

OVERSEAS OVERWHELMED

LET'S GO CANADA

Canada vs. Australia: An Editorial

Three months ago the director—international for one of Australia's major universities sat in Higher-Edge's Dubai office and announced that his university had enjoyed a tenfold increase in applications from the Gulf states since the previous year.

To *Overseas, Overwhelmed* this comes as little surprise, with links between the United Arab Emirates, for example, and Australia growing each day. The two countries expect to sign a free trade pact this year. There are approximately 50 weekly flights between the two countries—many of them direct. Bilateral trade between the UAE and Australia is more than \$2 billion (Aus.) or \$1.7 billion (Cdn.) annually. In contrast, trade between Canada and the UAE stands at roughly \$500 million (Cdn.). According to unofficial numbers from IDP Australia's Dubai office, about 1,500 students from the UAE go to Australia each year—about three times the number going to Canada.

With more students, airplanes and contracts flowing back and forth between the UAE and Australia, benefits seem bound for both countries. Why isn't Canada doing more to compete with its smaller rival—especially as competition for international students is only become fiercer (as is suggested by newly-released Australian enrollment figures)?

OVER THE COUNTER

Two U.K. Giants to Offer Joint Online Degrees

Britain's two largest universities, the Open University and the University of Manchester, have joined forces to offer combined degrees overseas. Manchester vice-chancellor Alan Gilbert said the move is partly in response to growing demand from countries like China, which can't build brick-and-mortar universities fast enough to fill their needs. Higher education, he also said, is on the verge of being transformed into a much more competitive industry, in which only the largest players will survive.

Source: "[On the Brink of a Revolution](#)," The Guardian, February 28, 2006

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

New Numbers Warn of Looming "Crunch" in Australia

Australia's spectacular growth as an educator of foreign students has "ground to a halt," the country's opposition party claimed this week.

The party was commenting on enrollment numbers released last week by the Australian government. The figures show total foreign enrollments in 2005 up by 8.3 per cent over 2004—but new commencements up by only one per cent. Andrew Norton, a research fellow at the Centre for Independent Studies, said the trend will mean a "crunch" in the next few years for Australian universities used to ever-climbing revenues in the form of tuition from foreign students. The trend has some Australian university officials blaming government for not funding them enough, and others considering new strategies, such as catering to the special needs of foreign graduate students.

Sources: [Undated news release](#) from the Australian Education International web site (which makes no mention of the one-per-cent new enrollments figure) and "[Overseas Intake Faces Downturn](#)," *The Australian*, March 8, 2006

GLOBE TIPPING

Not All Bottled Water is Pristine

Guidebooks frequently advise travelers to avoid drinking tap water. In some countries, however, bottled water may be no better--or worse.

A scam that has cropped up in some countries--India, for example--is to re-fill used water bottles with tap water and then re-sell it as bottled water. It can pay to get advice from trusted locals about which kinds of bottled water to buy and which to avoid. You might also want to take an extra-close look and make sure the seal around the cap hasn't been broken before you buy bottled water.

Tips on dealing with water and other issues overseas can be found on the [web site](#) of Arthur Blessitt, an avid world traveller.