The Impact of International Admissions at the University of Illinois: How the increasing population of international students is affecting U.S. applicants

Marquita Johnson University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Table 1. Top 10 Institutions Hosting International Students, 2008-09

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Total Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>University of S. California</td>
<td>7,482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>New York University</td>
<td>6,761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Columbia University</td>
<td>6,685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>University of Illinois</td>
<td>6,570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Purdue University</td>
<td>6,136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>University of Michigan</td>
<td>5,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>University of Texas</td>
<td>5,703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>University of California</td>
<td>5,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Boston University</td>
<td>5,037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Michigan State University</td>
<td>4,757</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3. U of I New Freshman Demographics

Discussion

1. "They have money... they're qualified."
2. "I know some kids back home who got denied from U of I maybe due to international students."
3. "...As money is short, more will be accepted."
4. "I think the main impact will be during the admission process."
5. "They should put a cap on how many can be admitted."
6. "We are already bringing in more international students than any other university (I believe), so I don’t think the proportion should increase. We need to make sure that we are educating future U.S. leaders too."
7. "There could be very well be fewer spots for native students if the [number] of international students increases, which makes me a little worried because if those international students take all their knowledge back home, the U.S. [will be] left with a gaping hole of able people to lead."

Figure 2. Top 10 Places of Origin of International Students, 2008-09

Figure 1. International Student and U.S. Higher Education Enrollment, 2000-2009

Figure 4. Top 10 Institutions Hosting International Students, 2008-09

Methods

Subjects:
- Gender: 4 Males, 4 Females
- Citizenship: 1 International, 7 U.S.
- Ages: 18 – 24 yrs
- Grade Level: 6 Undergraduate, 2 Graduate
- Race: 4 Minorities, 1 White, 3 Not Specified

Reason for International Admission
- Diversity/Globalization
- Qualified applicants
- Make money
- Increase university prestige
- Provide valuable education

Impact of Current Admission
- Exposure to culture
- Indifferent/Not sure
- Admission for U.S. students
- Friendships
- Language barriers
- Worldly education

Gauging the University and Recommendations
- Current balance is good
- No ideas
- Cap international admission
- More multicultural events
- Equal admission
- Admission based solely on merit
- Encourage international students to stay in U.S. after school

Results

Future Admission Projections
- Increase
- Stay the same

Impact if Current Trend Continues
- More competitive admission
- Increased diversity
- Benefits for international students' native country
- Enhanced cultural understanding

Conclusion

According to an article published in the Daily Illini, there seems to be a debate on the true effects of the large international student population at the University of Illinois. "On the one hand it is great for the students to experience life on a culturally diverse campus. On the other hand some people believe that there should be a better balance between those who support the university, i.e. Illinois tax payers and native students, and those that are admitted from abroad." The underlying question that still stands is whether the cons are starting to outweigh the pros with regard to the large international population. The announcement of the University of Illinois as the largest host of international students among public institutions was enough to spark a debate among state politicians, but will it be enough to alarm current and prospective students and their families?