

Chapter 58

Impact of International Students on Interactive Skills and College Outcomes of Domestic Students in U.S. Colleges

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ABSTRACT

This chapter reviews literature on the impact of international interaction on interactive skills and college outcomes of domestic students in U.S. colleges and presents key results from a comprehensive alumni survey of three graduating cohorts on the career achievements among undergraduate students who engaged in substantial interaction with international students during college. The findings indicate that collegiate international interaction was significantly correlated with U.S. students' postbaccalaureate international interaction, civic engagement, and artistic activities. The findings provide empirical evidence for claims of potential outcomes from collegiate international interaction and have implications for faculty, senior administrators, student affairs professionals, and policy makers as well as students seeking strategies for promoting beneficial international interaction, maximizing the gains in international diversity that institutions have achieved in recent years, and preparing students to function effectively in an increasingly globalized world.

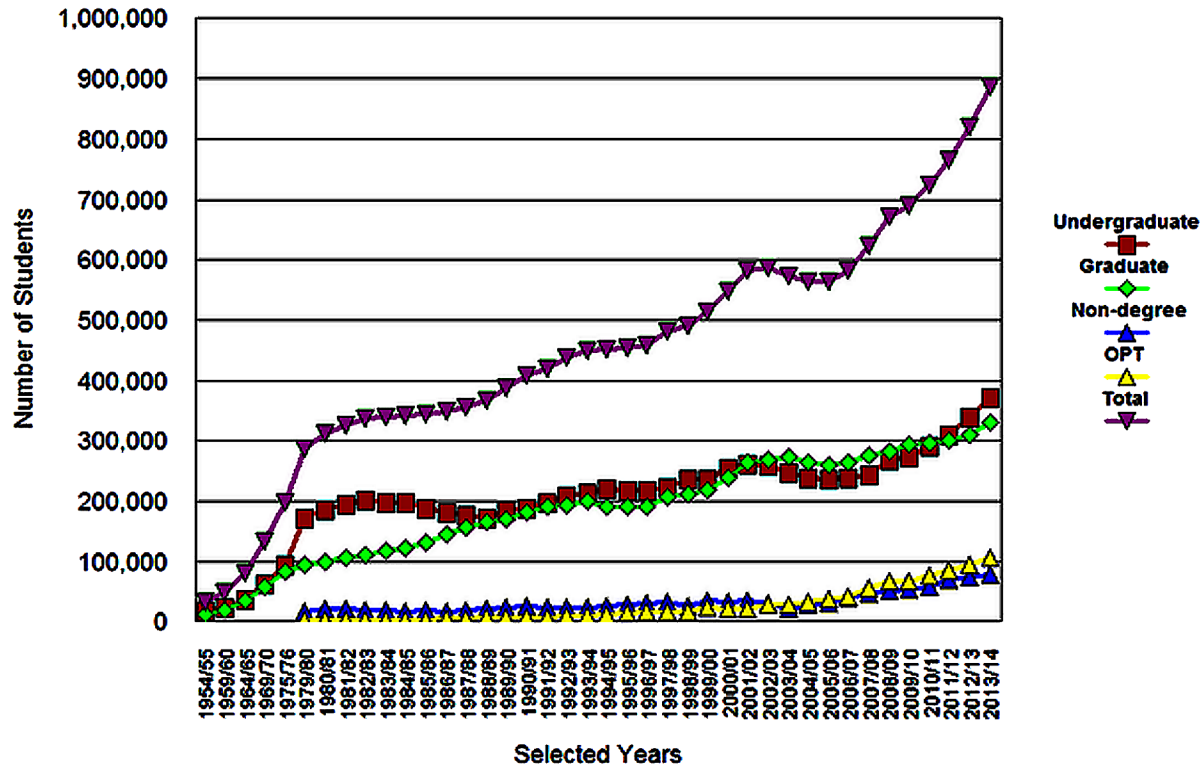
INTRODUCTION

The United States has a long history of hosting international students from around the world. According to Bevis and Lucas (2007), the admission of international students to U.S. college campuses could be traced back to the late eighteenth century, well before American colleges became fully

fledged. With the enrollment of a Venezuelan student, named Francisco de Miranda, at Yale University in 1784, the United States appeared to have opened its door to students from other countries ever since, although international matriculants at U.S. colleges were few and far between in the early succeeding years.

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Figure 1. International students by academic level at U.S. colleges and universities
Data from the Institute of International Education.



In the mid-nineteenth century, American colleges, which were originally built on the models of British residential colleges, underwent sweeping changes through the introduction of elective courses into the traditional curriculum to provide more choices in college studies (Brubacher & Rudy, 1958). Meanwhile, with the founding of Johns Hopkins University in 1876, German universities, which “were considered the most advanced in the world throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries” (Bevis & Lucas, 2007, p. 34), began to exert their influence on U.S. higher education through their emphasis on graduate education and advanced research. The expansion of the curriculum and the influence of German universities not only transformed U.S. colleges and universities but also propelled them into prominence by the turn of the twentieth century. As a result, the United States becomes increas-

ingly attractive to international students and has long been considered a top choice for the pursuit of a higher quality education. Indicative of this trend is the fact that, according to the latest report by the Institute of International Education [Institute of International Education (IIE), 2014], the number of international students studying at U.S. colleges and universities reached a record high of more than 886,000 students in 2013/2014 (Figure 1), continuing to sustain the United States as the largest host country in the world for the past few decades.

The rapid development of modern technology and the greater involvement of many countries in the global free trade economy in recent years have rendered the world increasingly interdependent and culturally diverse, enabling not only traditional nation-states and corporations but also individuals to “reach farther, faster, cheaper, and deeper around

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