

International Students

Cultural Challenges and Opportunities



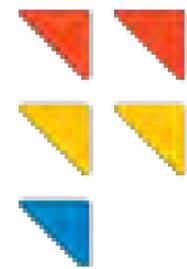
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2025 Presidents Institute ● **Spouses and Partners Program**
January 4–7, 2025 ● JW Marriott San Antonio Hill Resort & Spa ● San Antonio, Texas



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2025 Presidents Institute ● Spouses and Partners Program



Presenters

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Glen McGee, Presidential Spouse, Salem College (NC) - Session Chair

Agenda

Enrolling a Community

- Enrollment Trends
- Recruitment Pathways
- Challenges
- Opportunities

Building a Community

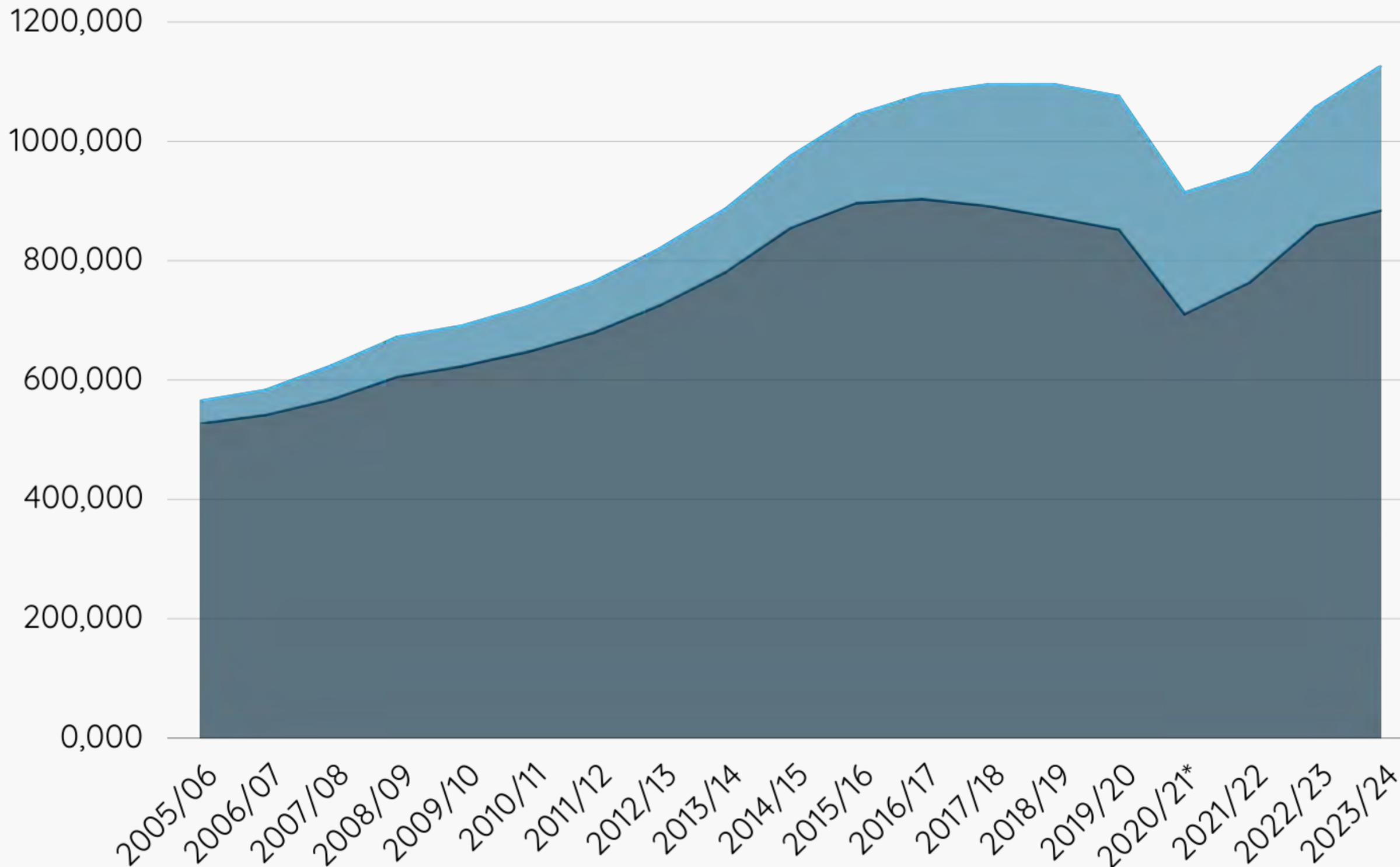
- Who to Contact
- How to Connect
- Support on Campus
- Special Considerations

Retaining a Community

- Retention
- Engaging After Graduation



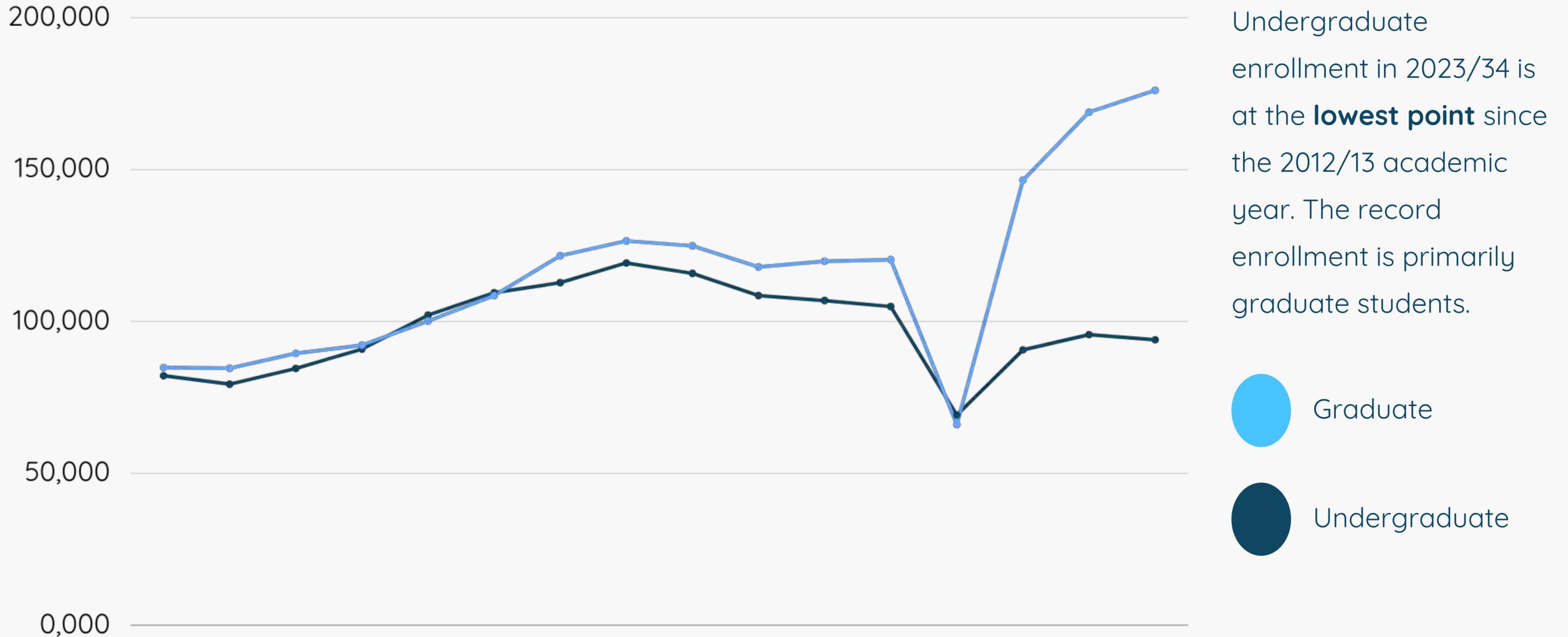
Enrollment Trends



In 2023/24, the total number of international students **increased by 7%** from the prior academic year and **reached an all time high**.

- OPT
- Enrolled

Enrollment Trends



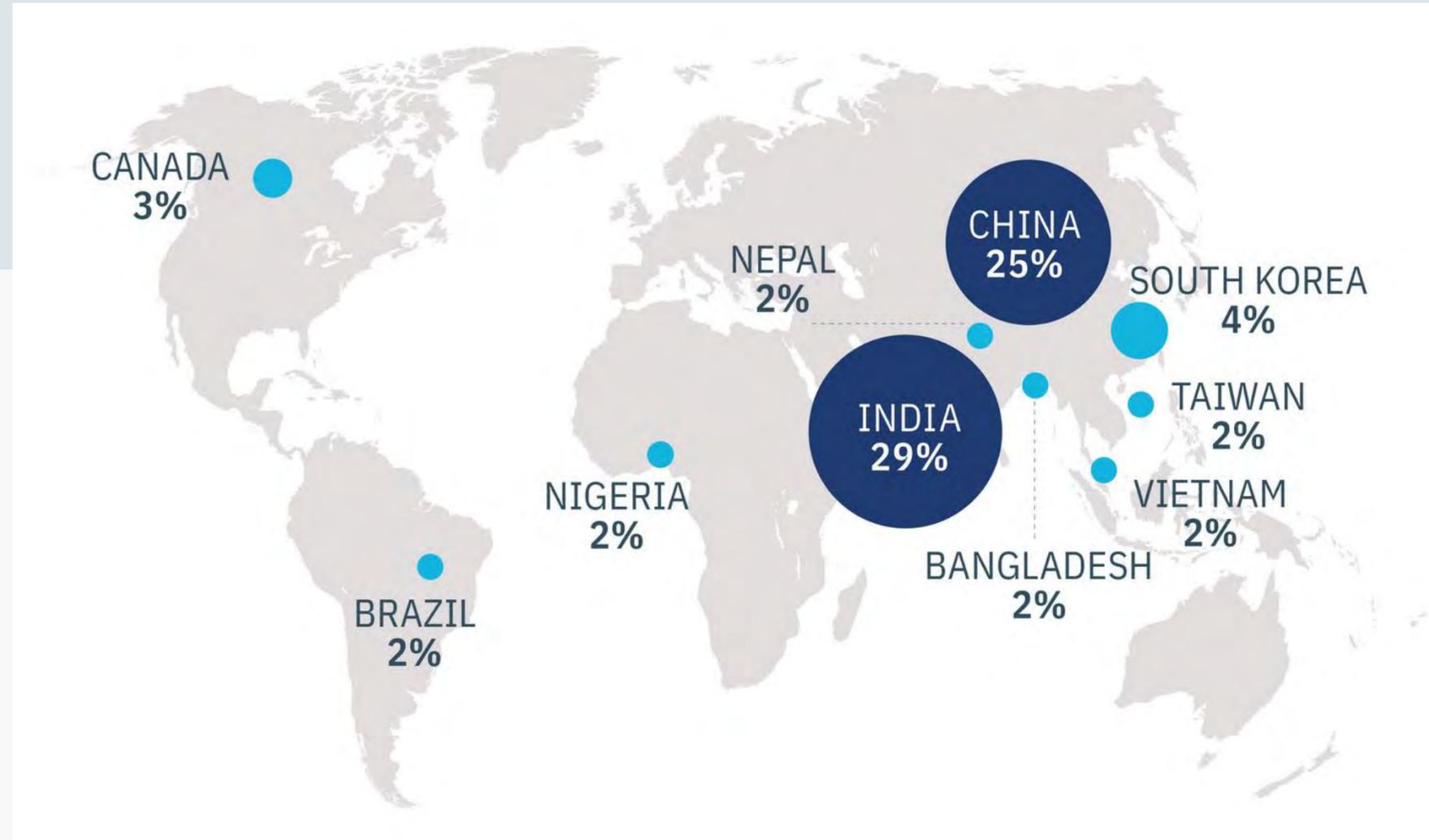
Enrollment Trends

Countries with Growth

These are the top senders of international students with the largest increases in 2023/24



Enrollment Trends



Students from India and China accounted for 54% of international students in 2023/24.



Enrollment Trends



Math and
computer science

25%



Engineering

19%



Business and
management

14%



Physical and
life science

8%

56% of international students in the US studied in STEM fields.



Challenges

Political

- US political landscape
- Global conflict and decreased mobility
- Future of OPT/CPT in the wake of the Chevron decision
- Visa access and denial rates

Budgets and Costs

- University budget constraints
- Market volatility and student ability to pay
- Unpredictable global economy
- Strength of the USD

Institutional

- English Proficiency - lingering COVID impact
- Shifts in international curriculums
- Heightened focus on rankings in cluttered landscape

Opportunities

Leverage Existing Relationships

- Continue to support existing pathways and partnerships
- Travel, professional development
- Creative collaborations between teams and departments

Build Institutional Strengths

- Highlight existing popular programs
- Identify STEM designated programs and opportunities for growth
- Strengthen internship and research programs for international students

Support and Retain Current Populations

- Include international students and programs in strategic planning
- Build a welcoming campus community and culture
- Support and retain current staff members who support students

Opportunities



1,126,690 international students

enrolled at US higher education institutions or were on OPT in the
2023/24 academic year,

an all-time high.

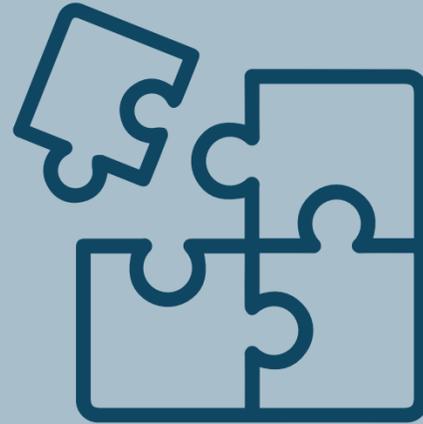


Building a Community



Who to Contact

- Departments and divisions
- Find the people doing the work
- Talk to different types of students!



How to Connect

- Best times of year
- Asking what they need
- Being realistic about support



How to Help

- Silence is a message.
- Play to your strengths!
- Bandwidth and expertise

Building a Community

Support on Campus

- Taking inventory - what do we already do?
- Who do we already have in place?
- Who can we enlist for more support?

Special Considerations

- Culture shock
- Different needs at different times - scaffolded support
- Where are you from?
- Holidays, food, religion, and culture
- Visa regulations

Cultural Context

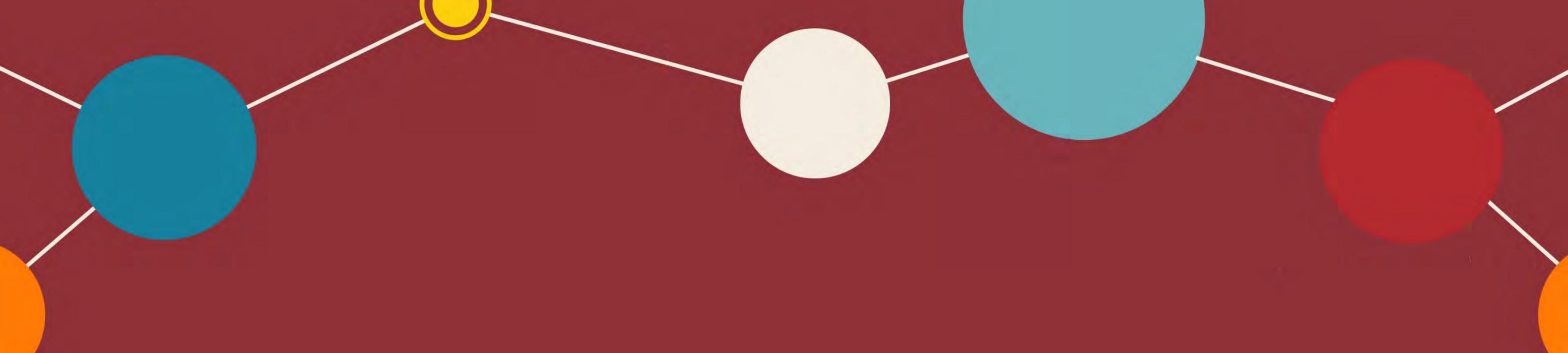
- High context vs low context cultures
- Empathy

Retaining a Community



According to a 2019 National Foundation for American Policy study, international students often have higher graduation rates than the overall student population, sometimes by 20% or more...

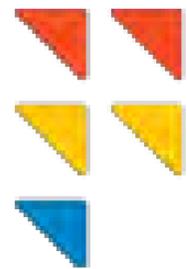




Q&A



Thank you for attending this session!



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