

Los Angeles Times

USC Enrolls The Most International Students In The Nation

By Larry Gordon, Los Angeles Times

November 14, 2011

The university has claimed the top spot for 10 straight years. UCLA ranks sixth. Meanwhile, the number of international students enrolled in American higher education rises 5% from the previous year.



USC fans cheer for the Trojans during a 2010 football game against Berkeley. According to a study being released Monday, USC enrolled 8,615 international students last year, up from 7,987 the previous year. (Robert Lachman / Los Angeles Times / October 16, 2010)

For the 10th year in a row, USC held on to a championship that has nothing to do with sports: The Los Angeles campus once again enrolled the most foreign students of any college or university in the United States, according to a new study. UCLA had the sixth-highest international enrollment, up from seventh place the year before.

Across the country, the ranks of international students enrolled in American higher education last year increased 5%, to 723,277, according to the annual report by the Institute of International Education, a New York nonprofit, in partnership with the U.S. State Department.

China, for the second consecutive year, sent the largest group, which was up 22% to about 158,000. Indian students were the next-biggest contingent, followed by those from South Korea, Canada, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Vietnam, Mexico and Turkey, the report found.

USC enrolled 8,615 international students last year, up from 7,987 the previous year, said the study, "Open Doors," which is being released Monday. UCLA enrolled 6,249 international students, compared with 5,685 the prior year. Aside from the Los Angeles campuses, the other schools in the top 10 were: the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, New York University, Purdue University, Columbia University, Ohio State University, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, Michigan State University and Harvard University.

USC has recruiting offices in Shanghai; Seoul; Mumbai, India; Taipei, Taiwan; and Mexico City, said Timothy Brunold, the university's admission dean. About 70% of international students at USC are in graduate programs, heavily concentrated in engineering, computer science and business, he added.

USC foreign students help provide revenue since they are not eligible for need-based financial aid, although they can compete for merit aid and fellowships, he said. They are not given preferences in admissions, Brunold said.

"The world is getting smaller, and at USC we see that an education that involves having international voices in the classroom goes a long way in improving what we have to offer," he said.

Although some Americans may feel they are being displaced, international students constitute just 4% of all the seats in higher education in this country, compared with 3% a decade ago, said Allan Goodman, president of the Institute of International Education. He too said U.S. students benefit from having classmates from overseas.

"Parents want to make sure their child knows how to relate to an Indian, a Brazilian or Chinese student. Because that's the global marketplace," he said. "If we suddenly locked our doors and put up fences, then we would be hurting our own next generation in their quest for jobs."

California attracted the most foreign students of any state, with New York, Texas, Massachusetts and Illinois next. USC and UCLA contribute to that by their academic reputations and locations, Goodman said. "Los Angeles, like New York, is an iconic city and a real draw," he said.

larry.gordon@latimes.com

Copyright © 2011, Los Angeles Times