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# **Online Education Enables Worldwide Participation!**

Higher education is becoming global, as the number of international students reportedly grows by degrees, online and otherwise. "Global" is the buzzword in education as students explore colleges that offer distance learning degrees, throwing open doors and crossing borders in the pursuit of education.

For the 2008-2009 academic year, colleges and universities throughout the United States reported a record near 672,000 international student enrollments, according to an annual Open Doors report. Most came from India, China and South Korea and were studying business and management and STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) subjects, the report published by the Washington, D.C.-based Institute of International Education noted. If you need more information about [grants for college](#), look on the internet.

A preliminary "snapshot" Institute survey for 2009-2010 has so far produced mixed reports on international enrollment, according to Open Doors surveyors. But the Chronicle of Higher Education has nevertheless contended that about 3 million study abroad students throughout the world in 2009 is anticipated to rise to 8 million by 2025. Ben Wildavsky, author of "The Great Brain Race: How Global Universities are Reshaping the World", reportedly told Inside Higher Education that he views the competitive higher education marketplace as a "free trade in minds" and "a chance for greater intellectual exchange, collaboration, and innovation".

Global education can also be big business. International students and their families contribute more than \$13 billion a year to the American economy, much of it in the form of tuition, the Institute for International Education noted. Students tend to begin their searches for schools based on guidance from family and friends, according to a Chronicle of Higher Education report on a spring Going Global conference held in London. Latin American students also look toward publications for assistance, undergraduates in Africa and the Middle East rely on the advice of their professors and graduate students look for quality, reputable programs that best meet their career goals, the Chronicle report noted.

Often, international students want swift responses to their inquiries and applications. Going Global speakers citing a wide array of higher education choices reportedly recommended against thinking or treating these students as just money. Colleges and universities need to provide them true value for their money, offering the same consideration as student in the United States. There is an abundance of information about [online college classes](#) on the web.

American colleges and universities currently hold the greatest share of top researchers and Nobel winners, according to Wildavsky's Inside Higher Education interview. United States institutions also draw the most top international students, Wildavsky reported said. With regard to colleges' online offerings specifically, America leads the world in reputation, accessibility and acceptance, a University Business article noted.

In pursuing American college degrees online or simply taking classes through colleges online, international students don't have to travel far or worry about passports, visas, I-20 forms or I-94 cards. In many instances, online college tuition in America reportedly costs the same for foreign students as it does domestic students. And where traditional American campuses in the past have attributed international enrollment declines to post-9/11 precautions and student concerns about the H1N1 virus, these issues don't exist for those considering colleges online. International students seeking to enroll in classes offered by American colleges online or to pursue American college degrees online should, however, look for accredited institutions, interactive programs and courses with flexible formats that allow for tending to family and work responsibilities, Hobsons education consultants have advised.

At least one American university as early as 2001 reportedly made it a requirement for undergraduates to take college classes online. The goal, in part is to provide students with global perspectives from worldwide scholars and practitioners with whom the institution partners, the Sloan Consortium reported. As of spring 2004, the school's Global Virtual Faculty Program involved nearly 50 scholars and practitioners from 23 countries who were working with about 900 students, according to the Consortium.

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