

Chapter 5

Overcoming International Student Matriculation Challenges

Gregory Lloyd Stoller

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-6854-3007>

Marymount University, USA

ABSTRACT

College tuition costs have increased more than two-fold, and the Educational Data Initiative anticipates an annual cost of \$36,436 and a compound annual growth rate increase of 2% per year moving forward. According to the Journal of International Students, non-U.S. students are an attractive revenue source. However, due to geopolitics and immigration policies, the number of non-American students has declined in the past few years. Smaller colleges will be negatively affected. Global University is one such example. At one point, over one-third of its students were from outside the U.S., but 90% were still waiting to return to America to attend physically. This paper aims to analyze this university's challenges and then develop and discuss a comprehensive strategy as recommendations to Global University's leadership team.

INTRODUCTION

College tuition costs have increased more than two-fold, and the Educational Data Initiative anticipates an annual cost of \$36,436 and a compound annual growth rate increase of 2% per year moving forward (Hanson et al., 2023). U.S. college enrollment has expanded from 3.97 million in 1965 to 14.09 million in 2024 and is expected to increase to nearly 15 million by 2031 (Korhonen, 2023). Some teenagers

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posit that college is not worth the investment, as over 1/3 of undergraduates who complete college take jobs that do not require a degree (Allred, 2019).

Regardless of the cost, and according to the Journal of International Students, non-U.S. students are an attractive revenue source (Cantwell, 2015). However, due to geopolitics and immigration policies, the number of non-American students has declined in the past few years (Li et al., 2024). Smaller colleges will be negatively affected (Stowe et al., 2016). This change in student demographics impacts not only the finances of U.S. colleges but also the organizational culture and leadership strategies of the administration.

Global University is one such example. At one point, over one-third of its students were from outside the U.S., but 90% were still waiting to return to America to attend physically. This paper aims to analyze this university's challenges and then develop and discuss a comprehensive strategy as recommendations to Global University's leadership team (Burrell, 2024).

Background

Colleges generate revenue primarily from five sources: tuition/fees, philanthropy, endowment returns, athletics, and research grants. Tuition and fees only account for 1/5 of what some public universities earn (Kronk, 2019). However, the problem is further compounded by the fact that many universities need to discount their tuition to make it affordable for many U.S. students (Stoppel, 2023). Additionally, tuition often does not account for the overall cost of attendance (Ruggless, 2023).

To make college more affordable, according to the Journal of Student Financial Aid (Fuller, 2014), most undergraduate funding comprises grants, scholarships, and loans. However, as many non-American students are ineligible to receive financial aid from the U.S. Department of Education, they typically pay higher net tuition than their American brethren (Fuller, 2014). Also, according to Chen (2021), the U.S. has a comparative advantage in education worldwide, so is an attractive location for international students. In that same paper, the author states that revenue from international students was approximately 5% of total tuition 20 years ago. Now, depending on the school's location or whether it is public or private, it could account for as much as 30% (Chen, 2021).

In this same regard, for decades, colleges and universities have strategically woven both tuition fees and the notably higher charges levied on international students into the fabric of their annual financial planning (Chen, 2021). The landscape of student recruitment at colleges has changed, notably with a surge in Japanese students attending U.S. colleges 20 years ago. This trend has since seen a significant decline. Then, students from other countries, such as China, came. The trend seems

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