zealand, Singapore and the United Kingdom.

Source:

[U.S. Council for Higher Education Accreditation](#)

## OVER THE COUNTER

### *Fake IELTS certificates on sale*

Dishonest education agents in Australia are selling fake English language certificates to overseas students for AUD \$ 10,000 (CDN 9,598) to help them get admission into Australian universities. An Australian university degree helps applicants secure extra visa points for permanent immigration. Professional exam sitters are hired to write the test in such cases of malpractice. International English Language Testing System (IELTS) administrators in Australia and New Zealand have been collaborating with police teams to crack the fraudulent certificate racket. While test administrators have been trained to detect imposters, IELTS authorities have taken a host of measures to prevent instances of cheating. Anne-Marie Cooper, Manager, IELTS Australia told the *Sydney Morning Herald* that "test questions are limited to one time zone to stop their sale via the internet for use in other cities. In China there have been reports of a cheating industry using *qiangshou* (hired guns) who sit exams for a fee. In 2002-03 alone, the Beijing post of the Immigration Department identified 1550 cases of student visa applicants using bogus documents."

Source: ["English tests faked to cheat on residency," Sydney Morning Herald, May 9, 2005](#)