

Expanding the Enrollment of International Students on College Campuses:  
Predictors of Enrollment Rates and Strategies for Recruitment

A Dissertation submitted  
to the Graduate School  
Valdosta State University

in partial fulfillment of requirements  
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION  
in the Department of Political Science  
of the College of Humanities & Social Sciences

May 2020

David L. Starling

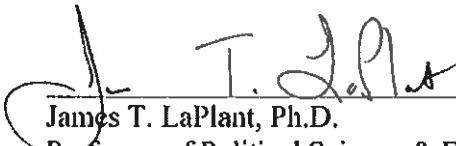
MS Applied Linguistics, Georgia State University, 1994  
BGS, Valdosta State University, 1988

Copyright 2020 David L. Starling

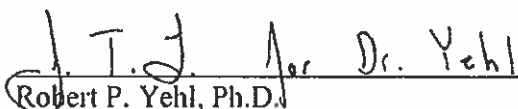
All Rights Reserved

This dissertation, "Expanding the Enrollment of International Students on College Campuses: Predictors of Enrollment Rates and Strategies for Recruitment" by David L. Starling is approved by:


**Dissertation  
Committee  
Chair**

  
James T. LaPlant, Ph.D.  
Professor of Political Science & Dean of the  
College of Humanities and Social Sciences


**Committee  
Member**

  
Robert P. Yehl, Ph.D.  
Professor of Political Science

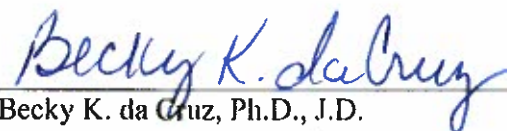
**Committee  
Member**

  
Zulal Denaux, Ph.D.  
Professor of Economics

**Committee  
Member**

  
Michael P. Savoie, Ed.D.  
Professor Communication & Media Studies

**Associate Provost for  
Graduate Studies and Research**

  
Becky K. da Cruz, Ph.D., J.D.  
Professor of Criminal Justice

**Defense Date**

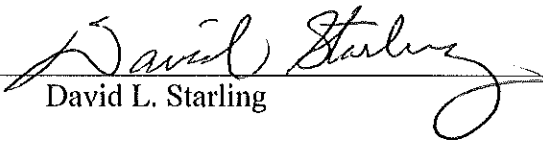
05/28/2020

FAIR USE

This dissertation is protected by the Copyright Laws of the United States (Public Law 94-553, revised in 1976). Consistent with fair use as defined in the Copyright Laws, brief quotations from this material are allowed with proper acknowledgement. Use of the material for financial gain without the author's expressed written permission is not allowed.

DUPLICATION

I authorize the Head of Interlibrary Loan or the Head of Archives at the Odum Library at Valdosta State University to arrange duplication of this dissertation for educational or scholarly purposes when so requested by a library user. The duplication shall be at the user's expense.

Signature  \_\_\_\_\_  
David L. Starling

I refuse permission for this dissertation to be duplicated in whole or in part.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
David L. Starling

## ABSTRACT

International students enrich the educational and cultural environment on college campuses as well as contribute to the economic health of institutions of higher education and their surrounding communities. International student recruitment has never been easy at non-doctoral institutions, but it has become even more challenging under the current political administration. This study begins with a description of the enrollment trends of international students at colleges and universities in the southeastern United States. It explores the factors that influence the decision of an international student to study in the United States, with a particular focus on the role of cost (tuition and fees) for regional universities and baccalaureate institutions. The heart of the study examines the percentage of international students enrolled at almost 200 institutions of higher education in the southeast. The first stage of analysis investigates the impact of institutional academic classification, public vs. private status, diversity, and tuition cost on the percentage of international students enrolled at an institution. The study finds significantly higher rates of enrollment at doctoral institutions. Significant differences also emerge by the type of research classification for doctoral institutions with those universities designated as highest research activity reporting an international student enrollment more than three times greater than moderate research activity universities. Furthermore, the average percentage of international students enrolled in private institutions is more than double that of enrollees in public institutions. The second stage of analysis relies on data collected through a Qualtrics survey and examines the role that Intensive English Programs (IEPs) play in the recruitment of international students. The study concludes that institutions with IEPs far outperform those without in relation to the percentage of international students attending the institution. The study also demonstrated that recruitment budgets for IEPs matter. Institutions

where IEPs had a recruitment budget showed a higher percentage of international students by 4.3% to 2.2%, nearly double those that did not. However, there was no significant statistical difference in international student percentages between institutions whose IEPs used agencies for recruitment and those that did not. The third stage of analysis also uses data from a Qualtrics survey and examines the role that Offices of International Programs (OIPs) play in international student recruitment. The study finds that OIPS were ineffective for the aspects of recruitment examined. The study concludes with policy recommendations for college and university campuses as well as for policymakers at the state level.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION .....	1
	Study Overview .....	3
II.	LITERATURE REVIEW .....	5
	International Student Enrollment Trends .....	5
	International Student Significance to STEM Fields .....	8
	International Student Enrollment and Political Considerations .....	11
	Why Students Choose to Study in the United States .....	13
	Coming to America .....	15
	On the Homefront.....	18
	The Role of Out-of-State Tuition .....	22
	Practices in Georgia .....	23
	The Role of the International Programs Office .....	26
	The Role of the Intensive English Program .....	29
III.	DATA AND METHODS .....	31
	Stage One: H1 – H4 .....	31
	Stage Two: H5 – H8.....	34
	Stage Three: H9 – H13.....	36
	IRB Approval .....	39
	Statistical Analysis .....	39
IV.	FINDINGS .....	41
	Stage 1.....	41

Stage 2 .....	48
Stage 3 .....	55
V. DISCUSSION .....	61
Interpretation of the Findings .....	64
Implications of the Study.....	69
Limitation of the Study .....	70
Policy Recommendations at the Campus Level .....	71
Policy Recommendations at the State Level .....	73
Future Areas of Research .....	76
Epilogue: The Future of IEPs .....	78
VI. LIST OF REFERENCES .....	80
VII. APPENDICES	
Appendix A: Survey of IEP Directors .....	85
Appendix B: Survey of OIP Directors .....	89
Appendix C: IRB Approval .....	93



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Comparison of Academic and Environmental Expectations in Four Countries .....	14
Figure 2. Academic and Environmental Expectations and Choice of Destination Countries .....	15
Figure 3. Decision-Making Criteria for Students from Select Countries When Selecting a University Abroad .....	17
Figure 4. Congressional District 8 Benefits from International Students .....	19
Figure 5. Enrollment Declines at University System of Georgia Schools, Fall 2014.....	20
Figure 6. Tuition Rates at Select University System of Georgia Institutions .....	25
Figure 7. Distribution of Public – Private Survey Responses from IEPs .....	35
Figure 8. Distribution of Public – Private Survey Responses from OIPs.....	37
Figure 8. Distribution of Survey Responses by Size of Institution .....	38

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Enrollment Trends: International Students in U.S. Higher Education .....	6
Table 2. New International Student Enrollment .....	8
Table 3. International Students by Major .....	10
Table 4. Variables, Characteristics and Sources .....	33
Table 5. Percentage International Student Enrollment by Institutional Type.....	43
Table 6. OLS Regression Analysis of International Student Enrollment across Colleges and Universities in the Southeast .....	45
Table 7. Non-Doctoral Institutions and the Impact of IEPs on International Student Enrollment .....	49
Table 8. Non-Doctoral Public Institutions and the Impact of International Student Enrollment on IEPs.....	50
Table 9. Non-Doctoral Private Institutions and the Impact of IEPs on International Student Enrollment.....	50
Table 10. All Institutions and the Impact of IEPs on International Student Enrollment .....	51
Table 11. Southeastern Institutions and International Student Enrollment.....	52
Table 12. IEP Dedicated Recruiter and International Student Recruitment .....	53
Table 13. IEP with Recruitment Funding and International Student Enrollment .....	54
Table 14. IEPs using Educational Recruitment Agencies and International Student Enrollment .....	55
Table 15. Institutions with IEPs – Qualtrics Survey of OIPs and International Student Enrollment .....	55
Table 16. Internationalization Included in Strategic Plan and International Student Enrollment .....	56
Table 17. International Program Offices with Dedicated Recruitment Staff and International Student Enrollment .....	57

Table 18. Recruitment Coordination between OIPs and Admissions Offices and International Student Recruitment .....	58
Table 19. OIP Recruitment Budgets and International Student Enrollment .....	58
Table 20. OIP Use of Recruitment Agencies and International Student Enrollment .....	59
Table 21. Summary of Hypotheses Testing .....	61
Table 22. Proportion of International Students Recruited with Agents .....	73

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A project of this nature is never the work of one person. I would like to offer a special thank you to Dr. James ‘Jimmylegs’ LaPlant, the Chair of my committee, for his guidance and encouragement as we worked through the dissertation process and worked on our golf games.

I also owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Zulal Denaux and Dr. Yeliz Yalcin, who helped me with organizing my data. I would especially like to thank Dr. Zulal Denaux, Dr. Robert Yehl, and Dr. Mike Savoie for encouraging me to pursue this program and agreeing to serve on my committee.

A special thanks goes to my wife Sugako, for raising our children while I was in the garage and at the library doing research for so many years.

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

International students contribute mightily to the intellectual climate of our classrooms and college campuses. For those of us who have had them in the classroom, international students provide a comparative perspective which is enlightening for the rest of our students. In upper-division classes, the intellectual impact of international students can be particularly powerful. International students can also have a significant economic impact on our university budgets and local communities. Given our current political environment, the higher education community faces great challenges in terms of recruiting international students to the United States. While we are currently witnessing a decline in international students studying in the United States, international students still remain an important part of the student population. According to the Open Doors Report, international students make up a little more than 5.5% of students in higher education across the United States, although nearly 24% of those students attend the top 25 hosting institutions and one third of all international students are concentrated in the states of Florida, New York, or Texas (Institute of International Education 2018). While the United States has the overall highest number of international students seeking degrees, the percentage of international students enrolled in higher education institutions does not compare well to many of our competitors. “In higher education overall, the United States had the smallest percentage of international students (3 percent) of the five G-20 countries with data, including Australia (20 percent), the United Kingdom (17 percent), Canada (7 percent), and Japan (4 percent)” (Stephens, Warren, & Harner 2015). These countries are investing heavily in international student recruitment and will eventually take a large market-share of the higher education market away from the United States unless universities in the United States begin to

seriously look at international student recruitment as a part of their overall student recruitment strategy.

The Office of Immigration Statistics gathers information on nonimmigrant foreign nationals and publishes a report annually. The report shows that 1,094,792 students entered the country on an F-1 visa in 2017-2018 (Institute of International Education 2018). Additionally, exchange visitors coming in on J-1 visas added nearly another 50,000 foreign national entries associated with higher education (U.S. Department of State (n.d.)). A recent analysis by the Association for International Educators (NAFSA) estimates that “. . . international students studying at U.S. colleges and universities contributed \$39 billion and supported more than 455,000 jobs to the U.S. economy during the 2017-2018 academic year” (NAFSA 2018).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore the key predictors of international student enrollment at colleges and university in the Southeast. This study seeks to determine the specific role of intensive English language programs (IEPs) and International Programs offices in the recruitment of international students.

For the purposes of this study, the following research questions will be addressed:

- (1) What are the key demographic and institutional predictors of international student enrollment for colleges and universities in the Southeast?
- (2) What role do intensive English programs (IEPs) play in recruitment strategies for colleges and universities in the Southeast?
- (3) What role and function do International Programs offices have in recruitment of international students on campuses across the Southeast?

## Overview of the Study

Chapter 2 begins with an examination of international student enrollment trends, the impact of our immigration debates and the Trump presidency, and an exploration of the factors that influence why international students choose to study in the United States. Chapter 2 also discusses the role of tuition rates. Tuition rates for domestic students and international students generally differ. Students from within a particular state generally have their education subsidized because their parents have paid state taxes. Students from outside the state, including international students, pay a higher tuition rate. Preston Cooper in a *Forbes Magazine* online article explains the rate differential for international students. Cooper, a research analyst on education policy at the American Enterprise Institution writes, “In 2016, the typical foreign student attending a selective American college paid \$23,500 in tuition and fees, more than three times the price a U.S. citizen paid. Tuition for international students increased by nearly \$5,000 since 2012, while tuition for Americans went up only \$450” (2018). This study hypothesizes that the impact of higher out-of-state tuition rates to be negligible at research-intensive doctoral institutions, but it may well be a key detrimental factor in the ability to attract international students at regional comprehensive universities and smaller schools.

Chapter 3 is the data and methodology chapter. Chapter 3 identifies the independent and dependent variables as well as the hypotheses tested in this work. The heart of this study examines the key predictors of international student enrollment across colleges and universities in the Southeast. The dependent variable is the percentage of international students at colleges and universities in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Key institutional characteristics (total student enrollment, Carnegie classification,

public vs. private, existence of intensive English support programs, presence of international programs offices, and institutional diversity) serve as the independent variables to predict the percentage of international students on a college campus. A particular variable of interest is whether higher international student enrollments are evident at institutions with intensive English language programs. The existence of an intensive English language program at a regional institution or smaller college is expected to reflect greater international student enrollment numbers. Additionally, the structure and organization of international programs offices will be examined by surveying international programs office directors across the Southeast. In particular, international student recruitment strategies will be scrutinized to help determine best practices for international student recruitment that are effective for regional universities and smaller colleges in the southeastern United States. Chapter 3 also describes the statistical analysis used in this study.

Chapter 4 reports on the results of the data analysis for all three research questions in this study. Chapter 5 summarizes the significance of the results and concludes with policy recommendations that can be employed at the campus level to improve and expand the recruitment of international students, along with suggestions to be considered at the state level.



## **Chapter 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In an ever-shrinking world and a growing global economy, international student mobility has become more prevalent. Students across the globe are able to select institutions of higher learning that will aid them in achieving their academic goals. Because the United States has been the dominant economic power for the last seventy years, international students have increasingly chosen the U.S. as a study destination. The value of an education in the United States is the driving force behind the increased international student enrollments. The U.S. remains the number one destination for international students. While international students make up a relatively small percentage of the total number of students studying at colleges and universities in the United States, their impact is not negligible. This chapter begins with an investigation of international student enrollment trends, discusses the critical role international students play in keeping our STEM program viable, brings to view their contribution to the American economy, highlights the current problems related to international students and President Trump's immigration and visa policies, and examines the reasons international students choose to come to the United States for an education. This chapter concludes with an exploration of the role of IEPs and International Programs offices in the recruitment of international students.

#### **International Student Enrollment Trends**

The United States has been a top destination for international students for decades. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has tracked the number of international students in the United States since the 1948/1949 academic school year. In 1948, there were just 25,464

international students enrolled in higher education academic program in the U.S. out of a total number of 2,403,400 students. International students made up approximately 1.1 percent of the students enrolled in colleges and universities across the United States. Table 1 shows the steady growth of international student enrollments from 1979 to 2017. Enrollments prior to 1979 were not included because the statistics don't record students enrolled in Optional Practical Training (OPT) before 1979. OPT is a system that allows an international student to apply for a job and work in the United States for a limited period of time in order to gain practical experience. This is important because students enrolled in OPT don't pay university tuition, though they are still counted as university students. In the 2017 Academic Year, there was a decrease in the actual number of students attending higher education institutions, but because of an increase in students applying for OPT, it appears there was an increase in students. In her article in *Inside Higher Education*, Elizabeth Redden asserts that, "The increases in OPT participation by recent international graduates can mask declines in the number of international students who are currently enrolled in degree programs -- the number that really matters to colleges when it comes both to their financial bottom lines and their goals of building diverse campuses" (2018a).

**Table 1**

**Enrollment Trends: International Students in U.S. Higher Education**

<b>Year</b>	<b><u>Enrolled</u> Int'l Students</b>	<b><u>Optional Practical</u> Training (OPT)</b>	<b>Total Int'l Students</b>	<b>Annual % Change</b>	<b>Total U.S. Enrollment*</b>	<b>% Int'l</b>
1979/80***	283,503	2,840	286,343	8.5	11,570,000	2.5
1980/81	308,432	3,450	311,882	8.9	12,097,000	2.6
1981/82	323,419	2,880	326,299	4.6	12,372,000	2.6
1982/83	333,365	3,620	336,985	3.3	12,426,000	2.7
1983/84	335,494	3,400	338,894	0.6	12,465,000	2.7
1984/85	337,803	4,310	342,113	0.9	12,242,000	2.8

1985/86	339,627	4,150	343,777	0.5	12,247,000	2.8
1986/87	344,879	4,730	349,609	1.7	12,504,000	2.8
1987/88	351,387	4,800	356,187	1.9	12,767,000	2.8
1988/89	359,334	7,020	366,354	2.9	13,055,000	2.8
1989/90	379,139	7,712	386,851	5.6	13,539,000	2.9
1990/91	398,759	8,770	407,529	5.3	13,819,000	2.9
1991/92	411,355	8,230	419,585	3.0	14,359,000	2.9
1992/93	427,608	11,010	438,618	4.5	14,487,000	3.0
1993/94	438,319	11,430	449,749	2.5	14,305,000	3.1
1994/95	439,427	13,208	452,635	0.6	14,279,000	3.2
1995/96	438,337	15,450	453,787	0.3	14,262,000	3.2
1996/97	439,859	18,125	457,984	0.9	14,368,000	3.2
1997/98	464,698	16,582	481,280	5.1	14,502,000	3.3
1998/99	474,091	16,842	490,933	2.0	14,507,000	3.4
1999/00	489,866	24,857	514,723	4.8	14,791,000	3.5
2000/01	526,809	21,058	547,867	6.4	15,312,000	3.6
2001/02	560,251	22,745	582,996	6.4	15,928,000	3.7
2002/03	558,530	27,793	586,323	0.6	16,612,000	3.5
2003/04	543,169	29,340	572,509	-2.4	16,911,000	3.4
2004/05	532,040	32,999	565,039	-1.3	17,272,000	3.3
2005/06	526,670	38,096	564,766	-0.05	17,487,000	3.2
2006/07	541,324	41,660	582,984	3.2	17,672,000	3.3
2007/08	567,039	56,766	623,805	7.0	18,248,000	3.4
2008/09	605,015	66,601	671,616	7.7	19,103,000	3.5
2009/10	623,119	67,804	690,923	2.9	20,428,000	3.4
2010/11	647,246	76,031	723,277	4.7	20,550,000	3.5
2011/12	679,338	85,157	764,495	5.7	20,625,000	3.7
2012/13	724,725	94,919	819,644	7.2	21,253,000	3.9
2013/14	780,055	105,997	886,052	8.1	21,216,000	4.2
2014/15	854,639	120,287	974,926	10.0	20,300,000	4.8
2015/16	896,341	147,498	1,043,839	7.1	20,264,000	5.2
2016/17	903,127	175,695	1,078,822	3.4	20,185,000	5.3
2017/18	891,330	203,462	1,094,792	1.5	19,831,000	5.5

Source: Institute of International Education Open Doors Report 2018

The statistics in Table 1 also show that total student enrollment has been on the decline since 2013/2014 as international student enrollments have increased-until the 2017/2018 school year, when international student enrollments also began to decline. Indications are that we can

expect declining international student enrollment for the next few years. The Institute of International Education reports that new enrollments of international students were down 6.6 percent from the previous year (2018a). Table 2 shows that new enrollments were down in every category, the second year in a row showing new student enrollments have dropped.

**Table 2**

**New International Student Enrollment**

Years

Academic Level	% Change from 2016/17	2	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Undergraduate	-6.3	3	102,069	109,486	112,765	119,262	115,841	108,539
Graduate	-5.5	1	100,129	108,519	121,637	126,516	124,888	117,960
Non-Degree	-9.7	3	48,722	52,123	59,364	54,965	50,107	45,239
<b>Total</b>	<b>-6.6</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>250,920</b>	<b>270,128</b>	<b>293,766</b>	<b>300,743</b>	<b>290,836</b>	<b>271,738</b>

Source: Institute of International Education Open Doors Report 2018

**International Student Significance to STEM Fields**

Without the economic investment of international students, many university programs would shut down and important progress in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) research fields would be lost. Table 3 shows that international students make up a very large percentage of all students doing graduate work in STEM fields (Redden, 2017). Because of these students, the growth in STEM programs has opened up more programs and spaces for domestic students. Therefore, Redden argues that these STEM programs would cease to exist without international students (2017).

Redden is not the first to make this argument. During the 2008 and 2012 presidential election campaigns, Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, and Mitt Romney all supported the idea of

awarding green cards to STEM students (Dwyer 2016). Senator Jeff Flake, a Republican, introduced a bill that was called the equivalent to stapling a green card to diplomas of Ph.D. graduate students who come on STEM visas (Thibodeau 2011). This shows that both parties in the United States have recognized the importance of the contributions of international students, particularly in keeping the United States on the cutting edge of science and technology.

**Table 3**  
**International Students by Major**

<b>Field of Study</b>	<b>Percent International</b>	<b>Number of Full-Time International Graduate Students in 2015</b>	<b>Number of Full-Time U.S. Graduate Students in 2015</b>
Electrical Engineering	81%	32,736	7,783
Petroleum Engineering	81%	1,258	302
Computer Science	79%	45,790	12,539
Industrial Engineering	75%	7,676	2,539
Statistics	69%	4,321	1,966
Economics	63%	7,770	4,492
Mechanical Engineering	62%	12,676	7,644
Civil Engineering	59%	9,159	6,284
Chemical Engineering	57%	5,001	3,834
Pharmaceutical Sciences	56%	1,931	1,502
Metallurgical/Materials Engineering	55%	3,723	3,103
Agricultural Engineering	53%	726	654
Agricultural Economics	53%	881	796

Source: Redden, Foreign Students and Graduate Stem Enrollment 2017

## **International Student Enrollment and Political Considerations**

The recruitment of international students is an important issue not only from a cultural perspective but also because of the contribution international students bring to the United States economy. The Office of Immigration Statistics gathers information on nonimmigrant foreign nationals and publishes a report annually. The last year for which statistics are available is 2017/2018 academic year (Institute of International Education 2018). The report shows that 1,094,792 students entered the country on an F-1 visa in 2017/2018. Additionally, exchange visitors coming in on J-1 visas added another 505,448 foreign national entries associated with higher education (Teke and Navarro 2018, 4). These international students contributed over 39 billion dollars to the United States economy in 2017 (Institute of International Education 2018). Those dollars help keep our universities and university communities healthy and growing.

Despite the decline in growth of overall new student numbers since the election of President Trump, international students remain an important source of tuition revenue for American higher education institutions. Telling is the decrease in enrollments from China and Mexico, two countries President Donald Trump has openly criticized. President Trump's anti-immigrant rhetoric and his attempt at enacting a travel ban have been strong factors associated with this enrollment decline. Chinese student enrollment dropped by almost 2.2 percent and enrollments from Mexico have declined by 11% (Trines 2017, 2). From 2017 to 2018, enrollments from Saudi Arabia and South Korea declined by 17 percent and 7.5 percent, respectively (Department of Homeland Security 2018). This accounts for an overall decline of 6.6 percent of new enrollments in the fall semester of 2017, and the trend appears to be continuing (Redden 2018a). Enrollment across the board began to flatten in 2016 for a number

of reasons. One reason is increased competition from Canada and Australia, but another reason college administrators cite is President Trump's anti-immigrant rhetoric and "...restrictive views on immigration" (Saul 2017).

President Trump's attempt at banning travel from some countries is another factor. *The Atlantic* reports that the largest decline in numbers of applications came from the Middle East. A recent survey of university applications and enrollments reveals that there was "... a 39 percent decrease in Middle Eastern undergraduate applications and a 31 percent decrease in graduate applications from the region" (Bendix 2017). Additionally, the number of students in the United States from the revised list of banned countries was about 15,000 in 2016 (Bendix 2017). That is a significant number of students for institutions to lose. While it is argued that the ban is justified for security reasons by the Trump administration, the news of such a policy is bound to affect students in more than just the countries targeted by the ban. When immigration policies are in flux, international student applications suffer because of the confusion and uncertainty over new policies (Saul 2017). According to the survey, many potential students have expressed concern about the possibility of the list growing to include their countries, including potential students from China and India (Bendix 2017). Some analysts would say that declines in international enrollment are due to economic reasons or simply cyclical; however, numbers closer to home affirm that Trump's rhetoric and policies have an impact. In Mexico and Canada, our closest neighbors geographically, there were declines in enrollments in every academic category. Mexican students coming for non-degree programs like intensive English training dropped by over 39 percent (Redden 2018a). Trump's has vilified our neighbor to the south and is in constant conflict with our closest ally and one of our strongest trading partners in



the north. It should come as no surprise that students are hesitant to study where they fear people see them as pariahs.

### **Why Students Choose to Study in the United States**

The reasons students choose particular countries and educational institutions are important for us to understand so that we can better determine how we can appeal to international students. As the United States is currently the most popular destination for international students worldwide, some of the reasons for selecting the United States as a destination are clear. First, the United States has the largest economy in the world, and an education in the United States gives students more possibilities for participating in the global economy. Second, the United States has a reputation for high-quality educational options.

As English has become the de-facto Lingua Franca, international enrollments in English-speaking countries have dramatically increased. As mentioned earlier, the United States is currently the most popular destination for international students worldwide in terms of overall number of enrollments, but other English speaking countries are also doing well. England, Australia, Ireland, and New Zealand all have much higher enrollment percentages of international students than the United States. The United States is currently at 5.5 %, while the others range from 7% in Canada to 20% in Australia. (Redden 2018a). The reasons for selecting the United States as an educational destination are clear. By examining data on how students evaluate and select universities, additional insight can be gleaned into the reasons students select to pursue an education in the United States.

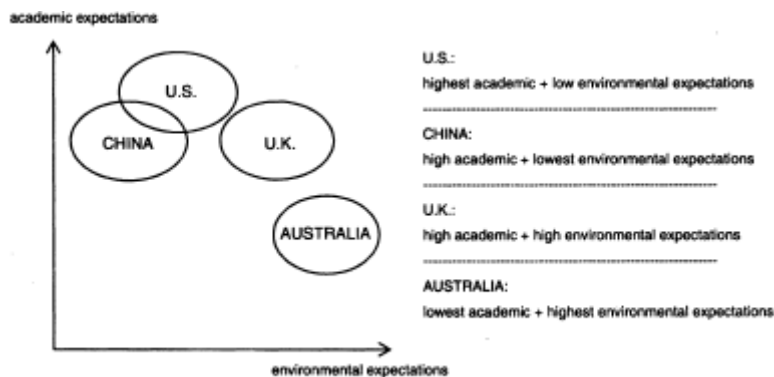
The following study by Elisa Park demonstrates the specific motivations for Korean students. However, similar studies would likely show different results based on the socio-

economic outlook of the *exporting* country and perhaps students' views of their own educational system, plus a myriad of other factors. Nevertheless, as Korea sends a large number of students to the United States, lessons can be taken from this study.

The United States is a favorite destination for Korean students who want to study abroad. South Korea sent nearly 55,000 students to the United States in 2017 (Institute of International Education 2018). In her study of Korean student international-mobility motivations, Park (2009) polled Korean high school students regarding four popular destinations for those seeking an education abroad (see Figures 1 & 2). Students were given questionnaires regarding environment and academic expectations of an education in the United States, China, the United Kingdom, and Australia, the four most popular destinations for Korean students.

**Figure 1**

**Comparison of Academic and Environmental Expectations in Four Countries**



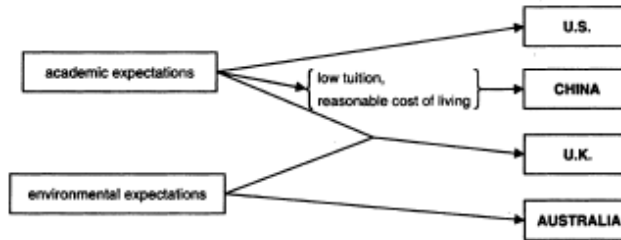
Source: Park (2009)

“Students who selected the United States as an ideal destination had their high expectations of ‘curriculum excellence,’ ‘high reputation of school,’ and ‘high job opportunity after graduation’ for U.S. higher education” (Park 2009, 750). The United Kingdom was perceived similarly to the United States in terms of academic expectation but was deemed more

traditional and conservative. Korean students who selected China as a study abroad destination did so due to monetary issues (Park 2009, 753) as summarized in Figure 2.

**Figure 2**

**Academic and Environmental Expectations and Choice of Destination Countries**



Source: Park (2009)

Students who chose Australia had lower academic expectations and were looking for an exciting environment. What this study tells us is that Korean students believe that an education in the United States represents the best option for future success. Similar results can be expected from Chinese students. An article on the BBC website reporting on Chinese students in the United States credits world-class universities as one reason and the Chinese system failures as another. It posits that Chinese students are eager to leave the Chinese system because tests scores determine which majors students will be allowed to enroll in (Svoboda 2015). Because of the quality of education and the prestige of an education in the United States, it is still the number one choice for students considering study abroad in nearly every country (Gold 2016).

**Coming to America**

In order to understand the international student market, the first factor that needs to be addressed is how students evaluate and select a university abroad. The information this study is most interested in is how students evaluate a university. These factors include national rankings,

cost, location, and research opportunities. This is the key to the development of a recruitment strategy that targets your potential students.

From experience recruiting abroad, for example, many international recruiters have learned that most students in China ask about the university's national rankings. This experience tells us that schools that can show high rankings in various programs have an advantage with Chinese students. The research from International Education Advantage (INTEAD) highlighted below in Figure 3 confirms these sentiments regarding Chinese students' evaluation criteria. However, rankings are not a strong factor for all students according to a study done by INTEAD. In a survey sent to more than 807,000 students in 94 countries (not including China), INTEAD received more than 35,000 responses. The responses summarized in Figure 3 indicate that scholarships were clearly the top criteria students used when selecting a university abroad followed by research opportunities, rankings, and then geography (FPPEDU Media 2016, 15).

**Figure 3**

**Decision-Making Criteria for Students from Select Countries  
When Selecting a University Abroad**

What Do You Evaluate When Choosing...



Source: FPPEDU Media, INTEAD (2016)

Looking at the survey results and the countries surveyed, it is clear that promotion of scholarships and strong academic programs with research opportunities are going to interest students more than university rankings in many countries. It is also evident that geography plays a very small role for students from these same countries. The information we are most interested in is how students evaluate a university. In the Middle East, for example, an area with significant growth in study abroad numbers the last decade, 56% of students surveyed said academic programs were a factor they looked at when deciding where to go, while 49% said scholarships were important, and 34% said rankings were important. In Vietnam, however, another country with strong growth in numbers of students going abroad to study, 68% said

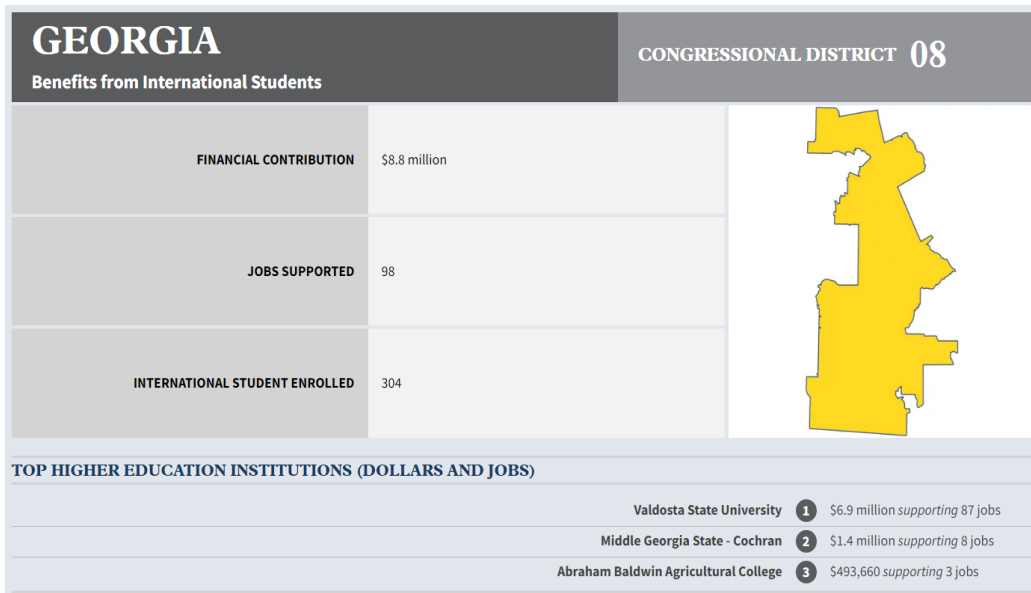
scholarships were an important factor in their choice. Academic programs were considered important by 59% of the respondents, and academic rankings as a consideration in choosing schools was so low it did not merit mentioning (FPPEDU Media 2016). The data reveal that what attracts students in one country or region does not necessarily work in another country or region.

### **On the Homefront**

In Georgia, international students provided a significant boon to the economy. There were 23,623 international students in Georgia last year, and it is estimated that they spent more than \$850 million dollars in the state (NAFSA 2019a). The impact is felt in every district with international students. As Figure 4 below shows, students in Georgia's Congressional District 8 contributed \$8.8 million dollars to the economy and supported 98 jobs. At Valdosta State alone, the report estimates that international students contributed \$6.9 million dollars and supported 87 jobs in the Valdosta area (2019a).

**Figure 4**

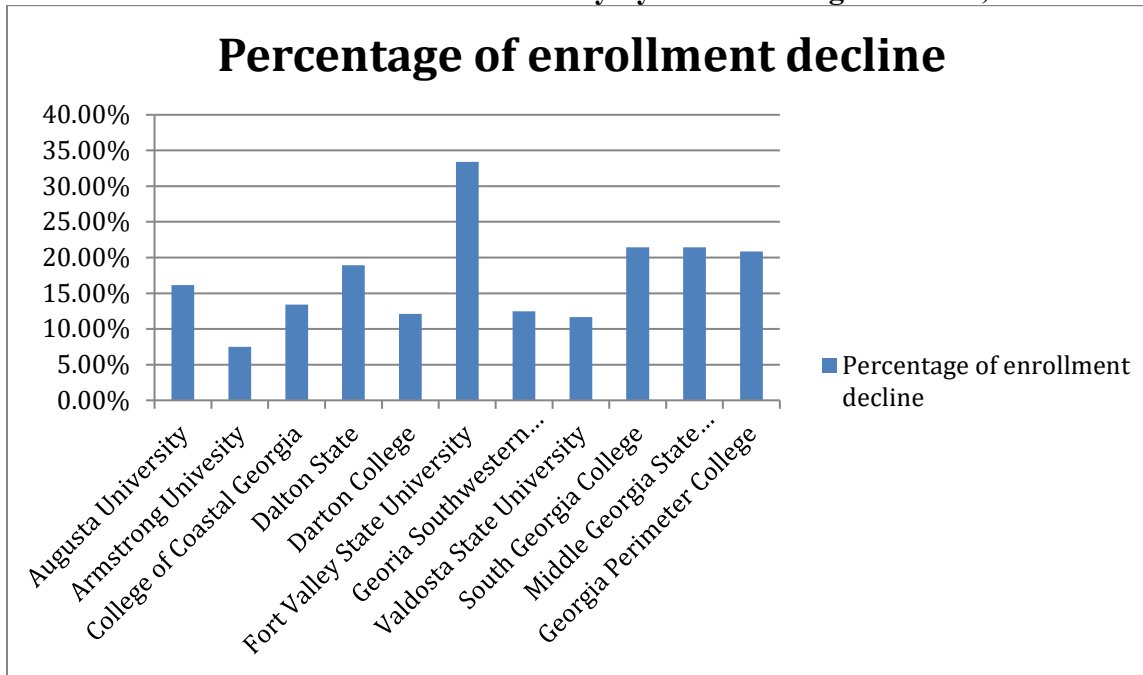
**Congressional District 8 Benefits from International Students**



Source: NAFSA's International Student Economic Value Tool 2019

However, enrollment declines have had a significant effect on revenues. Janel Davis (2015) of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* reports that nearly every non-research-intensive university had significant declines in enrollment, ranging from 7.65% at Armstrong State University to 33.42% at Fort Valley State University. Valdosta State's enrollment declined by 11.7% during this period (Davis 2015). Figure 5 shows the serious enrollment decline at USG schools.

**Figure 5**  
**Enrollment Declines at University System of Georgia Schools, Fall 2014**



Source: Davis (2015)

Regional comprehensive universities and smaller institutions have lost a significant number of students and have lost funding provided by appropriations. Doctoral research-intensive universities have made up for lost funding through increases in out-of-state and international enrollments. In a recent journal article, Ashley Macrander (2015) posits that as state funding decreases, international student tuition dollars are seen as a replacement. Georgia Tech provides an example of this. In 2008, Georgia Tech enrolled 3,459 international students out of a little less than 19,000 total students. In 2015, there were slightly more than 5,100 international students out of a little more than 19,000 students, a disproportionate increase (Georgia Tech Fact Book 2016).

International students are clearly attracted to doctoral research-intensive universities because of their academic programs and research. They are also enticed by their reputations as



top-quality universities. However, not every international student qualifies for or can afford an education at a doctoral research-intensive institution. While the attraction of these top universities is understandable, what is less clear is how students select regional universities, and how recruitment can attract and enroll international students in quality programs at these universities. What are the key factors in terms of a regional university or four-year baccalaureate institution attracting international students? Is it academic rankings, program offerings, scholarships, geographical location, climate, or institutional characteristics?

The Institute of International Education (IIE) Open Doors reports that one out of three international students chooses to study in California, New York, or Texas. Where do the rest of them go? Georgia ranks 15<sup>th</sup> in states with the most international students, which sounds respectable, but of the more than 21,000 international students in Georgia, 15,870 went to University of Georgia, Georgia State, Georgia Tech, Emory, and Savannah College of Arts and Design (2016). That means that slightly over 5,000 students were spread out across all the other public and private institutions in Georgia. It is clear that the big draws for international students who come to Georgia are doctoral research-intensive universities or in the case of SCAD, specialization of the programming, and the reason they selected these programs was because of their reputation for academic excellence. This is not just the case for Georgia, but a pattern across the United States. In the 2015-2016 academic school year, there were eight United States institutions in which more than 10,000 international students were enrolled: New York University led the way with 15,543 international students, the University of Southern California followed with 13,340, Arizona State University, Tempe and Columbia University enrolled more than 12,700 each. The University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and Northeastern University

both enrolled more than 12,000, while the University of California, Los Angeles had more than 11,000 international students. Purdue, West Lafayette rounds out the list with slightly more than 10,000 international students enrolled (Zong & Batalova 2017).

### **The Role of Out-of-State Tuition**

It has been well established that the United States is a top destination for international students; however, money is still a very big impediment to an education in the United States. For those who are unable to gain admission to a top-ranked university and for more of those who can't afford an education at a top-ranked school, they would be well-served by a good education at a regional comprehensive university or four-year baccalaureate institution. The problem for many of these students is that even at regional comprehensive universities, tuition charges are often so high as to make it too difficult for the majority of applicants to come. One reason is the additional tuition that international students pay.

Nearly every state in the United States has a system whereby university tuition is charged according to whether you are a resident or a non-resident of the state. State residents receive a "discounted" rate because the students or their parents are presumed to have paid state taxes to support the educational system in the state. Students from out of state pay an "out-of-state tuition" rate, which is about three times higher than the in-state rate. In Georgia, this out-of-state rate is supposed to reflect the cost of education in the Georgia system. The policy governing out-of-state tuition rates is important for several reasons. First, most four-year baccalaureate universities and colleges in Georgia are not operating at full capacity and badly need students to fill empty seats. Enrollment in nearly every one of these institutions has dropped drastically since its peak in 2010 (Davis 2015).

## **Practices in Georgia**

Enrollment management practices at all institutions in Georgia, including Valdosta State University, are made at the state level, primarily. It can be argued that the policies set by the Board of Regents of the State of Georgia regarding out-of-state tuition rates help research institutions and flagship universities, but these policies hurt regional comprehensive universities as well as baccalaureate colleges. Doctoral research-intensive universities are not impacted by high tuition rates for international or domestic students and enrollment rates remain strong, as discussed below. The unnecessarily high out-of-state tuition rates set by the Board of Regents, a key element of our data analysis in this study, can make it difficult for regional comprehensive universities and four-year baccalaureate colleges to recruit international students to fill vacant seats left open by declining enrollment numbers.

Prior research has shown that “public universities increase nonresident enrollment following declines in the state appropriations” (Jaquette et al. 2016). In Georgia, this is true for doctoral research-one universities, but not true for smaller institutions. Research-intensive universities across the country and in the state of Georgia (Georgia Tech and the University of Georgia) attract international students primarily through their reputations as high-quality institutions and are not noticeably affected by increases in tuition in terms of international student numbers. For example, in fall 2015 Georgia Tech had 5,193 international students out of a student body of 19,541 (Georgia Tech Fact Book 2016). International students made up over 25% of all students at Georgia Tech. Another 24% were students from out of state (Georgia Tech Fact Book 2016). To further illustrate the point that research-intensive universities like Georgia Tech are immune from declines in enrollment, during the same period, they had

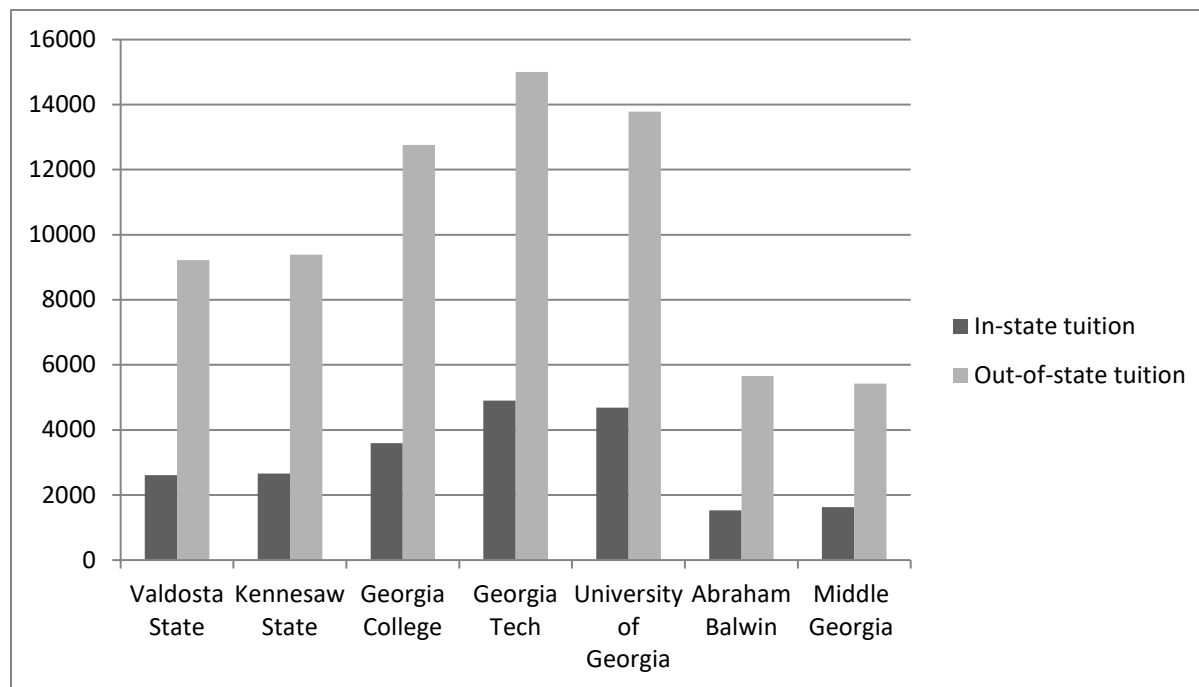
approximately 27,000 freshman applications and 15,000 graduate school applications, the large majority of which were denied (Georgia Tech Fact Book 2015).

In contrast to research-one universities which can regulate out-of-state and international student admissions based on a desire for the extra revenue from out-of-state tuition, few regional comprehensive or four-year baccalaureate institutions are that lucky. Nevertheless, many regional universities are beginning to invest in strategies to attract out-of-state and international students to fill vacant seats. According to the Open Doors report (2016), international students make up 5.2% of students across the United States. The report (2016) goes on to show that almost 20% of that number attended the top 20 hosting institutions. In contrast, international students in the United Kingdom make up approximately 20% of the student body at higher education institutions (HESA 2017). That's nearly 15% higher than in U.S. institutions. In Australia, international students make up nearly 25% of the student body in higher education (Australian Education Network (n.d.)). Both the United Kingdom and Australia have focused on increasing numbers and revenue from the international student market, while the United States has been content to watch our market share slip away.

In-state tuition rates and out-of-state tuition rates vary across the University System of Georgia institutions. Figure 6 shows the tuition rates of a selected number of institutions, showing research-one institutions like Georgia Tech and the University of Georgia, regional comprehensive institutions such as Valdosta State and Kennesaw State, and four-year baccalaureate institutions such as Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Georgia College and State University, and Middle Georgia University.

**Figure 6**

**Tuition Rates at Select University System of Georgia Institutions**



Source: Synthesized from various System University Fact sheets

The darker columns represent the cost of in-state tuition at each college and the lighter columns represent the cost of out-of-state tuition at each university or college for fall semester 2016. Data was taken directly from the college/university admissions websites. As highlighted in Figure 6, the rates for out-of-state tuition are roughly three to three and a half times more than the rates for in-state tuition.

From Figure 6 one can see the difference in the in-state and out-of-state tuition charges clearly. The supposition is that the real cost for educating a student at each of these schools is the cost of the out-of-state tuition charge. One could then also deduce that the cost differential between the in-state tuition and out-of-state tuition is met through the state appropriations process. Therefore, state appropriations should contribute between approximately sixty-five and

seventy percent towards the total cost of tuition. However, this is not the case. In 2017, Valdosta State received approximately 25.4% of its budget from state appropriations (VSU Fact Book 2017-2018).

### **The Role of International Programs Office**

In the past seventy years, there has been a steady march towards *globalization*. As travel and trade between countries become more frequent, and the fact that globalization is to some extent coming at us like a runaway train, many leaders have recognized that it is imperative for our future leaders to be prepared to function in a new inter-connected world. Universities are attempting to meet this challenge through an educational process they are calling *internationalization*. Maria Cantu (2013, 1) describes globalization as a “social and economic process” and internationalization as the strategy for universities and colleges to respond to it. Internationalization is the term used for how we teach our students a set of skills often referred to as global competencies. These global competencies are intended to successfully prepare “. . . students to live responsible, productive, and creative lives in a dramatically changed world . . .” (Cantu 2013, 2). Having international students in the classroom is one key strategy to achieve our internationalization goals.

Crucial to the success of international education is the international programs office on a campus. According to Elizabeth Redden, a survey shows that, “The top two priority activities for internationalization both relate to student mobility -- increasing study abroad for American students and recruiting international students” (2017). She adds that “partnerships, internationalizing the curriculum, and faculty development” are the next three important goals (2017). Generally, international student programs offices are tasked with meeting these goals.

Most international programs offices are responsible for study abroad, faculty internationalization, and international student services, at a minimum. As such, an international programs office is responsible for nearly every aspect of an international student's experience—from recruitment to organizing student visas to navigating the academic offerings of the university. Particularly important is recruitment. Regional universities and community colleges see their primary mission as serving the local population, so their admissions recruitment team is generally limited to recruiting regionally. Therefore, the International Programs office has become the de facto international recruitment arm of the university, often with an unfunded mandate.

Presidents and Senior International Officers (SIO) drive internationalization. If it is a priority for the president of an institution, then the SIO or director is crucial to its success. The international programs office staff usually consists of an SIO or director, a study abroad coordinator, and an international student advisor. Depending on the size of the institution and the number of students, there may be additional staff or graduate assistants tasked to help the study abroad and international student advisor. However, it is also common for smaller institutions to have only one person designated as the international officer, with the responsibilities of director, study abroad advisor, and international student advisor. To address the difficulties of running such an office, NAFSA, the professional organization associated most strongly with internationalization, offers a workshop called “The One-Person Office: Strategies and Tools for Success” (NAFSA 2019b).

The director of an international office is responsible for developing a strategic plan, organizing faculty development programs such as Fulbright, or international events on campus. The director is also the person who may deal with faculty exchanges, execute new cooperation or

exchange agreements, or develop dual and cooperative degree programs. The director is also in charge of the budget and determines how any funds for advertising or recruitment will ultimately be spent. It is important for this person to have a good understanding of how a successful international office operates.

The study abroad advisor is usually in charge of student exchange and short-term study abroad programs. This person mentors faculty new to study abroad and helps with the creation of new study abroad programs, as well as the monitoring of continuing programs. The person in this position is also responsible for advising students who want to go on semester or year-long exchange programs. He or she is also the Responsible Officer (RO) for Homeland Security's SEVIS record system. This person issues a government form DS-2019 to incoming exchange students and faculty to facilitate the J1 Exchange Visitor's visa process.

The international student advisor is a position that is required if an institution plans to host international students. This person is responsible for tracking and reporting international students to Homeland Security. She or he is also responsible for advising students regarding rules and regulations regarding their F1 visa status. This person is often the Designated Student Officer (DSO) in charge of issuing the Form I-20 to international students who apply to come to the United States. In addition to those duties, often international student recruitment falls on the shoulders of the international student advisor. They are generally tasked with answering international student queries, and depending on the recruitment budget, sent overseas to student recruitment fairs if the school actively recruits.



## **The Role of the Intensive English Program**

According to the American Council on Education's *Mapping Internationalization on U.S. Campuses* study, about half of the 1164 institutions that participated responded that they had or were considering developing an intensive English language program on their campuses (Helms, Brajkovic, & Struthers 2017, 29). In their survey, 29% responded that they currently have an IEP run by the institution, 5% responded that they have a program operated by a third-party provider, 6% were currently developing an IEP, and 9% were considering developing a program. These numbers show how tremendously universities value the contributions that international students make on their campus. In a publication on IEPs, the American Council on Education explained that, "...Intensive English Programs (IEPs) are gaining attention on many campuses as a means to enhance the institutional value proposition for international students, increase numbers and provide an additional level of support for matriculated students" (Reese & Helms 2019, 2). In other words, a main consideration for an IEP is the value it brings to a campus, both in terms of real dollars and in internationalization of the campus. Generally, IEPs are tasked with recruiting for their programs and the university's programs. Most college and university IEP administrators and instructors are professionals in the field of TESL and are employees of the institution. The majority of IEPs are housed in international programs, continuing education, or another academic unit (Reese & Helms 2019, 3). In addition, a majority are revenue generating departments for the university. If there is a designated international student recruitment position, it is often funded through an IEP. Because IEPs are revenue generating, they have a higher stake in recruitment. Without a minimum number of students studying English in an IEP, the program must face layoffs and potential closure when numbers drop.

Generally, an IEP's administrative staff consists of a director and an assistant director, a recruitment coordinator, and an administration specialist to serve as the Designated School Official and issue Form I-20 for student visas.

The director is responsible for the overall success of the program, including administration, hiring, budgeting, and planning. If no recruitment position exists, the director generally takes on recruitment responsibilities. The director may teach, as well.

The assistant director is generally responsible for curriculum, scheduling, and managing instructors. The assistant director usually teaches, but has a reduced course load. He or she may also assist in recruitment.

Few institutions have a designated international student recruiter. Most assign this role to a faculty member in exchange for a reduced course load. The recruiter is responsible for webpages, advertising, and searching for opportunities to promote the IEP. A full-time recruiter will attend student recruitment fairs abroad and help facilitate contracts with recruitment agents and agencies. He or she will also manage a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database to track recruitment efforts.

As mentioned previously, this is a general overview of the administration of both international programs offices and intensive English program offices. Some offices operate with just one permanent staff member, and some offices are fully staffed. Much depends on how seriously university administrators pursue internationalization goals.

## Chapter 3

### DATA AND METHODS

This study analyzes the key predictors of international student enrollment at colleges and universities in the southeast and what roles both IEPs and International Programs offices play in bringing international students to campus. The study uses data collected from a variety of sources to analyze the key predictors of international student enrollment at colleges and university across the Southeast.

#### Stage One

The first stage of analysis relies on published data from the experts in the field, primarily the annual *Open Doors* Report. The Institute of International Education *Open Doors* Report (2018) provides data on colleges and universities with more than ten international students. According to the *Open Doors* report, almost 200 colleges and universities (n = 195) in the six southeastern states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Tennessee participated in the research. The enrollment data are for the 2016-2017 academic year, the last year that enrollment data were available at the time the research commenced.

There are four hypotheses that guide this analysis:

H1: Doctoral research-intensive universities will have the highest percentage of international students.

H2: Private colleges and universities will have a higher percentage of international students in their student body than public institutions.

H3: More diverse institutions will have a higher percentage of international students.

H4: Higher tuition rates, especially out-of-state tuition rates, will depress the percentage of international students at colleges and universities.

Initially, it is expected that institutions with a large research and doctoral portfolio will be most successful in recruiting international students. These prestigious institutions are attractive for international students across the globe. It is also hypothesized that private colleges and universities will be the most successful in attracting international students through scholarships or waivers of tuition and fees. Furthermore, a diverse student body should help to attract international students to a college or university. As discussed previously, high rates of tuition should serve as a disincentive for international students to attend, especially at non-doctoral universities.

The dependent variable in this study is the total number of international students enrolled divided by the total enrollment (undergraduate + graduate students) at the institution. The analysis is based on the percentage of international students as a reflection of how successful small, medium, and large institutions are at recruiting international students. Table 4 summarizes all the variables for the stage one analysis. For the 195 colleges and universities in this study, the total number of international students range from 10 to 6,751 (University of Florida) with a mean of 532 and a standard deviation of a little more than 1,000. Total enrollment ranges from 550 to 62,953 with an average institutional enrollment of approximately 10,000 for the institutions of higher education in this study. The percentage of international students, the dependent variable, ranges from a low of .14% (Greenville Technical College in South Carolina) to a high of 39% (Florida International University) with a mean percentage of international students of 4.65% and a standard deviation of 5.59. The average of 4.65% for the

institutions in this sample is very close to the national mean of 5% for international student enrollment.

**Table 4**  
**Variables, Characteristics and Sources**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Source</b>
Total Enrollment of International Students	10	6751	532.47	1053.87	Open Doors 2015-2016
Total Enrollment (undergraduate + graduate)	550	62953	10380.06	11861.31	IPEDS
Percentage International Students	.14	38.79	4.65	5.59	Open Doors Report/ IPEDS
Percentage White	0	85	53.81	22.97	IPEDS
Percentage African American	1	96	23.32	22.13	IPEDS
Percentage Latino	0	86	8.69	11.87	IPEDS
Percentage Female	20	100	58.56	9.72	IPEDS
Total Tuition and Fees	4810	49241	22561.09	9857.24	IPEDS
Institutional Academic Classification	1	5	3.56	1.14	IPEDS
Public/Private	0	1	.56	.50	IPEDS

Percentage white ranges from 0 to 85% with a mean of 54% across the colleges and universities of this study. Percentage African American ranges from 1 to 96% with a mean of 23%, and percentage Latino ranges from 0 to 86% with a mean of almost 9%. Percentage female

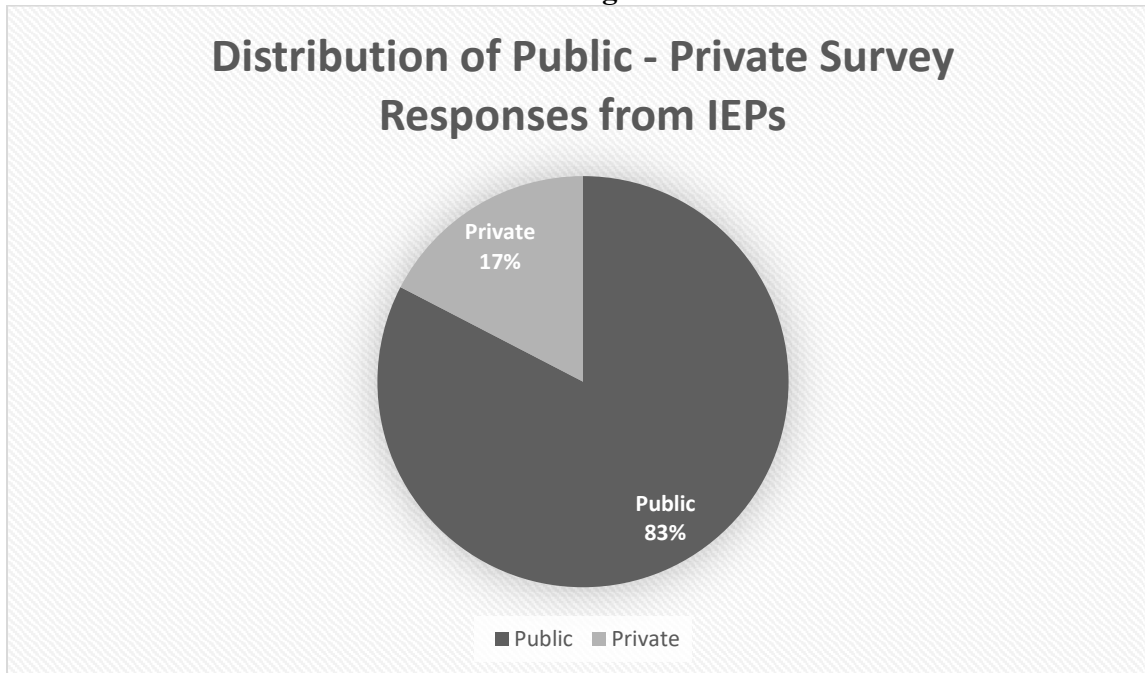
ranges from 20 to 100% with an average female student body of 58% across the 195 colleges and universities in this study. Institutional academic classification has five categories: specialty, associates, bachelors, masters, and doctoral. There are 45 doctoral institutions (23% of the sample), 69 master's institutions (35% of the sample), 40 bachelor's institutions (21% of the sample), 34 associates institutions (17% of the sample), and 7 specialty institutions (4% of the sample). For the final independent variable in Table 4, the dummy variable for public/private is coded 0 for private colleges and universities (44% of the sample) and 1 for public institutions (56% of the sample). All of the independent variables are derived from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) of the National Center for Education Statistics to match the academic year of data from the Open Doors report (2017).

## **Stage Two**

The second stage of analysis examines the role that intensive English programs (IEPs) play in the recruitment of international students. To gather data on international student recruitment practices in the southeastern part of the United States, a Qualtrics survey (see Appendix A) was developed and sent out to all institutions with IEPs in NAFSA's Region 7. Region 7 includes Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi. The surveys were distributed through English USA, an organization comprised of English language teaching professionals, as they were able to target the southeastern states included in the survey. Additionally, the survey links were emailed directly to international student office directors and directors of intensive English programs (IEP) whose contact information was available on their websites. Twenty-three directors of intensive English programs or their representatives responded to the survey out of the 106 queried, a response rate

of 21.7%. Of the IEPs that responded, 82.61% were at public institutions, and 17.39% were at private institutions as highlighted in Figure 7.

**Figure 7**



The survey included questions pertaining to recruitment of international students and the budget for international student recruitment in IEPs. Further questions inquire about staffing for recruitment and marketing. Additionally, the survey seeks to determine which countries are providing the majority of international students to IEPs in the Southeast and whether these students are staying for academic degree programs. Respondents are asked to select from options the strategies they use for recruitment and an open-ended question regarding recruitment strategies is asked in order to elicit responses that may not have been considered in our response choices. Finally, institutions are queried on whether they receive funding from the academic institution for the IEP or if they are a cost-recovery program.

There are four hypotheses that guide the analysis in this stage:

H5: Institutions offering intensive English programs will show a higher percentage of international students.

H6: IEPs with a designated staff member for recruitment will show a higher percentage of international students enrolled at the institution.

H7: As the budget increases at IEPs for recruiting international students, the institution will have a higher percentage of international students.

H8: IEPs utilizing educational agencies to assist in recruitment efforts will have a higher percentage of international students at the institution.

The Qualtrics survey is expected to confirm that institutions offering an intensive English program should have an advantage in attracting students who don't have opportunities to improve their English language skills, but would still be academically qualified for degree programs. Furthermore, staffing and budget of the IEP as well as utilizing educational agencies should matter in relation to international student enrollment. If this is true, it follows that institutions that seek out these students would have a larger body of international students.

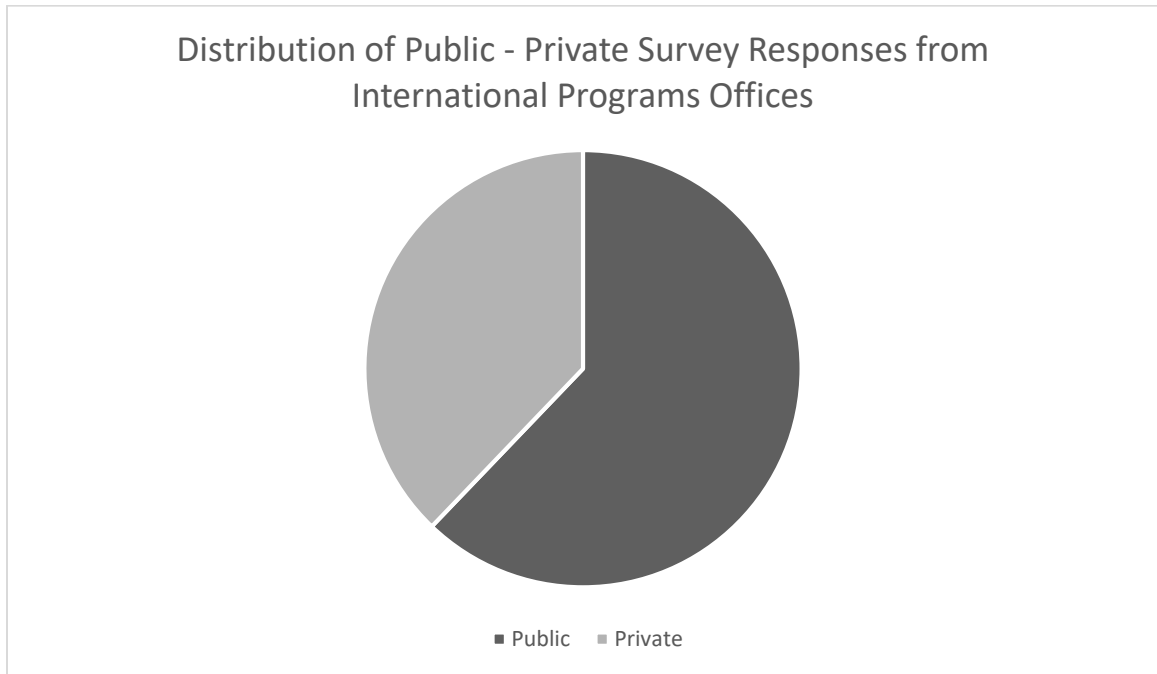
### **Stage Three**

The third stage of analysis also relies on data gathered through a Qualtrics survey (see Appendix B) sent out to International Programs offices in NAFSA's Region VII, which includes institutions in the Southeast (Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi). The total number of institutions with International Programs offices is estimated to be about 150 out of the 188 schools queried. International Programs directors in Georgia were sent the link through the SCIE listserv and via email, and personally asked to fill out the survey to assure participation of colleagues in Georgia. Thirty-eight institutions



responded to the survey, a response rate of 20.2%. If we consider that only 150 of the schools have international offices, then our response rate from those 150 institutions was 25.3%.

Figure 8

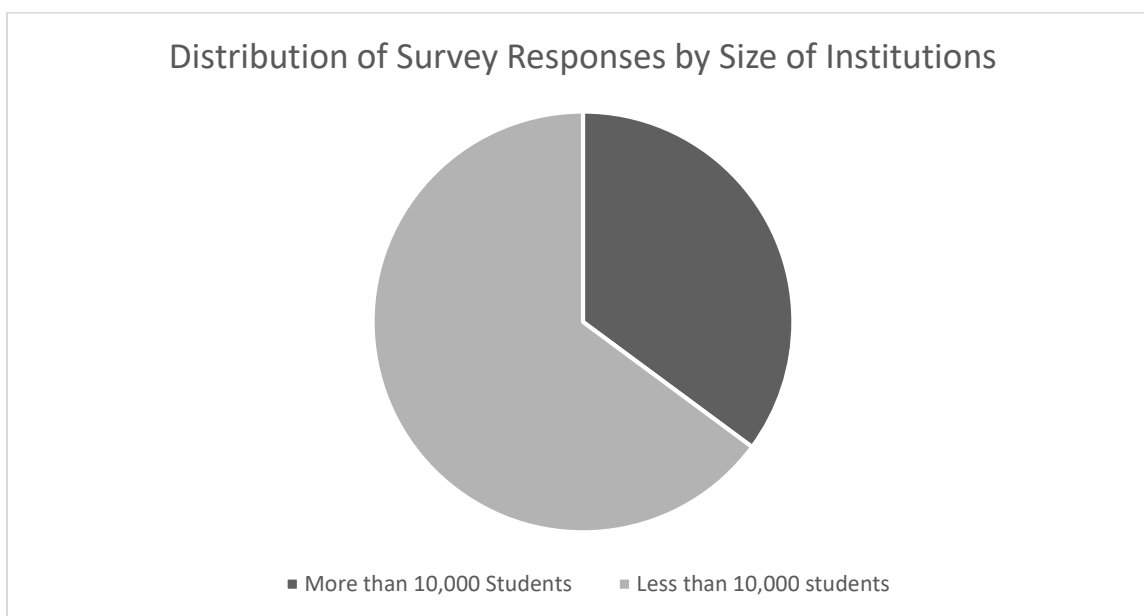


In addition, amongst the respondents, public institutions made up approximately 62% of institutions responding to the survey and 38% were private institutions, as shown in Figure 8. This roughly corresponds to the stage one analysis of the percentage of public and private institutions in the Open Doors Report where 56% of the respondents in Region 7 were public universities and 44% were private.

Figure 9 shows the distribution of survey responses by size of the institution. Approximately 65% of the institutions responding had less than 10,000 students as highlighted in Figure 9. This also shows a relatively good distribution of the types of universities responding to the survey. The mean for the average institutional size for the respondents to the survey was

14,263. The average institutional size for 195 colleges and universities in the Southeast was 10,380 students, as shown in the stage 1 analysis.

Figure 9



This survey also addresses recruitment of international students, recruitment staffing and budgeting, but additionally asks questions regarding the internationalization efforts and the institution's strategic plan. Many institutions have an international component to their strategic plan, and this survey seeks to discover how institutions across the Southeast prioritize international student recruitment and campus internationalization efforts.

There are five hypotheses that guide the analysis in this stage:

H9: Universities with a strategic plan including internationalization of the curriculum and campus will have a higher percentage of international students.

H10: International Programs offices with a dedicated recruitment professional will show a higher percentage of international students.

H11: International Programs offices that coordinate recruitment efforts with the Admissions office will show a higher percentage of international students.

H12: International Programs offices with recruitment budgets will show a higher percentage of international students.

H13: International Programs offices that collaborate with educational recruitment agencies will show a higher percentage of international students at the institution.

Declarations on the importance of internationalization and unfunded mandates have not been effective, at least in Georgia. In 2005, the Center for International Programs at VSU under direction from the Board of Regents Office of International Programs for the State of Georgia declared that our international student enrollment goal was 6% by 2008. 2008 came and went with no noticeable increase in international enrollment across the state of Georgia. It is expected that institutions who are truly interested in recruiting international students would include internationalization in their strategic plans and are therefore more likely to have a higher percentage of international students. Furthermore, institutions that indicate they collaborate on recruitment with the IEP, have a dedicated recruitment professional on staff, have higher recruitment budgets, and work with educational agencies are expected to show a higher percentage of international students.

### **IRB Approval**

Stage 1 of the analysis did not need IRB approval since all of the data came from public records. For stages 2 and 3, the research design of the questionnaires was reviewed by the VSU

IRB. An IRB exemption was approved in June and the survey sent out in August of 2019 (see Appendix C).

### **Statistical Analysis**

For Stage 1, a difference of means test is conducted to examine international student enrollment by institutional academic classification (H1) as well as for public versus private (H2). An OLS (Ordinary Least Squares) regression is conducted to test the key institutional and demographic predictors of international student enrollment (H3-H4).

For Stage 2, a difference of means test is utilized to investigate the impact of IEPs on international student enrollment (H5-H8). Frequency distributions of the survey responses are explored to describe the structure, staffing, budget, and recruitment strategies of IEPs throughout the Southeast.

For Stage 3, a difference of means test is utilized to explore the impact of International Programs offices on international student enrollment (H9-H13). Again, frequency distributions of the survey responses describe the staffing, budgeting and recruitment strategies of International Programs offices across the Southeast.

## **Chapter 4**

### **FINDINGS**

The three questions this study explores are as follows:

- (1) What are the key demographic and institutional predictors of international student enrollment for colleges and university in the Southeast?
- (2) What role do intensive English programs (IEPs) play in recruitment strategies of international students for colleges and universities in the Southeast?
- (3) What role and function do International Programs offices have in recruitment of international students on campuses across the Southeast?

#### **Stage One**

The data analysis in stage one proceeds in two phases. The first phase of the analysis examines the percentage of international students by institutional type. The second phase utilizes an OLS (ordinary least squares) regression analysis to predict the percentage of international students across the almost 200 institutions of higher education in this study.

Table 5 highlights the percentage of international students by institutional academic classification, as well as public compared to private colleges and universities. Interestingly, the highest percentage of international students in the overall student body (more than 10%) is evident at specialty institutions. It must be kept in mind that only 7 institutions fall in this category with the majority being colleges of art and design, which are attractive to international students. As hypothesized, the doctoral research-intensive universities have a larger percentage of international students (7.18%) than associates (1.39%), bachelors (4.9%), and masters (3.46%) institutions, confirming the first hypothesis. The differences between doctoral-associates and

doctoral-masters institutions are statistically significant at  $p < .01$ , with doctoral-bachelors statistically significant at  $p < .05$ , based upon a  $t$ -test. The difference between doctoral (7.18%) and specialty (10.21%) institutions is not statistically significant ( $t = -.735$ ,  $p = .484$ ). The difference between masters-associates is highly significant at  $p < .01$ , while the differences between masters-bachelors and masters-specialty are not significant. Furthermore, the difference between bachelors-associates is highly significant at  $p < .01$  while the difference between bachelors-specialty is not significant. The last possible combination for the difference of means test of associates-specialty is significant at  $p < .05$ .

Additionally, the doctoral institutions were disaggregated by the three Carnegie classifications of research activity: moderate, higher, and highest. As expected, those institutions with the *highest* research activity have the highest international student enrollment (11.38%). Doctoral institutions that fall into the higher research activity category have a smaller percentage of international students (7.41%). It is noteworthy that doctoral institutions with the *highest* research activity have an international student enrollment more than three times greater than moderate research activity institutions (11.38% vs. 3.71%). Most regional comprehensive universities fall in the category of moderate research activity and their level of international student enrollment is roughly on par with master's institutions and even below bachelor's institutions. As reported in Table 5, the difference between moderate and highest research activity doctoral institutions is highly significant with a  $t$ -test of -4.18 with a probability below .01, while the differences between highest-higher and higher-moderate research activity are not significant.

Table 5 also highlights the significantly higher level of international student enrollment at private colleges and universities when compared to public institutions of higher education. The average percentage of international students at the 86 private colleges and universities in this study is 6.67% which is more than double the average of 3.05% at the 109 public institutions in the sample. The difference is statistically significant with a *t*-test of -4.39 ( $p < .01$ ), which provides support for the second hypothesis of this study.

**Table 5**  
**Percentage International Student Enrollment by Institutional Type**

<b>Institutional Academic Classification</b>	<b>Percentage International Students</b>	<b>Difference of Means Test: t-test</b>
<i>Doctoral</i>	7.18%	Doctoral-Masters: 3.61** Doctoral-Bachelors: 2.18* Doctoral-Associates: 5.63** Doctoral-Specialty: -.735
<i>Masters</i>	3.46%	Masters-Bachelors: -1.61 Masters-Associates: 3.72** Masters-Specialty: -2.20
<i>Bachelors</i>	4.90%	Bachelors-Associates: 4.38** Bachelors-Specialty: -1.69
<i>Associates</i>	1.39%	Associates-Specialty: -2.89*
<i>Specialty</i>	10.21%	
<b>Doctoral Carnegie Classification</b>		
<i>Highest Research Activity</i>	11.38%	Highest-Higher: 1.37
<i>Higher Research Activity</i>	7.41%	Higher-Moderate: 1.51
<i>Moderate Research Activity</i>	3.71%	Moderate-Highest: -4.18**
<b>Public or Private</b>		
<i>Public</i>	3.05%	Public-Private: -4.39**
<i>Private</i>	6.67%	

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$

The second phase of stage one employs a multiple regression analysis to predict the percentage of international students. The first model in Table 6 includes all the colleges and universities in the sample ( $n = 195$ ). Three independent variables capture the diversity of the

student body at an institution: percentage white, percentage Latino, and percentage female. Percentage African American and percentage white cannot be included together because of multicollinearity (each variable has a VIF score above 10 when included together in a multivariate model). Mixed evidence was found for the third hypothesis of this study. As the percentage white increases at an institution, the percentage of international students declines and the relationship is statistically significant at  $p < .01$ . Percentage Latino is positively associated with the percentage of international students, but the regression coefficient is not statistically significant. Intriguingly, the percentage of female students is negatively associated with the percentage of international students and the relationship is statistically significant at  $p < .01$ . The standardized regression coefficient for percentage female (- .327) is the second largest in the model.

When examining institutional costs, total tuition and fees is a positive predictor of the percentage of international students and it is the strongest variable in the first model of Table 6 with a standardized regression coefficient of .493 which is statistically significant at  $p < .01$ . The positive and powerful relationship likely captures the prestigious doctoral institutions which are particularly effective in recruiting international students even though they have especially high out-of-state tuition rates. The same likely holds true at private colleges where the sticker shock of sky-high tuition rates is mitigated by waivers or scholarships for international students. The dummy variable for public vs. private is not statistically significant in the first model in Table 6 with controls for the diversity of the institution, institutional cost, and total enrollment. Total enrollment is not significant in the first model of Table 6. While the largest state institutions are successful in recruiting international students, there are many large two-year institutions in this



study with relatively small percentages of international students. Model 1 in Table 6 is fairly robust with the independent variables accounting for slightly more than 40% of the variance in the percentage of international students enrolled at colleges and universities in the southeast.

**Table 6**

**OLS Regression Analysis of International Student Enrollment across Colleges and Universities in the Southeast**

<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>Model 1 All Colleges and Universities</b>	<b>Model 2 Public Masters</b>
<u>Diversity of Institution</u>		
Percentage White	<b>-.261**</b>	<b>.397</b>
Percentage Latino	<b>.098</b>	<b>-.368*</b>
Percentage Female	<b>-.327**</b>	<b>.122</b>
<u>Institutional Cost</u>		
Total Cost of Tuition + Fees	<b>.493**</b>	<b>-.173</b>
<u>Institutional Type</u>		
Public or Private	<b>-.050</b>	
<u>Institutional Size</u>		
Total Enrollment (undergraduate + graduate)	<b>.070</b>	<b>.051</b>
<i>F</i> test	<b>22.609**</b>	<b>1.476</b>
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	<b>.401</b>	<b>.064</b>

Notes: Cell entries are standardized regression coefficients.  
\*p < .05    \*\*p < .01

The second model in Table 6 truncates the regression analysis to just public master's institutions. Obviously, out-of-state vs. in-state-tuition rates are only applicable to public institutions of higher education. As discussed previously in this study, out-of-state tuition rates are expected to have the most noticeable negative impact on international student enrollment at non-doctoral universities such as those in the master's category. While the out-of-state tuition variable has a negative coefficient in the second model of Table 6, it fails to reach statistical significance. The only variable that attains statistical significance in the second model is percentage Latino. As the percentage Latino rises at public master's institutions, the percentage of international students declines. With only 35 cases, Model 2 is rather weak with the independent variables explaining only 6% of the variance in the percentage of international students and the *F* test failing to achieve statistical significance. When baccalaureate institutions are included in Model 2, the findings are essentially unchanged with the same adjusted  $R^2$ .

The data analysis produced some findings that were very much expected as well as several interesting results for colleges and universities in the southeast. Not surprisingly, in relation to the first hypothesis, it shows higher percentages of international students at research-intensive doctoral institutions (7.18%) when compared to masters (3.46%), bachelors (4.90%), and associates (1.39%) colleges and universities. Specialty institutions have the highest percentage (just above 10%) which is accounted for by several colleges of art and design in the very small subsample ( $n = 7$ ) for these institutions. When disaggregating doctoral institutions, it is remarkable that the percentage of international students is three times greater at the highest research activity institutions when contrasted to moderate research activity schools (11.38% to 3.71%), which clearly confirms the first hypothesis of this study. Furthermore, the average

percentage of international students at private institutions (6.67%) is more than double the rate at public institutions (3.05%) in support of the second hypothesis. Private colleges and universities have been particularly active in international recruitment, and these institutions often have the capacity to waive tuition or substantially discount those rates for international students they wish to recruit.

For the third hypothesis, we have mixed evidence that the diversity of institutions of higher education in the southeast helps to attract international students. In support of the hypothesis, the data shows that as the percentage white increases in the student body there is an accompanying decline in the percentage of international students, and the results are statistically significant. In contrast to the hypothesis, one sees as the percentage female increases across the almost 200 institutions in this study there is a decline in the percentage of international students, with the relationship statistically significant. This may well be explained by STEM colleges and universities, especially in relation to engineering, which still have a majority male student population and are also successful in recruiting international students.

In contrast to the fourth hypothesis, we actually find that the price tag of tuition and fees is a positive predictor of the percentage of international student in the multivariate regression analysis of all the institutions in our sample. The relationship is the strongest in the model and statistically significant. This likely captures the large public state institutions as well as private institutions which are particularly effective recruiting international students despite the eye-popping price tag of their tuition. Some of the lowest tuition rates in our sample are for the two-year colleges which have very small international student populations. When the sample is truncated to public masters institutions, out-of-state tuition rates are a negative predictor of the

percentage of international students, but the relationship is not statistically significant. The sample includes fewer than 40 public masters institutions, so a much larger sample across the country would provide for a better test of the hypothesis. It is also critical to keep in mind that this study employs an aggregate unit of analysis, rather than individuals, with data clustered by college or university. Individual survey data reveal the critical role of cost and the availability of scholarships for international students who are contemplating studying in the United States.

## **Stage Two**

The first phase of stage two focuses on international student enrollment at institutions with and without IEPs. The results of the Qualtrics survey of IEPs are examined for differences to determine the recruitment strategies of institutions with and without IEPs in phase two (see Appendix A).

The fifth hypothesis posits that institutions with IEPs have higher international student enrollments in their academic programs. International student enrollment numbers at universities and colleges in the southeastern United States were used in the study. The institutions include schools across the southeast that reported their enrollment numbers to the Institute of International Education (IIE) Open Doors annual survey (2018). Information from 188 institutions across these eight states was available through Open Doors. One hundred and six institutions in these eight states have active Intensive English Programs (IEPs) according to their websites. Eighty-two institutions showed no evidence of having an intensive English program. An analysis of the data shows that there were 62 non-doctorate institutions in Region VII with IEPs, and their average international student enrollments was 4.79%. There were 77 non-doctorate institutions with no IEP. Their average number of international student enrollments

was 3.17%, as depicted in Table 7. The difference of means test is statistically significant at  $p < .05$ .

**Table 7**

**Non-Doctoral Institutions and the Impact of IEPs on International Student Enrollment**

Non-Doctoral Institutions	N	% Intl Students	Std. Deviation	t - test
Yes - IEP	62	4.79	6.90151	2.096*
No - IEP	77	3.17	3.79574	

$p < .05^*$

To gain a little more insight into these numbers, the analysis further breaks down the institutions into the categories of non-doctoral public with and without an IEP, and non-doctoral private with and without an IEP. Table 8 shows that public institutions with IEPs have more than twice the percentage of international students than those without IEPs. This is quite a significant find for public institutions interested in attracting international students. The difference of means test ( $t = 4.129$ ) is highly significant at  $p < .001$ .

**Table 8**

**Non-Doctoral Public Institutions and the Impact of IEPs on International Student Enrollment**

Non-Doctoral Public Institutions	N	% Intl Students	Std. Deviation	t - test
Yes - IEP	41	2.57	1.90725	4.129***
No - IEP	26	1.10	.98694	

p < .001\*\*\*

This also bears out for private institutions. Although private institutions generally attract more international students because of their ability to offer financial aid packages, the data in Table 9 clearly shows that having an IEP more than doubles the percentage of international students at a private university. The difference of means test is significant at p < .05.

**Table 9**

**Non-Doctoral Private Institutions and the Impact of IEPs on International Student Enrollment**

Non-Doctoral Private Institutions	N	% Intl Students	Std. Deviation	t - test
Yes - IEP	21	9.14	10.30271	2.12*
No - IEP	51	4.22	4.24867	

p < .05\*

Next, this study tested whether there was any statistically significant difference between international student enrollment at doctorate and non-doctorate institutions with intensive English programs. For this purpose, a t-test was performed to compare the means of these two groups.

Table 10 shows support for the fifth hypothesis of this study that institutions with IEPs have nearly twice as many international students. Institutions with IEPs averaged 5.93% enrollment of international students while institutions without IEPs averaged just 3.22%. The difference of means test ( $t = 3.440$ ) is statistically significant at  $p < .01$ .

**Table 10**

**All Institutions and the Impact of IEPs on International Student Enrollment**

Institutions & IEPs	N	% Intl Students	Std. Deviation	t - test
Yes - IEP	106	5.93	6.88780	3.440**
No - IEP	82	3.22	3.77966	

$p < 01^{**}$

To get a better picture, Table 11 is broken up into institutions in the Southeast with IEPs and institutions that offer no intensive English program. Each state is broken down by number of schools and average number of international students. Table 11 shows that in every case, schools with IEPs have more international students enrolled in degree programs than schools without IEPs. For example, institutions in Georgia with IEPs average 7.17% international student enrollment while institutions without IEPs average just 1.61%. The statistics in Table 11 bear out for every other institution queried, supporting the fifth hypothesis.

**Table 11**

**Southeastern Institutions and International Student Enrollment**

<b>Number and Percentage of International Students</b>			
<b>IEP</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Number of International Students Enrolled</b>	<b>Percentage of International Students Enrolled</b>
YES	AL	8564	4.98%
	FL	42084	5.74%
	<b><u>GA</u></b>	<b><u>21161</u></b>	<b><u>7.17%</u></b>
	KY	9167	7.14%
	LA	7244	4.75%
	MS	2090	3.24%
	SC	4796	5.51%
	TN	7365	5.59%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>102926</b>	<b>5.84%</b>
NO	AL	513	1.59%
	FL	3149	3.32%
	<b><u>GA</u></b>	<b><u>1244</u></b>	<b><u>1.61%</u></b>
	KY	513	3.30%
	LA	357	3.26%
	MS	125	0.76%
	SC	945	1.98%
	TN	1042	1.84%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7661</b>	<b>2.22%</b>
Total	AL	9077	4.41%
	FL	45233	5.46%
	<b><u>GA</u></b>	<b><u>22405</u></b>	<b><u>5.98%</u></b>
	KY	9680	6.73%
	LA	7601	4.65%
	MS	2772	3.42%
	SC	5741	4.26%
	TN	8407	4.46%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>110587</b>	<b>1.41%</b>

The second phase of stage two measures additional data gathered from a Qualtrics survey designed to determine what role and function IEPs play in bringing international students to campuses across Region VII (see Appendix A). In the Qualtrics survey aimed at intensive English language programs, twenty-two IEPs fully responded across NAFSA’s Region VII in the Southeast. While the sample size is small, it is important to bear in mind that there were only



106 institutions across the Southeast that reported having an IEP, so the 21% response rate is in line with expectations.

In most institutions, recruitment is seen as the key to student enrollments, international and domestic. However, the data in Table 12 from the Qualtrics survey shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the percentage of international students at institutions that have a designated staff member for recruitment in the IEP (3.75%) as opposed to those that don't (3.39%), so hypothesis 6 retains the null hypothesis. Although hypothesis 6 doesn't bear out in the schools that responded, it's important to note that just because an IEP does not employ a designated staff member for recruitment, recruitment is still taking place. In most IEPs, the director plays a significant role in recruitment in addition to his or her other responsibilities. Additionally, some IEP rely significantly on independent recruitment agencies, which may also eliminate the need for an in-house recruiter.

**Table 12**

**IEP Dedicated Recruiter and International Student Recruitment**

IEP w/ dedicated recruiter	N	% Intl Students	Std. Deviation	t - test
Yes	8	3.75	1.6690	-.940
No	14	3.39	2.9494	

The Qualtrics survey data in Table 13 show that IEPs with funds set aside for international student recruitment have higher percentages of international students, validating hypothesis seven. IEPs with international student recruitment funds show that their campuses average a 4.3% international student population, while IEP institutions without recruitment funds

average 2.2%. This is important, but it is also important to remember that many of these institutions rely heavily on recruitment agencies and would therefore not need a significant recruitment budget, as most agencies are paid either by the student for finding them a program or by the school through a commission agreement.

**Table 13**

**IEP with Recruitment Funding and International Student Enrollment**

IEP-Recruitment Funding	N	% Intl Students	Std. Deviation	t - test
Yes	14	4.286	2.6726	2.140*
No	7	2.214	1.7286	

p < .05\*

Table 14 highlights that IEPs utilizing educational agencies have higher percentages of international students on campus. Those using agencies average 4%, while those not using agencies, average 2.5%. This could be a significant number of students, depending on the size of the university. It is also important to recognize that 68% of IEP respondents to the survey utilize recruitment agencies, showing empirical evidence that IEPs recognize the value of collaborating with recruitment agencies. The difference in Table 14 just misses statistical significance likely because of the small sample size.

**Table 14**

**IEPs using Educational Recruitment Agencies and International Student Enrollment**

IEP - Use Recruitment Agencies	N	% Intl Students	Std. Deviation	t - test
Yes	15	4.0	2.8031	1.655
No	7	2.5	1.4434	

p < .05

**Stage Three**

The third stage of this study analyzes data collected from a Qualtics survey sent to international offices, of which 36 institutions responded, a response rate of 18.9%. As seen below in Table 15, at institutions that include an IEP, the percentage of international students is nearly 3.3%, while schools without an IEP have a lower percentage of international students at 1.75% according to the survey of OIP directors. This more closely matches the larger survey from IIE, so the numbers do show a meaningful difference for professionals in the field, although the difference of means test just misses statistical significance in Table 15.

**Table 15**

**Institutions with IEPs based on the Survey of OIP directors and International Student Enrollment**

OIP - Institution has IEP	N	% Intl Students	Std. Deviation	t - test
Yes	18	3.29	2.93	1.997
No	17	1.75	1.39	

p < .05

Question 16 in the Qualtrics Survey of International Offices relates to whether internationalization is a part of the strategic plan. Thirty-five institutions responded with 22 (62.86%) answering affirmatively, and 13 (37.14%) responding that internationalization was not a part of their strategic plan. The data show that amongst institutions with a strategic plan for internationalization, international students make up 2.53% of the student population, while institutions without a strategic plan show that international students make up 2.47% of the student population. Therefore, as Table 16 highlights, the difference of means test ( $t = .067$ ) is statistically insignificant at  $p < .05$  for hypothesis 9.

**Table 16**

**Internationalization Included in Strategic Plan and International Student Enrollment**

OIP Strategic Plan includes Internationalization	N	% Intl Students	Std. Deviation	t - test
Yes	21	2.53	2.31675	.067
No	13	2.47	2.71538	

$p < .05$

The Qualtrics survey results show that most OIPs that responded do not have a dedicated staff member responsible for international student recruitment. The Qualtrics survey revealed that almost 68% of the respondents do not employ an international recruitment specialist. However, there is not a large difference statistically in the overall percentages of international students at institutions with and without international student recruitment specialists. In fact, institutions with a dedicated recruiter averaged 2.1%, while institutions with no dedicated recruitment specialists appear to do better at 2.8% based on the respondents' answers. There

appears to be a slight negative correlation. However, no statistically significant differences were found. Therefore, there is no support for hypothesis ten.

**Table 17**

**International Program Offices with Dedicated Recruitment Staff and International Student Enrollment**

OIP – Dedicated Recruitment Staff	N	% Intl Students	Std. Deviation	t - test
Yes - IEP	13	2.12	1.45364	-.940
No - IEP	22	2.80	2.82906	

p < .05

Although statistically insignificant, the findings for hypothesis 11 are interesting. Data shows that recruitment coordination between international offices and admissions offices correlates to fewer international students on campus. Table 18 shows where coordination exists, the percentage of international students averages 2.1%. Where coordination is not reported, international students make up 2.7% of the student population. While no explanation for this is evident in the data, there is a likelihood that international offices that coordinate with admissions offices have no budget for recruitment themselves and depend on admissions offices for referrals, which is a typical practice among my colleagues in Georgia.

**Table 18**

**Recruitment Coordination between OIPs and Admissions Offices, and International Student Recruitment**

Recruitment Coordination	N	% Intl Students	Std. Deviation	t - test
Yes	12	2.09	1.38339	-.815
No	24	2.66	2.79671	

p < .05

International recruitment offices with larger recruitment budgets show no statistical advantage over international student offices with smaller budgets, which provides no support for hypothesis 12. In fact, there seems to be a negative correlation, as shown in Table 19. OIPs with budgets shows average international student enrollments at 2.2% and those without at 2.6%. This and other data point to the fact that international student recruitment is most successful through intensive English language programs rather than international program offices.

**Table 19**

**International Programs Office, Recruitment Budgets, and International Student Enrollment**

OIP - Recruitment Budget	N	% Intl Students	Std. Deviation	t - test
Yes	12	2.20	1.46163	-.579
No	24	2.61	2.78723	

p < .05

The thirteenth hypothesis proposes that IPOs that work with recruitment agencies will show a higher percentage of international students. Interesting was the fact that of those who

responded, they were fairly evenly split in whether or not they use recruitment agencies.

However, whether or not international programs offices collaborate with educational recruitment agencies seems to make no meaningful difference according to the data in Table 20.

**Table 20**

**International Programs Offices, Use of Recruitment Agencies, and International Student Enrollment**

OIP – use of recruitment agencies	N	% Intl Students	Std. Deviation	t - test
Yes	18	2.54	2.10695	.063
No	16	2.48	2.83272	

p < .05

The data show international student enrollment is at 2.54% at institutions that work with agencies, as opposed to 2.48% at institutions that do not work with agencies. There are several possible reasons for this lack of a difference. First and foremost is that most public institutions do not pay a commission to agencies. This generally involves a complicated process of getting tuition back from the universities. When agencies are not compensated by the university, they have to collect a significantly higher fee from the student, which students are reluctant to pay. This is not the case with intensive English language programs. Tuition for academic programs is generally a part of state budgeting, but tuition to IEPs are generally not, so it is easier for IEPs to pay agencies a commission. The Qualtrics survey data also shows that about 53% of International Program offices use recruitment agencies. That is significantly less than the nearly 70% of IEPs that use agencies. While the survey did not specifically ask, it may be that many of the 53% that answered affirmatively only use agents for IEP recruitment. As a result of the

analysis, it is shown that there is no significant difference and hypothesis 13 is rejected. It is possible the data tested in table 20 would show a higher correlation at private liberal arts colleges. This would be a relevant topic for further research.



## Chapter 5

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine the key predictors of international student enrollment for institutions across the Southeast. This final chapter includes the results of the Qualtrics surveys regarding the hypotheses concerning international student recruitment, a discussion of the findings as related to the literature on international student enrollment, and the implications that may be valuable for institutions across the Southeast as they consider the benefits and drawbacks of attempting to increase international student enrollment on their campuses. It concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study, a brief summary, and suggestions for future research.

Table 21 provides a summary of the hypothesis testing. There were both expected and some unexpected results gleaned from the survey data analysis.

**Table 21**  
**Summary of the Hypothesis Testing**

<i>Hypothesis</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
<b>R1: What are the key demographic and institutional predictor of international student enrollment for colleges and universities in the Southeast?</b>		
H1: Doctoral research-intensive university will have the highest percentage of international students	Fail to reject	Difference of means test reveals that doctoral institutions with the highest level of research activity have a significantly higher percentage of international students.
H2: Private colleges and universities will have a higher	Fail to reject	Difference of means test reveals that private institutions have a significantly higher percentage of international students (more

percentage of international students than public institutions		than double) the ratio at public institutions, although the term is not significant in the multivariate regression model.
H3: More diverse institutions will have a higher percentage of international students	Mixed results	In the multivariate model, percentage white is significant and negatively related to the percentage international students, while the percentage female is also negative and statistically significant. In the analysis of just public masters institutions, the percentage Latino is significant and negative in the truncated regression model.
H4: Higher tuition rates will depress the percentage of international students at colleges and universities	Reject	Tuition rates are actually positive and statistically significant in the multivariate regression model of all colleges and universities in the southeast.
<b>R2: What role do intensive English programs (IEPs) play in recruitment strategies for colleges and universities in the Southeast?</b>		
H5: Institutions offering intensive English programs will show a higher percentage of international students	Fail to reject	Difference of means test reveals that institutions with IEPs have a significantly higher percentage of international students, close to double the percentage of institutions without IEPs. Differences are particularly evident at non-doctoral private institutions.
H6: IEPs with a designated staff member for recruitment will show a higher percentage of international students enrolled	Reject	Difference of means test shows there are minimal differences and not statistically significant. More data is needed for a better understand of how recruitment is accomplished in IEPs.
H7: Institutions with an IEP recruitment budget will have a higher of international students	Fail to reject	Difference of means test reveals that institutions where IEPs have recruitment funding outperform institutions that don't at 4.3% to 2.2% in terms of international student enrollment, nearly double those that don't have recruitment funding. The difference is statistically significant.
H8: IEPs utilizing educational agencies to assist in recruitment efforts will have a higher percentage of international students at the institution	Reject	Although the responses show that IEPs that use recruitment agencies have a higher percentage of international students on campus (4.0% vs. 2.5%), it is not statistically significant because of the small sample size.

		More data is needed to confirm this hypothesis.
<b>R3: What role and function do Offices of International Programs (OIPs) have in recruitment of international students on campuses across the Southeast</b>		
H9: Universities with a strategic plan including internationalization of the curriculum and campus will have a higher percentage of international students	Reject	Institutions with a strategic plan including internationalization show no significant advantage over universities that don't (2.53% to 2.47%). In fact, the percentage is lower at institutions with a strategic plan including internationalization.
H10: Offices of International Programs with a dedicated recruitment professional will show higher numbers of international students	Reject	OIPs with a dedicated recruitment professional actually perform worse in terms of international student enrollment numbers, showing a negative relationship (2.12% to 2.8%).
H11: Offices of International Programs that coordinate recruitment efforts with the IEP and Admissions will show higher numbers of international students	Reject	Data analysis shows a negative correlation where OIPs collaborate with admissions offices on international recruitment (2.09% vs. 2.66%). More data is needed to determine why coordination is ineffective.
H12: Offices of International programs with a larger recruitment budget will show a higher percentage of international students	Reject	A negative relationship was evident between OIPs with a recruitment budget and the percentage of international students on campus (2.20% vs. 2.61%). This suggests that international student recruitment is most effective through IEPs.
H13: Offices of International Programs that collaborate with educational recruitment agencies will show a higher percentage of international students.	Reject	There is no difference to support this hypothesis (2.54% vs. 2.48%), although slightly more than half of IPOs that responded use recruitment agencies.

## **Interpretation of the Findings**

The data analysis produced some findings that were very much expected as well as several unexpected and interesting results for colleges and universities in the southeast. Not surprisingly, in relation to the first hypothesis, higher percentages of international students are found at research-intensive doctoral institutions (7.84%) when compared to masters (3.46%), bachelors (4.90%), and associates (1.39%) colleges and universities. Specialty institutions have the highest percentage (just above 10%) which is accounted for by several colleges of art and design in the very small subsample ( $n = 7$ ) for these institutions. When disaggregating doctoral institutions, it is remarkable that the percentage of international students is three times greater at the highest research activity institutions when contrasted to moderate research activity schools (11.38% to 3.71%), which clearly confirms the first hypothesis of this study. Furthermore, the study finds the average percentage of international students at private institutions (6.67%) is more than double the rate at public institutions (3.05%) in support of the second hypothesis. Private colleges and universities have been particularly active in the recruitment strategies that are outlined below, and these institutions often have the capacity to waive tuition or substantially discount those rates for international students they wish to recruit.

For the third hypothesis, there is mixed evidence that the diversity of institutions of higher education in the southeast helps to attract international students. In support of the hypothesis, the study shows that as the percentage white increases in the student body there is an accompanying decline in the percentage of international students, and the results are statistically significant. In contrast to the hypothesis, the data show that as the percentage female increases across the almost 200 institutions in this study there is a decline in the percentage of international

students, with the relationship statistically significant. This may well be explained by STEM colleges and universities, especially in relation to engineering, which still have a majority male student population and are also successful in recruiting international students.

In contrast to the fourth hypothesis, the study actually finds that the price tag of tuition and fees is a positive predictor of the percentage of international student in the multivariate regression analysis of all the institutions in our sample. The relationship is the strongest in the model and statistically significant. This likely captures the large public state institutions as well as private institutions which are particularly effective recruiting international students despite the considerably higher rates of their tuition. Some of the lowest tuition rates in the sample are for the two-year colleges which have very small international student populations. When we truncate the sample to public master's institutions, out-of-state tuition rates are a negative predictor of the percentage of international students but the relationship is not statistically significant. The sample includes fewer than 40 public master's institutions so a much larger sample across the country would provide for a better test of the hypothesis. It is also critical to keep in mind that the study employs an aggregate unit of analysis, rather than individuals, with data clustered by college or university. Individual survey data reveal the critical role of cost and the availability of scholarships for international students who are contemplating studying in the United States.

For the fifth hypothesis, there is strong evidence that shows institutions with IEPs attract far more students than institutions without. As shown in Table 10, institutions with IEPs average an international student population of 5.83%, in contrast to 3.22% for institutions without IEPs. In raw numbers, it's even more significant. There were 102,926 international students across the

southeast in institutions that hosted an IEP, and only 7661 international students at institutions that didn't offer an intensive English language program. There is little doubt that institutions who are interested in bringing international students to campus will do better if they offer support services for them. This includes the language support offered by IEPs.

In the sixth hypothesis, an attempt to test a correlation between IEPs with a dedicated recruitment professional and higher international student enrollment numbers at the institution was found to be inconclusive and rejected. Of those responding to the Qualtrics survey, illustrated in Table 12, both IEPs with a dedicated staff member for recruitment and those without showed similar percentages for international student enrollments, 3.75% for the former, and 3.39% for the latter. However, it is important to remember that IEPs recruit whether they have a dedicated recruitment specialist or not. Typically, at smaller institutions, the director or assistant director does most of the recruitment. Larger doctoral institutions are more likely to have a dedicated staff member for recruitment. Additionally, most IEPs have relationships with agents, which eliminates the necessity to hire a specialized recruiter in many cases. The director or assistant director is the person who generally maintains a relationship with the agency recruiters.

The seventh hypothesis seeks to find a relationship between an IEPs recruitment budget and higher numbers of international students at an institution. When an IEP has recruitment funding, a strong correlation is seen to the number of international students on campus, as shown in Table 13. When an IEP has a recruitment budget, nearly 4.3% of the student populations is international, compared to 2.2% when there is no recruitment funding for the IEP. IEPs with a recruitment budget more easily establish a marketing presence abroad, which leads not only to

name recognition for the IEP, but also name recognition for the university. It is a simple marketing principle: the more a person hears about a product, the more likely he or she will be to investigate that product. If an institution can establish a presence at international student recruitment fairs, they have more access to international students because more international students will have access to information about the institutions.

As the eighth hypothesis posits, IEPs that utilize educational recruitment agencies seem to have a positive effect on the percentage of international students on campus, but as highlighted in Table 14, the difference is not statistically significant due to the sample size. IEPs that work with recruitment agencies show an average of 4% international students on campus, while those that don't only show a 2.5% international student population. More research is needed with a larger sample to get an accurate picture of whether it is beneficial to work with recruitment agents. Schools that work with agents see the advantage because someone else does much of the work. The agent finds the students and directs them to a school that they qualify for. An institution can forgo a full-time staff person for recruitment and do well with an agency, assuming the director or assistant director takes an active role in maintaining agency contact. For this service, agents usually charge the IEP a commission of between 20% - 40% of the tuition the students pay the ELI. For doctoral institutions that attract these students because of their reputations, this commission may be too high. However, for institutions that don't have the presence in the international market or a reputation for excellence abroad, this is a small price to pay if the student continues on to do a degree program.

Universities that reported having a strategic plan related to internationalization do not show significantly larger numbers of international students than universities without a strategic

plan related to internationalization, so the ninth hypothesis is inconclusive and rejected. The Qualtrics survey results show a slight advantage for institutions which have a strategic plan that includes internationalization of the curriculum and campus (2.53%) compared to those who do not (2.47%), as summarized in Table 16, which is a miniscule difference. However, the data illustrates that 66% of the respondents reported having a strategic plan that includes internationalization, which is significant in that it reveals that institutions in the Southeast at least pay some attention to internationalization efforts. A more detailed study of strategic plans is recommended to get a realistic picture of the correlation between international student numbers and strategic initiatives.

For hypothesis ten, OIPs with a dedicated recruitment professional show no benefit in terms of how it affects international student percentages. Table 17 interestingly illustrates that institutions with a dedicated recruiter in their OIP have lower percentages of international students than those without (2.1% vs 2.8%). Therefore, hypothesis 10 ten is rejected. This seems to add some credence that IEP recruitment is much more effective.

As for hypothesis eleven, a similar result was seen. Table 18 shows a negative correlation when OIPs coordinate recruitment efforts with admissions offices. While there is no explanation to be found in the data, it is suspected that most admissions offices focus their recruitment efforts on regional and state recruitment, leaving little funding for international recruitment. Only about one-third of institutions responding to the survey reported this type of recruitment coordination, which suggests that most schools tend to leave international student recruitment to international offices or IEPs which report to international offices.



Hypothesis twelve, which states that OIPs with recruitment funding will show a higher percentage of international students, was also rejected. International recruitment offices with larger recruitment budgets show no statistical advantage over international student offices with smaller budgets. In fact, table 19 shows a negative correlation at 2.2% for OIPs with a recruitment budget and those without at 2.6%. Again, this points to the fact that international student recruitment is most successful through intensive English language programs rather than international program offices.

For hypothesis thirteen, OIPs that collaborate with recruitment agencies show no statistically significant advantage. That data show international student enrollment is at 2.54% at institutions that work with agencies, as opposed to 2.48% at institutions that don't work with agencies. Therefore, hypothesis thirteen is rejected. 53% of those that responded to the survey report they work with international recruitment agencies. However, the survey questions were not clear in terms of whether they pay commissions to agencies, which may affect how agencies respond in sending students. To get a clearer picture of how OIPs and agencies work together, more data is needed.

### **Implications**

The data in this survey reinforces the supposition that institutions with IEPs show higher percentages of international students on campus. For institutions that want to increase the numbers of international students on campus, the most effective recruitment tool and most meaningful program to attract students is a well-supported Intensive English Program. The data show that recruitment by admission offices and international programs offices is not as effective as having an IEP on campus. Institutions that want to compete in the international student

market would do well to establish an IEP to serve the large segment of potential international students that need to improve their English language skills before starting an academic program. While this study focuses primarily on the financial benefits of enrolling international students, it is important to recognize the many intangible benefits international students bring to campus. They provide our students who don't have the opportunity to travel a window into other cultures, they bring fresh perspectives to classroom discussions, they add to the diversity of the campus, and they provide potential international connections for our universities and our students in the future.

### **Limitations**

What the results can't tell us is why admissions offices and international programs offices are so ineffective in recruitment. The survey research does not investigate deep enough to provide definitive answers. Additionally, this is a cross-sectional study and it is not a longitudinal study, so the findings cannot be generalized across time. As this is just an investigation of the Southeast and the sample size is relatively small, one can only speculate on the reasons for ineffective recruitment. One possible reason is that the students targeted by these offices are already fully competent in English. Students proficient enough to study in English make up a much smaller number of the international student population that is considering studying abroad. Additionally, these students are more likely to have had a superior education abroad and target institutions that are highly ranked in the United States. Moreover, the focus of most admissions offices at regional comprehensive universities and smaller institutions is on the domestic student, primarily within their own region. More research has to be done to determine

how these universities and institutions could improve their international student recruitment practices.

### **Policy Recommendations at the Campus Level**

Most regional comprehensive universities and smaller institutions in Georgia have not considered international student recruitment options. As a professional in the field, it has been my observation that few if any of these universities in Georgia have made serious attempts to recruit international students. The reasons for this are most likely related to how universities see their mission. The mission of most regional universities is to serve the regional population, so administrators are focused on local populations. They have not developed nor invested in a recruitment strategy targeted at international student populations.

Recognizing the financial, cultural, and educational benefits of enrolling international students is an important first step for a university interested in bringing international students to campus. As discussed earlier, international students contributed nearly \$40 billion to the U.S. economy and supported nearly half a million jobs during the 2017-2018 academic year (NAFSA 2018). Many institutions recognize this and are investing in this opportunity. Additionally, the cultural value of having international students on campus is tremendous. Although hard to measure, it is a common supposition that American students who have a lot of interaction with international students are more likely to study a foreign language, value different cultures, and be capable of seeing problems in a historical perspective (Saidi-Kuenhert 2016). Moreover, as shown in Table 3, international students make up an overwhelming majority of the students in graduate STEM programs, subsidizing these programs for domestic students and contributing mightily to the development of scientific research in the United States. With a focus on internationalization on campuses over the last decade, most colleges see the benefits and would love to have more

international students enrolled in their programs. However, most regional comprehensive and four-year baccalaureate institutions in Georgia are unfamiliar with international student recruitment and unprepared to compete for international students. For regional comprehensive and four-year universities to see real increases in international student enrollments, they would have to plan and organize international recruitment efforts just like they do for domestic students or student athletes. They would have to develop recruitment strategies and build brand names just like they have done regionally. Developing a marketing strategy for international recruitment should be a top priority.

One way that universities have seen significant success with increasing international student numbers is through the use of educational recruitment agencies. These agencies hold recruitment fairs, visit high schools in their home countries, and generally represent foreign universities to students. These agencies either charge a consultation fee to the student or a commission to the university for each student they send. Many universities in the United States have been opposed to using paid educational agents, but a growing number are using this important recruitment tool. It was estimated “. . . that in 2007, only 4 percent of international students in the United States identified agents as having played a major role in their choice of college” (Jaschik 2014). In 2013 that figure was estimated at 28 percent (Jaschik 2014). Additionally, a 2012 survey compares the use of agents from seven countries. As expected, the United States ranked lowest for the use of agents (see Table 22) (Jaschik 2014).

By 2016, the number of universities directly working with agents in some manner had grown to about 50%, according to a study by Bridge Education Group (2016). Their studies claim that 37% of United States universities indicated that they work directly with agencies

(Bridge Education Group 2016). Whether universities are comfortable with working with agents or not, it is a reality that working with educational agencies is one of the most effective ways to bring international students to our college campuses.

**Table 22**  
**Proportion of International Students Recruited with Agents**

Country	Percentage
Australia	53%
Canada	41%
Malaysia	56%
Netherlands	20%
New Zealand	47%
United Kingdom	38%
United States	11%

Source: Jaschik (2014)

### **Policy Recommendations at the State Level**

The Board of Regents has already acted to address declining enrollments at regional comprehensive and four-year baccalaureate institutions. One step they have taken is the consolidation of many of the universities in the system. Another step afforded to several institutions has been the ability to offer in-state tuition rates to the border states of Florida, Alabama, and South Carolina (Davis 2015). While these are positive steps in addressing declining enrollments, they will not completely solve the problem. Educating international students may be the best avenue for helping to boost Georgia's declining enrollment problems. There are millions of students from across the globe who want an education in the United States

and more and more who can now afford to come. Georgia would be wise to consider investing in international recruitment before too many other states are competing for those students.

In contrast to doctoral research-intensive universities which can regulate out-of-state and international student admissions based on a desire for the extra revenue from out-of-state tuition, few regional comprehensive or four-year baccalaureate institutions are that lucky. Nevertheless, many regional universities are beginning to invest in strategies to attract out-of-state and international students to fill vacant seats. According to the Open Doors report (Institute of International Education 2016), international students make up 5.2% of students across the United States. The report goes on to show that almost 20% of that number attended the top 20 hosting institutions. In contrast, international students in the United Kingdom make up approximately 20% of the student body at higher education institutions (HESA 2017). That is nearly 15% higher than in United States institutions. In Australia, international students make up nearly 25% of the student body in higher education (Australian Education Network). Both the United Kingdom and Australia have focused on increasing numbers and revenue from the international student market, while the United States has been content to watch our market share slip away. The first policy recommendation is that Georgia invest in a marketing and recruitment strategy to bring international students to regional universities and colleges across the state. A second recommendation is that the Georgia Board of Regents consider developing a policy addressing recommended recruitment strategies for schools across the state. Additionally, clear policies and procedures for working with agents need to be articulated. Working with agents may prove to be the most effective and cheapest way for Georgia to increase its market share of international students.

In-state tuition rates and out-of-state tuition rates vary across the University System of Georgia institutions. Figure 6 in Chapter II shows the tuition rates of a selected number of institutions, showing doctoral research-intensive institutions like Georgia Tech and the University of Georgia, regional comprehensive institutions such as Valdosta State and Kennesaw State, and four-year baccalaureate institutions such as Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Georgia College and State University, and Middle Georgia University. As highlighted in Figure 6, the rates for out-of-state tuition are roughly three to three and a half times more than the rates for in-state tuition. The supposition is that the real cost for educating a student at each of these schools is the cost of the out-of-state tuition charge. One could then also deduce that the cost differential between in-state tuition and out-of-state tuition is met through the state appropriations process (a reflection of what state taxpayers contribute that out-of-state students must compensate for by paying much higher tuition rates). This differential assumes that state appropriations constitute the vast majority of higher education funding, but this has not been true for many years. In Georgia, state appropriations constitute a quarter to one-third of the budget for most public institutions with the majority of funding now coming from sources such as student paid tuition and fees, grants and contracts, and auxiliary services. The second recommendation is that the Georgia Board of Regents (BOR) review the actual cost of tuition for a university education. The Georgia BOR should research how various states structure out-of-state-tuition charges for international students. According to an article by University Language Services (2013), some states like Minnesota and North Dakota allow certain schools to waive out-of-state tuition entirely in order to boost enrollments. Similarly, the BOR should consider lowering out-of-state tuition costs at regional comprehensive and four-year baccalaureate as well

as two-year institutions to a number closer to the actual tuition cost to attract additional international students. The difference between in-state and out-of-state tuition rates could be calculated based upon actual state appropriations for higher education. The difference could be in-state tuition plus 25-33% of the actual tuition rate, which more accurately reflects state appropriations. With increased enrollment, this will actually help bring in more tuition dollars for the state.

The decline in enrollment numbers across the Georgia system has to be addressed: universities either have to reduce the number of faculty and administrators, raise tuition costs for current students, or find a way to attract students from out of state to fill these seats.

International student recruitment may help us avoid the first two options.

The findings of this study dovetail with these policy recommendations. Private institutions as well as doctoral research-intensive universities are doing fairly well in terms of recruiting international students, but regional comprehensive universities lag well behind as do bachelors and masters institutions. The contributions of international students to the intellectual climate of our classrooms and institutions should not be confined to our largest and most prestigious doctoral institutions. While greater diversity in the student body of an institution can contribute to the level of international student enrollment, the policy recommendations in this study are offered with the hopes of assisting campuses, state legislatures, and system offices spread the wealth of international student recruitment and enrollments across all types of institutions.



## **Areas for Future Research**

For the institutions analyzed in this study, useful independent variables for future research would involve the number of out-of-state tuition waivers, the availability of scholarships, and the scope and activities of OIPs across institutions. With the online market growing and the COVID-19 pandemic adding to it, another interesting topic of research is the shift from face-to-face instruction to online instruction and the response of IEPs to the challenge posed by online learning. It would be interesting to see how many IEPs are able to adapt instruction to partial or full-online models.

As demonstrated in stage two of the study, universities with IEPs have a higher percentage of international students in degree programs. Future research tracking the number of students who first attended an IEP before beginning an academic program would be invaluable in helping universities determine how best to attract qualified international students. Additionally, from the data gathered for stage three research, it was unclear as to what recruitment strategies worked best for OIPs. There is a growing perception that working with recruitment agencies is advantageous for OIPs, but a much larger survey sample is needed to determine if it is worth the investment to focus recruitment efforts in this direction. Indeed, a larger sample size and more specific questions about the role of a recruitment specialist on staff would also aid in this effort. In general, the role of international student recruitment on campus remains opaque. More specific research into who is responsible for international recruitment, what budget resources are available for recruitment, and what avenues are most productive is required before it is possible to determine the best approach.

Another area of research that would be worthy of study is to see how university consolidations have helped or hurt smaller institutions. With the larger partner taking the lead in international recruitment, it is possible that the smaller units will suffer lower numbers of international students, hurting both the economic prospects of smaller campuses and the internationalization prospects. One example of this is the consolidation of Georgia Southern University and Armstrong University. The OIP at Armstrong was “consolidated” and the office was relocated to the Georgia Southern campus. As a result, there is no international office on the Armstrong campus. It would be interesting to see if this has had an effect on international student numbers at the Georgia Southern Armstrong campus.

Since President Trump’s policies are perceived to have a negative effect on international student enrollments, conducting a time series analysis of international student enrollment from 2000 to 2020, investigating the impact of three different presidencies and political environments, would be interesting and perhaps shed some light on the real versus the perceived effects the Trump presidency on international student enrollments. Furthermore, such an analysis could explore the impact of demographic factors, tuition rates, and institution type over time.

### **Epilogue: The Future of IEPs**

It would be remiss of me not to mention the most recent challenges facing IEPs. The first is the accessibility of online learning. Because of greater access to the internet than ever, students across the world have regular access to English language materials, movies, news, and even online English teachers. While we have previously seen a preference for face-to-face instruction for language teachers in the past, the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has forced institutions across the globe to fall back on instruction via the internet. Over 1.2 billion

children are out of the classroom and learning online (Li & Lalani 2020). The realization that learning a language online is possible, and maybe preferable in many cases, has not been lost on language learners. The switch to online learning may significantly impact the future of language learning across the globe.

COVID-19 has brought with it economic challenges, as well. While we don't yet know the extent of the economic downturn that the world faces, it has potential to be very serious. More students will likely turn to online learning because of the expense of going abroad to learn a language. Because of the pandemic, many IEPs are already facing financial difficulty and many will be forced to close in the coming months. With universities facing budget cuts and possible layoffs, we can expect many universities to overlook the potential benefits of supporting a financially struggling IEP.

Another significant challenge is overcoming the impression created by some in the Trump administration that international students are not welcome in the United States. We have already seen significant decreases in the international student population since the election of Donald Trump. With the possibility of a second term for President Trump, temporary decreases in numbers may turn into permanent losses if Canada, New Zealand, and Australia prove capable of offering these students a good education at a reasonable price, and making them feel wanted. Hopefully, this government will again recognize the impact that educating international students across the globe in the U.S. brings in terms of economic impact, peace dividends, democratic development, and good will towards the United States.

## References

- Australian Education Network. (n.d.) Accessed October 28, 2017. "International Student Numbers at Australian Universities."  
<http://www.australianuniversities.com.au/directory/international-student-numbers/>.
- Bendix, Aria. 2017. "A Pause in International Students?" *The Atlantic* (March 13)  
Accessed February 15, 2018. <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2017/03/a-pause-in-international-students/519435/>
- Bridge Education Group. 2016. "Pace of Adoption of International Student Recruitment Agencies by U.S. Institutions." Accessed October 12, 2017. <http://bridge.edu/Bridge-Research-Library>.
- Cantu, Maria P. 2013. "Three Effective Strategies of Internationalization in American Universities." *Journal of International Education and Leadership*. Accessed November 18, 2019.  
<http://www.jielusa.org/>.
- Cooper, Preston. 2018. The Real Reason International Students Are Fleeing U.S. Colleges (It's Not Trump). (November 16). Accessed March 07, 2019, from  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/prestoncooper2/2018/11/16/the-real-reason-international-students-are-fleeing-u-s-colleges-its-not-trump/#1a4d1c427c1>
- Davis, Janel. 2015. "Georgia colleges cut tuition to nearby out-of-state students." *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. Wednesday, March 18, 2015. Atlanta Education News. Accessed April 05, 2017. <http://www.ajc.com/news/local-education/georgia-colleges-cut-tuition-nearby-out-state-students/>
- Department of Homeland Security. 2018. SEVP report highlights changes in international student population. (April 30). Accessed March 06, 2019.  
<https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/sevp-report-highlights-changes-international-student-population>
- Dwyer, P. 2016. Give Green Cards to College Graduates? Yes, But Take Care. (July 7). Accessed March 9, 2019. <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2016-07-07/clinton-plan-on-tech-worker-shortage-needs-tweaking>
- FPPEDU Media. International Education Advantage. 2016. "Know Your Neighborhood Report." INTEAD. Accessed October 10, 2017. <http://info.intead.com/know-your-neighborhood>.

- Georgia Tech Fact Book Enrollment by Country Table 4.11. 2015. Accessed April 05, 2017. <http://factbook.gatech.edu/admissions-and-enrollment/enrollment-by-country-table-4-11/>
- Georgia Tech Fact Book Enrollment by Country Table 4.11. 2016. Accessed April 05, 2017. <http://factbook.gatech.edu/admissions-and-enrollment/enrollment-by-country-table-4-11/>
- Gold, Steven J. 2016. "International Students in the United States." *Society*. (September 23). Accessed August 24, 2017. <https://scholars.opb.msu.edu/en/publications/international-students-in-the-united-states>.
- Helms, Robin, Lucia Brajkovic, and Brice Struthers. 2017. 2017 - American Council on Education. Accessed June 15, 2018. <https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Mapping-Internationalization-2017.pdf>
- HESA. 2017. "Higher Education Student Enrolments and Qualifications Obtained at Higher Education Providers in the United Kingdom 2015/16." Accessed April 09, 2017. <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/12-01-2017/sfr242-student-enrolments-and-qualifications>.
- Institute of International Education. 2018a. "International Student Enrollment Trends, 1948/49-2017/18." Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange. Accessed March 6, 2019. [www.iie.org/opendoors](http://www.iie.org/opendoors)
- Institute of International Education. 2016. "Open Doors 2016 Executive Summary." Open Doors Report 2016. Accessed August 6, 2017. <https://www.iie.org/en/Why-IIE/Announcements/2016-11-14-Open-Doors-Executive-Summary>.
- Institute of International Education. 2018b. "Top 25 Institutions Hosting International Students, 2016/17 - 2017/18." Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange. Accessed March 6, 2019. [www.iie.org/opendoors](http://www.iie.org/opendoors)
- Institute of International Education. 2017. "U.S. State Fact Sheets." Accessed September 24, 2017. <https://www.iie.org/en/Research-and-Insights/Open-Doors/Fact-Sheets-and-Infographics/US-State-Fact-Sheets/2016>
- Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). (n.d.). National Center for Education Statistics. Accessed October 1-30, 2017. <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/login.aspx?gotoReportId=6>

- Jaquette, Ozan, Bradley R. Curs, and Julie R. Posselt. 2016. "Tuition Rich, Mission Poor: Nonresident Enrollment Growth and the Socioeconomic and Racial Composition of Public Research Universities." *The Journal of Higher Education*. (August 16). Accessed April 4, 2017. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/g28415>
- Jaschik, Scott. 2014. "The Agent Impact: New data on use of agents to recruit international students." *Inside Higher Education*. Accessed October 12, 2017. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2014/05/01/new-data-use-agents-recruit-international-students>.
- Li, Cathy, and Farah Lalani. 2020. "The COVID-19 pandemic has changed education forever. This is how." Accessed May 4, 2020, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/04/coronavirus-education-global-covid19-online-digital-learning/>
- Macrander, Ashley. 2017. "An international Solution to a national crisis: Trends in student mobility to the United States post 2008." *International Journal of Educational Research*, 821-20, doi:10.1016/j.ijer.2016.12.003
- NAFSA International Student Economic Value Tool. 2018. Accessed March 9, 2019. [https://www.nafsa.org/Policy\\_and\\_Advocacy/Policy\\_Resources/Policy\\_Trends\\_and\\_Data/NAFSA\\_International\\_Student\\_Economic\\_Value\\_Tool/](https://www.nafsa.org/Policy_and_Advocacy/Policy_Resources/Policy_Trends_and_Data/NAFSA_International_Student_Economic_Value_Tool/)
- NAFSA International Student Economic Value Tool. 2019a. Accessed November 19, 2019. <https://www.nafsa.org/policy-and-advocacy/policy-resources/nafsa-international-student-economic-value-tool-v2>.
- NAFSA The One-Person Office: Strategies and Tools for Success. 2019b. Accessed November 25, 2019. <https://www.nafsa.org/professional-resources/learning-and-training/one-person-office-strategies-and-tools-success>.
- Park, Elisa L. 2009. "Analysis of Korean Students' International Mobility by 2-D Model: Driving Force Factor and Directional Factor." *Higher Education*, 57(6), 741-755. Accessed August 04, 2017. <http://www.jstor.org.library.valdosta.edu:2048/stable/40269156>
- Redden, Elizabeth. 2017a. "Foreign Students and Graduate STEM Enrollment." Accessed March 9, 2019. <https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2017/10/11/foreign-students-and-graduate-stem-enrollment>
- Redden, Elizabeth. 2017b. "The State of Campus Internationalization." Survey of more than 1,100 U.S. colleges looks at state of internationalization efforts. *Inside Higher Education*. (June 14). Accessed November 18, 2019. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/06/14/survey-more-1100-us-colleges-looks-state-internationalization-efforts>.

- Redden, Elizabeth. 2018a. "New International Enrollments Decline Again." Accessed March 06, 2019. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2018/11/13/new-international-student-enrollments-continue-decline-us-universities>
- Redden, Elizabeth. 2018b. "Eastern Michigan offers Resident Tuition Rate to International Undergraduates." Accessed March 06, 2019. <https://www.insidehighered.com/print/admissions/article/2018/06/25/eastern-michigan-offers-resident-tuition-rate-international>
- Redden, Elizabeth. 2018c. "Recruiting Without a Plan." Accessed May 15, 2019. <https://www.insidehighered.com/admissions/article/2018/06/04/substantial-numbers-international-enrollment-managers-say-their>
- Reese, Susanne, and Robin Helms. 2019. American Council on Education: Intensive English Language Programs – Questions and Considerations. Accessed December 15, 2019. <https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Intensive-English-Programs-Questions-and-Considerations.pdf>
- Saidi-Kuehnert, Jasmin. 2016. The Many Benefits of International Students at U.S. Campuses. Accessed June 2, 2020. <https://acei-global.blog/2016/12/31/the-many-benefits-of-international-students-at-u-s-campuses/#:~:text=American students exposed to and,current problems in historical perspective.>
- Saul, Stephanie. 2017. "Amid 'Trump Effect' Fear, 40% of Colleges See Dip in Foreign Applicants." *New York Times* (March 16). Accessed August 21, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/16/us/international-students-us-colleges-trump.html>
- Stephens, Maria, Lauren K. Warren, & Ariana L. Harner, 2015. "Comparative Indicators of Education in the United States and Other G-20 Countries: 2015." Accessed March 9, 2019. [https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2016/2016100/ind\\_04.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2016/2016100/ind_04.asp)
- Svoboda, Sarah. 2015. "Why do so many Chinese students choose US universities?" Accessed October 04, 2017. <http://www.bbc.com/news/business-32969291>
- Teke, John, and Waleed Navarro. 2018. "Nonimmigrant Admissions to the United States: 2016." Accessed March 6, 2019. [https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Nonimmigrant\\_Admissions\\_2016](https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Nonimmigrant_Admissions_2016)
- Thibodeau, P. 2011. "Rep. Flake re-introduces bill to 'staple' green cards to Ph.D. diplomas." Accessed March 9, 2019. <https://www.computerworld.com/article/2512683/rep--flake-re-introduces-bill-to--staple--green-cards-to-ph-d--diplomas.html>

Trines, Stefan. 2017. "SEVIS Data Points to Declining Enrollments from Key Countries." Accessed August 04, 2017. <http://wenr.wes.org/2017/06/sevis-data-points-to-declining-enrollments-from-key-countries>.

University Language Services. 2013. "Colleges with In-State Tuition for International Students." (December 2009). Retrieved February 25, 2018. <https://www.universitylanguage.com/blog/02/in-state-international-tuition/>

U.S. Department of State. (n.d.). Facts and Figures. Accessed March 9, 2019. <https://j1visa.state.gov/basics/facts-and-figures/>

Valdosta State University (VSU) Fact Book 2017-2018. Accessed May 17, 2019. [https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/institutional-research/documents/factbook/factbook\\_2017.pdf](https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/institutional-research/documents/factbook/factbook_2017.pdf)

Zong, Jie, and Jeanne Batalova. 2017. "International Students in the United States." Accessed October 04, 2017. [http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/international-students-united-states#Geographic Distribution and Leading Institutions](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/international-students-united-states#Geographic%20Distribution%20and%20Leading%20Institutions).



APPENDIX A:  
Survey of IEP Directors

1. Is your institution public or private?

- a) Public                      b) Private

2. What is the overall size of the student body?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Approximately what percentage of the student body is considered international (studying on a student visa)

\_\_\_\_\_ %

4. Do you actively recruit international Students?

- a) Yes                      b) No

5. Do you have a budget for recruiting international students?

- a) Yes                      b) No

If yes, how much money is set aside for recruitment?

\$1000 - \$5000	\$5000 - \$10,000	\$10,000 - \$20,000
\$20,000 - \$50,000	\$50,000 - \$100,000	More than \$100,000

6. Do you have a dedicated staff member in your office responsible for international student recruitment?

- a) Yes                      b) No

7. Does your institutional Admissions Office participate or assist in the recruitment of international students?

- a) Yes      b) No

8. Do the International Programs office, the IEP, and the office of Admissions coordinate international recruitment efforts?

- a) Yes      b) No

9. Do you use educational agencies to assist in your recruitment efforts?

- a) Yes      b) No

10. If yes, do you pay them a commission per student?

- a) Yes      b) No

11. How do you primarily recruit international students?

- a) we rely on recruitment agencies
- b) by attending recruitment fairs abroad
- c) by advertising on the internet and in magazines
- d) word of mouth
- e) designated staff recruiter(s)

12. Where do the majority of your international students come from?

- a.) Asia      b) Europe      c) the Middle East      d) Africa      e) South America  
f) North America

13. What percentage of your international students enrolled in degree-seeking programs go through the intensive English program

- a) 0 – 25%      b) 26-50%      c) 51 – 75%      d) 76-90%      e) 91 – 100%

14. What additional strategies are being employed to recruit international students at your institution?

---

---

---

---

---

15. Is the IEP funded through the institution or is it a cost recovery-program funded by IEP student tuition?

- a) fully funded by institution
- b) cost-recovery program
- c) partially funded though the institution

APPENDIX B:  
Survey of International Programs Directors

1. Is your institution public or private?

- a) Public                      b) Private

2. What is the overall size of the student body?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Approximately what percentage of the student body is considered international (studying on a student visa)

\_\_\_\_\_ %

4. Do you actively recruit international Students?

- a) Yes                      b) No

5. Do you have a budget for recruiting international students?

- a) Yes                      b) No

If yes, how much money is set aside for recruitment?

- |                     |                      |                     |
|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| \$1000 - \$5000     | \$5000 - \$10,000    | \$10,000 - \$20,000 |
| \$20,000 - \$50,000 | \$50,000 - \$100,000 | More than \$100,000 |

6. Do you have a dedicated staff member in your office responsible for international student recruitment?

- a) Yes                      b) No

7. Does your institutional Admissions Office participate or assist in the recruitment of international students?

- a) Yes      b) No

8. Do the International Programs office, the IEP, and the office of Admissions coordinate international recruitment efforts?

- a) Yes      b) No

9. Do you use educational agencies to assist in your recruitment efforts?

- a) Yes      b) No

10. If yes, do you pay them a commission per student?

- a) Yes      b) No

11. How do you primarily recruit international students?

- a) we rely on recruitment agencies
- b) by attending recruitment fairs abroad
- c) by advertising on the internet and in magazines
- d) word of mouth
- e) designated staff recruiter(s)

12. Where do the majority of your international students come from?

- a.) Asia                      b) Europe                      c) the Middle East
- d) Africa                      e) South America              f) North America

13. Do you have an intensive English language program on campus?

- a) Yes      b) No

14. If yes, what percentage of your international students enrolled in degree-seeking programs go through the intensive English program

- a) 0 – 25%    b) 26-50%    c) 51 – 75%    d) 76-90%    e) 91 – 100%

15. Is internationalization of the curriculum and the campus part of your institution’s strategic plan?

- a) Yes    b) No

16. Has your office or any other office on campus been tasked with increasing the number of international students on campus?

- a) Yes    b) No

17. What additional strategies are being employed to recruit international students at your institution?

---

---

---

---



APPENDIX C:  
Institution Review Board (IRB)



***Institutional Review Board (IRB)***  
***For the Protection of Human Research Participants***

---

**Protocol Number:** 03871-2019      **Responsible Researcher:** David Starling

**Supervising Faculty:** Dr. James LaPlant

**Project Title:** *Survey of International Programs and ELI Offices on Recruitment.*

**INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD DETERMINATION:**

This research protocol is **Exempt** from Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight under Exemption **Categories 1&2**. Your research study may begin immediately. If the nature of the research project changes such that exemption criteria may no longer apply, please consult with the IRB Administrator ([irb@valdosta.edu](mailto:irb@valdosta.edu)) before continuing your research.

---

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:**

- *Upon completion of this research study all data (data list, email correspondence, etc.) must be securely maintained (locked file cabinet, password protected computer, etc.) and accessible only by the researchers for a minimum of 3 years.*

***If this box is checked, please submit any documents you revise to the IRB Administrator at [irb@valdosta.edu](mailto:irb@valdosta.edu) to ensure an updated record of your exemption.***