

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN OF INTERNATIONAL YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

A. An Overview of the Field of Youth Exchange

The Need & Benefits

Internationalization has been defined as “education for an interdependent world.”¹ The world has always been interdependent in one way or another, but now the scope, pace and magnitude of change, especially over the past ten years, has created exciting and challenging opportunities for international exchange providers and globally curious students. Specifically, international exchange and international educational programs help move people across borders for educational, professional, or cultural purposes and help connect individuals with others from around the world.

By making institutions sensitive to international needs, globalizing the curriculum of all grade levels, and exposing youth to various cultures, students can understand diverse communities better and critically evaluate the connections between politics, commerce and civil society in a global context. International education and exchange programs are seen as the catalyst to this kind of understanding. Specifically, these programs are believed to encourage:

- Advanced learning and scholarship
- Respect and relations among different peoples
- Cross-cultural communication
- Constructive leadership in a global community.²

Internationalizing education helps not only demonstrate the different ways to solve shared problems but also creates mutual understanding of differences. According to the Institute of International Education, there is a demand for international education for the following two reasons:

- To broaden the outlook of future leaders through academic and professional exchange and to strengthen their ability to think and act on a cooperative basis.
- To transfer knowledge and skills across borders and to prepare a new generation of global citizens.³

To prosper in an increasingly interdependent global economy, nations will need to cultivate citizens knowledgeable about different markets, languages, cultures, and business practices around the world. For example, the export industry alone creates approximately 15 million American jobs and represents close to 30% of America’s gross domestic product (GDP).⁴ Yet the United States only makes small investments in international exchange; fifty years of funding the Fulbright program only equals three days of American defense spending.

¹ NAFSA, www.nafsa.org

² NAFSA, www.nafsa.org

³ Institute for International Education, www.iie.org

⁴ Alliance for International Education and Cultural Exchange: <http://www.alliance-exchange.org/policy.html>

The presence of exchange students in the United States also creates other economic benefits. According to the Commerce Department, foreign students in the United States create over 150,000 American jobs.⁵ In addition, international education is responsible for contributing \$12.3 billion to the American economy from foreign expenditures on tuition and cost-of-living.⁶ The United States is the world's leading "exporter" of education services, and currently maintains a trade surplus of over \$6 billion in this sector,⁷ making education the United States' fifth largest service sector export. Also, every federal dollar expended on these programs attracts \$12 in contributions from universities, high schools, nongovernmental organizations, and communities.

Politically, exchange programs advance important American national interests by building understanding and cooperation between Americans and future foreign leaders. Nearly 150 present and past foreign heads of state, such as former world leaders Anwar Sadat and Indira Gandhi and British Prime Minister Tony Blair, made their first visits to the United States on an exchange program. Former South African President F.W. deKlerk, who played a critical role in ending apartheid, credits his American exchange program with providing his first vision of a multi-racial society.⁸

Americans who do not travel also benefit from exchange programs. Foreign exchange participants learn American values, customs, and ways of doing business from everyday teachers, students, families, and thousands of volunteers from all types of communities throughout the United States. In turn, these Americans build international links of their own and gain a fuller appreciation of foreign cultures and values by being host families and volunteering with international organizations.

Need for Japan-Focused Programs

Currently there are strong relations between the United States and Japan, but there still is a great need to offer students an opportunity to interact and understand the complex dynamics of the two countries.

Experts in the field highlight the need for international exchange programs focused on Japan-US relations for the following reasons:

- The trend in America is still to study Europe, not Asia. Programs to Japan tend to be more tour-oriented and do not integrate the Japanese people.
- The student enrollment disparity between Japan and the United States is still skewed; over 43,000 Japanese are enrolled at American universities whereas the number of Americans studying in Japanese universities is less than 2,000.
- There is still a need to maintain the bilateral friendship and to build upon it with new generations of students (not wait for a crisis), especially since Japan is an important country and ally and still culturally inaccessible.

In addition, there is a demand for intense, short-term programs to and from Japan and the United States. In the United States, it has become increasingly more difficult to send students on long-term programs because of a variety of competing factors, such as academic requirements, school events, etc. Specifically for Japan, it is virtually impossible to send American students for a long period because of the language requirement, expense, and drastically different culture. Experts acknowledge that even a month abroad will open minds, broaden horizons and improve appreciation of different cultures.

⁵ Alliance for International Education and Cultural Exchange: <http://www.alliance-exchange.org/policy.html>

⁶ Open Doors. "2000 Report on International Educational Exchange," 2000. www.opendoorsweb.org.
<http://www.opendoorsweb.org/Lead%20Stories/finances.htm>

⁷ Alliance for International Education and Cultural Exchange: <http://www.alliance-exchange.org/policy.html>

⁸ Alliance for International Education and Cultural Exchange: <http://www.alliance-exchange.org/policy.html>

B. Types of Programs & Trends

Today more than 4,000 organizations say they conduct international exchanges.⁹ Opportunities for international exchange are diverse. The following demonstrates the variety of international programs and exchanges:

- Inter-institutional
- Study abroad
- Opportunities to teach, work and volunteer abroad
- Faculty and scholar exchanges
- International visitors
- Foreign language training
- Religious treks
- Development projects
- Seminars and conferences
- Youth-led
- Youth, university and senior focused

International exchanges range from one week to one year; from homestays to independent living; from in-depth language immersion to translated tours; from independent travel to group excursions; and from scholarship-funded to independently fundraised programs.

However, there are two primary trends in the field of international exchange:

- Increasing numbers of programs that have a community service/volunteer component.
- Increasing diversity through outreach to minorities, low-income students, disabled people, etc.

The fastest growing segments of this market are “Volunteer vacations” or “Alternative spring breaks;” international exchange programs with community service components have become steadily more popular with students. This popularity has partly stemmed from the need for students to be more well-rounded when applying to schools and jobs, but mostly it is from an increasing need of students to make a difference and to be challenged. Break Away, a leader in “alternative spring break” options, estimates that over 24,000 students participate on such programs.¹⁰ In addition, the International Volunteer Programs Association (IVPA) represents 50 member organizations that send about 15,000 volunteers to other countries each year, and it estimates that there are an additional 250 groups operating similar programs.¹¹

International exchange organizations are also increasingly diversifying their applicant pool by offering their programs to more minorities, low-income students and the disabled. Currently, a typical American student volunteering abroad is a young, white female from a middle-to-upper-middle-class background.¹² Many exchange leaders believe it is important to diversify their participant base to:

- Better represent the United States
- Add to the experience of all who are involved
- Explore opportunities to different funding sources¹³

One example is the LaFetra Operating Foundation and its BRIDGES (Building Responsible International Dialogue Through Grassroots Exchanges) Fellowship Program, which offers a fellowship to lower-

⁹ <http://www.aiesec.org/about/pchng1.asp>

¹⁰ Sommerfeld, Meg. “New Student Wave: Service Over Sunbathing,” *Chronicle of Philanthropy*. August 10, 2000.

¹¹ Sommerfeld, Meg. “The Pause that Reflects,” *Chronicle of Philanthropy*. August 10, 2000.

¹² Sommerfeld, Meg. “The Pause that Reflects,” *Chronicle of Philanthropy*. August 10, 2000.

¹³ Interviews with programs and literature review.

income students combining volunteer work abroad with service learning in the San Francisco Bay Area.¹⁴ Another leader is Mobility International, which focuses attention on how to improve access to international exchange programs for persons with disabilities.

C. Data on Youth Exchange Programs: Inbound and Outbound Students

Inbound Students

While there is comprehensive data on international exchange students at institutions of higher education, there is no single organization that collects data on international exchange students younger than the undergraduate level. Maintained by the Institute of International Education, Open Doors is a comprehensive information resource of statistics based on an annual survey of international student populations in institutions of higher education.

Information on exchange programs for youths, younger than college-age, is limited. According to a Program Designation Officer for Youth Exchanges at the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, US Department of State, there are approximately 31,000 high school students who travel to the United States annually on short-term exchange J-1 Visas. The department only tracks the total number of visas issued to inbound students. On the other hand, the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) has records of students that participate in its members' programs, which are primarily secondary school programs (grades 9-12), and estimates that 29,275 foreign secondary school students studied in the United States during the 2000/2001 academic year. This is a slight decrease from the 1999/2000 figure of 29,357 students and the 1998/1999 figure of 30,289 students. According to CSIET, the majority of students participating in high school exchange programs come from Germany (32% in 2000), with Japan (17%) ranked in the top five.¹⁵

Experts note that the number of outbound students is significantly less than the number inbound, and estimate that 94% of all inbound students are college-age or older.

The United States remains the leading destination for international students. It is estimated that there were approximately 546,000 inbound students in 2000. The number of international students studying at institutions of higher education in the United States during the 1999/2000 academic year increased 4.8% over the previous year.¹⁶ These students comprise 3.8% of all US higher education enrollments, but are primarily enrolled in graduate school.

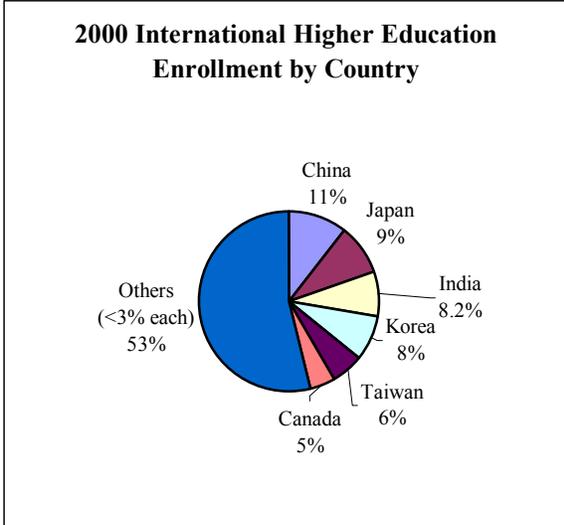
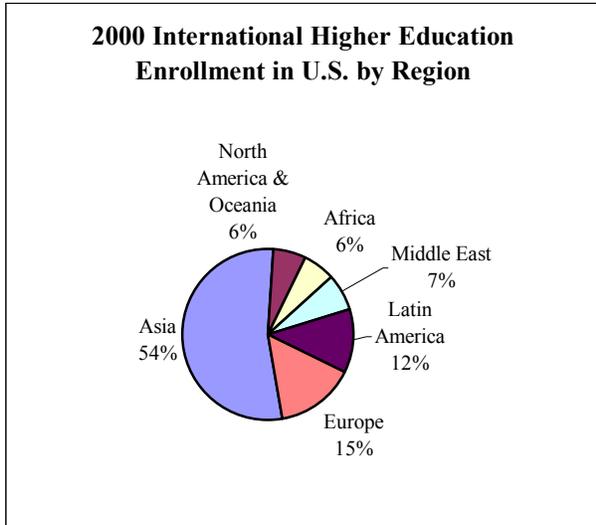
Overall, Asian students constitute over half of all international students (54%) in the United States. According to the survey conducted by OpenDoors¹⁷, the top ten countries of origin for foreign students of higher education in the United States are (in descending order): China, Japan, India, Republic of Korea, Taiwan, Canada, Indonesia, Thailand, Mexico, and Turkey. In 2000, there was a substantial increase of students from China (6.8%) and India (13%), whose enrollment grew at more than twice the overall rate. For the first time, India passed Korea as the third largest country of origin. Japan had a modest increase of 1%, which continues its six-year trend of minimal enrollment change (46,872 in 2000).

¹⁴ <http://www.lafetra.org/>

¹⁵ Interview with CSIET President.

¹⁶ Open Doors. "2000 Report on International Educational Exchange," 2000. www.opendoorsweb.org .
<http://www.opendoorsweb.org/Lead%20Stories/finances.htm>

¹⁷ Open Doors. "2000 Report on International Educational Exchange," 2000. www.opendoorsweb.org .
<http://www.opendoorsweb.org/Lead%20Stories/finances.htm>



By fields of study, international students tend to study business administration (20%) followed by engineering (15%) and mathematics and computer sciences (11%). As expected, there are many thousands¹⁸ of students studying in the United States in Intensive English Programs; they are primarily from Japan (23.3%), Korea (10.5%) and Taiwan (10.3%).

On average, an international student studying in America is:

- Financed personally or by their family (67%)
- A graduate student (42%)
- Asian (54%)
- At school in the Northeast (25%)
- Studying business administration (20%)
- Male (57.5%)
- Single (84.2%)¹⁹

Outbound Students

Over the last few years, the number of American college and graduate students participating in study abroad programs has steadily increased: 100,000 students in 1995/1996 to 129,000 in 1999.²⁰ This is a 13.9% increase from the previous year, but represents less than 1% of all American university students. The main reason for this increase is the growing importance of study abroad as an integral part of the undergraduate experience. Approximately 90% are undergraduate students.²¹ The most popular destination for American students is still Europe. But increasingly popular locations are Mexico (6%),

¹⁸ Significantly underestimated at 73,357 for 1999/2000 by Open Doors. “2000 Report on International Educational Exchange,” 2000. www.opendoorsweb.org.

¹⁹ Open Doors. “2000 Report on International Educational Exchange,” 2000. www.opendoorsweb.org/Lead%20Stories/finances.htm

²⁰ Open Doors. “2000 Report on International Educational Exchange,” 2000. www.opendoorsweb.org/Lead%20Stories/finances.htm

²¹ <http://www.ed.gov/NLE/USNEI/international/study-abroad.html>

Australia (4%), Costa Rica (3%), Japan (2%) and China (2%).²² The biggest change over recent years has been the swing from Americans studying in Europe (fall of 18%) to Americans studying in Latin America (up from 7% to 15%). In particular, short-term (8 weeks or less) programs have driven the increase in number of American students studying abroad. Over the last decade, short-term programs have increased from 28% to almost 50% and are now the most popular choice for American students.

While inbound students tend to study business and management, Americans abroad typically major in the humanities and social sciences, and there has been a steady decrease in the number of students studying abroad for a foreign language major.

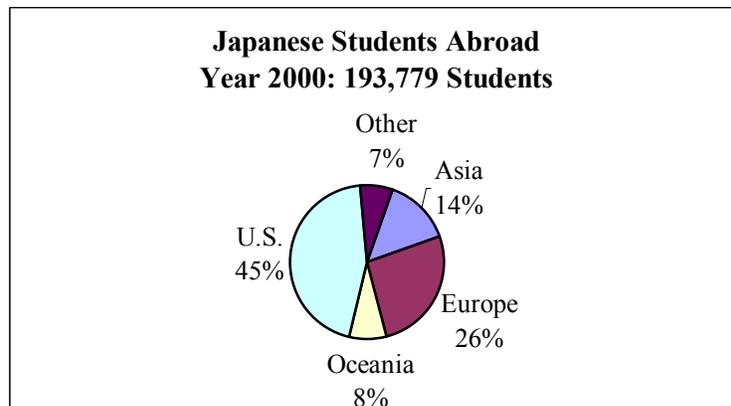
On average, an American student abroad is:

- A third-year college student (40.3%)
- Caucasian (85%)
- At school in the United Kingdom (21.4%)
- A social science major (20.3%)
- Female (65.2%)
- Participating in a short-term program (50%)²³

D. Japanese International Exchange

According to the Ministry of Education, there are over 193,000 Japanese students studying abroad.²⁴ Approximately 87,000 Japanese students are currently studying in the United States. The average Japanese student abroad is:

- An undergraduate student (69.8%)
- At school in the United States (45%)
- Studying business administration (19%)
- Female (55.5%)²⁵



²² Open Doors. "2000 Report on International Educational Exchange," 2000. www.opendoorsweb.org/Lead%20Stories/finances.htm

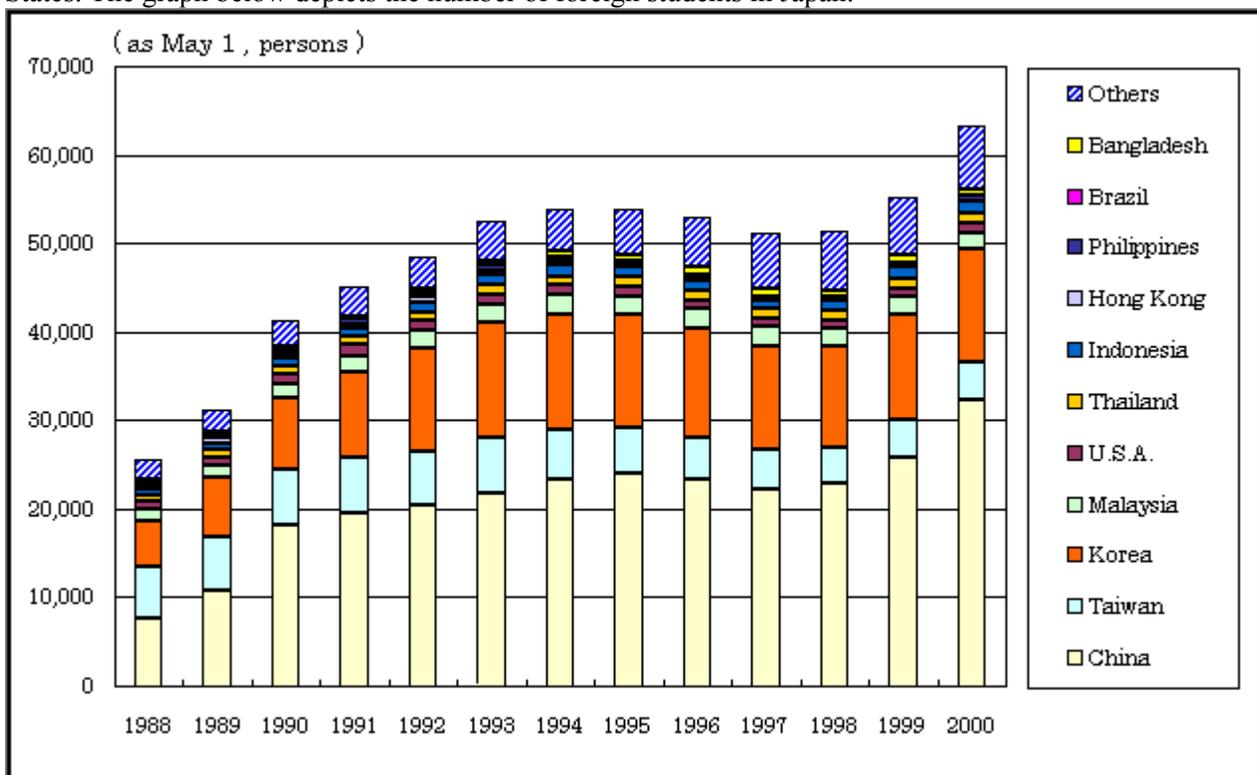
²³ Open Doors. "2000 Report on International Educational Exchange," 2000. www.opendoorsweb.org/Lead%20Stories/finances.htm

²⁴ <http://jin.jcic.or.jp/stat/stats/16EDU62.html>

²⁵ Open Doors. "2000 Report on International Educational Exchange," 2000. www.opendoorsweb.org/Lead%20Stories/finances.htm

The number of foreign students in Japan is low. The number of foreign students in the United States is more than 500,000, compared to only 64,000 in Japan. The foreign students in the United States are from all over the world, while those in Japan are predominantly Chinese and Korean. The number of American students in Japan is less than 3,000, which is far less than the approximately 90,000 Japanese students in the United States.²⁶ The United Kingdom, Germany and France are smaller than Japan in terms of both population and GNP but each has a larger foreign student population.²⁷

Under a national policy plan entitled "Project of Accepting 100,000 Students from Abroad," Japan has proactively taken on a large number of foreign students since 1983. With only 64,011 international students as of May 1, 2001, Japan is still far short of its goal. There is also little Western diversity in the number of students studying in Japan. About 90% of foreign students in Japan are from Asia, while the number of students from North America and Oceania is about 2%.²⁸ There are only 1,044 from the United States. The graph below depicts the number of foreign students in Japan:²⁹



E. Outcomes & Standards for Model International Exchange Program

The challenge for international exchange program providers is to quantify the benefits and to capture the direct program results. Providers need to demonstrate the quality of their programs and their specific results of providing knowledge, skills and greater awareness. Although there is much anecdotal evidence

²⁶ Estimated from CSJET, State Department, and the Japan Ministry of Education figures.

²⁷ Mitsuta, Akimasa. "Japanese Student Mobility," Obirin University in Tokyo, 1993/1994.

http://www.opendoorsweb.org/Lib%20Pages/Global/japanese_student_mobility.htm

²⁸ <http://www.between.ne.jp/sij/en/ryugaku/genjo1.html>

²⁹ <http://jin.jcic.or.jp/stat/stats/16EDU61.html>

on the success of exchange programs and the effects on students (improved ethno-relativism, global-mindedness, and sense of self-efficacy), there is no single source or technical instrument used to consistently measure those outcomes.

Currently, there are a few instruments to measure at least some aspect of international learning. For example, the State Department tests oral language proficiency with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) by administering a pre- and post-program test. For culture learning there are the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) and the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), which assess and document critical dimensions of student learning abroad.³⁰ In addition, members of the SECUSSA (Section on US Students Abroad of NAFSA) Data Collection Working Group created a web site, <http://www.oldsite.nafsa.org/secussa/datacollection.html>, to post information on data collection and to promote the initiative to collect data.³¹

Monitoring organizations

Monitoring organizations are important to international exchange programs as they provide accreditation to programs, which in turn is valuable for program marketing efforts and instilling public trust in the programs.

There is no uniform set of standards to ensure quality for exchange programs, however a few organizations exist that outline standards that member organizations must abide by.

The most recognized organizations include the NAFSA: Association of International Educators, the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET), International Volunteer Programs Association (IVPA) and InterAction.

Founded in 1948, NAFSA: Association of International Educators promotes the professional development of American college and university officials responsible for foreign students who come to study in the United States. The Association sets and upholds standards of good practice and provides education and training to strengthen programs and services related to international educational exchange. With more than eight thousand individuals from 80 countries, NAFSA's members share a belief that “international educational exchange advances learning and scholarship, builds respect among different peoples, and encourages constructive leadership in a global community.”³²

The Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) is a private, not-for-profit organization that establishes standards for, monitors, and disseminates information about reputable high school international youth education and exchange programs.³³ It offers the most detailed standards of those currently available, requiring specifics in such areas as financial responsibility, program promotion and homestay placements. Published annually, the *CSIET Advisory List* contains information about high school exchange programs that were evaluated and meet CSIET's minimum standards.

The International Volunteer Programs Association (IVPA) is an alliance of nonprofit, non-governmental organizations based in North America that are involved in international volunteer and internship exchanges. IVPA encourages “excellence and responsibility in the field of international voluntarism and promotes public awareness of and greater access to international volunteer programs.”³⁴

³⁰ Vande Berg, Michael. “The Assessment of Learning Outcomes in Study Abroad,” School of International Training, 1999.

³¹ <http://www.oldsite.nafsa.org/secussa/datacollection.html>

³² NAFSA, www.nafsa.org

³³ The Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET), www.csiet.org

³⁴ The International Volunteer Programs Association (IVPA), www.volunteerinternational.org/

InterAction is a diverse coalition of more than 165 US-based relief, development, environmental and refugee agencies working in more than 100 countries around the world. Its agencies are also committed to a set of ethical standards to ensure accountability to donors, professional competence and quality of service.

Range of standards

Standards for international exchange programs vary widely from generic standards on student orientations and homestay placements to specific requirements on a provider's financial obligations to post-program follow-up activities. These standards are provided to help students and/or their parents and guardians have a reliable basis on which to evaluate and choose an appropriate quality exchange program. No one standard suits all programs, since most are focused on a type of program, such as volunteer-based (IVPA), college-age (NAFSA), development and environmental (InterAction) and high school (CSIET). Consumers and grantmakers must choose standards that are appropriate for their own purposes.

