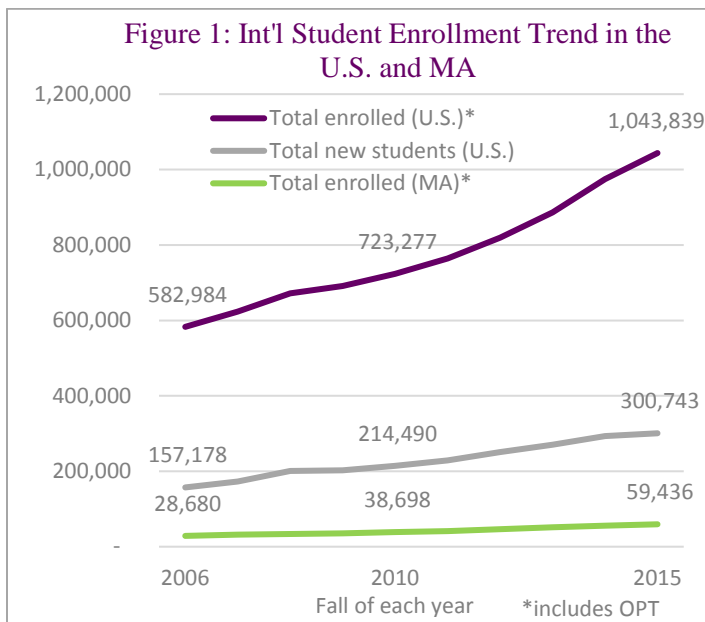


International Student Enrollment

The United States is the number one host destination for international students. In 2015-16 academic year, the U.S. hosted 25 percent of an estimated 4.1 million globally mobile students, the highest among all countries followed by the U.K. (12%) and China (10%). Yet, international students amount to only five percent of total U.S. enrollments comparing to 21 percent in the U.K. and Australia, 13 percent in Canada, and 12 percent in New Zealand. Strategic recruitment of international students in U.S. higher education has paramount importance for three major reasons- 1) international students make academic, cultural, and economic contributions,¹ 2) there is an aggressive global competition² for talented workforce, and 3) alternative revenue sources are needed due to unceasing budget cuts.³ In this research brief, we present national, state, and institutional level data for promoting informed decision making.

A Swelling Trend in International Student Enrollment in the U.S.

The number of international students in the U.S. reached a new high, over one million, in 2015-16 academic year. Nearly 3,000 higher education institutions across the country hosted 1,043,839 international students from more than 200 countries. In 2015-16, there was a 7.1 percent increase in the total number of international students from the prior year. The total number of new students was 300,743. Asian students propelled this growth. The majority (66%) of the international students were from Asia. Nearly half (47%) of all international students were from China (32%) and India (16%).



Enrollment in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields are booming. In 2015-16, nearly 46 percent of all international students enrolled in STEM fields. Business and management fields ranked second (19%). Of those who enrolled at doctorate institutions, 24 percent pursued engineering as their program of study, 14

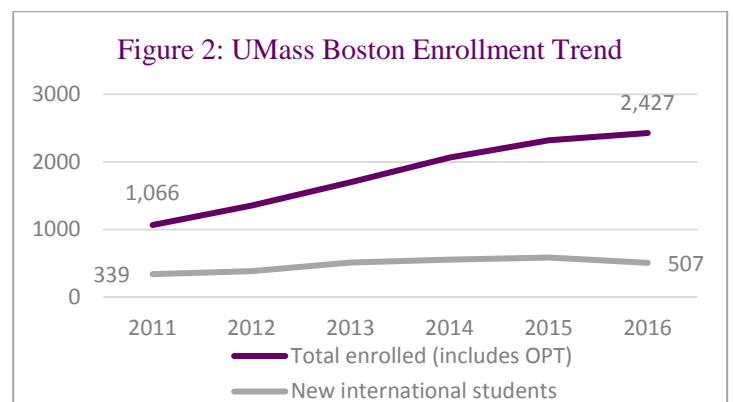
percent math and computer science, and 17 percent business and management.

Massachusetts Ranked Fourth in the U.S. in International Student Enrollment

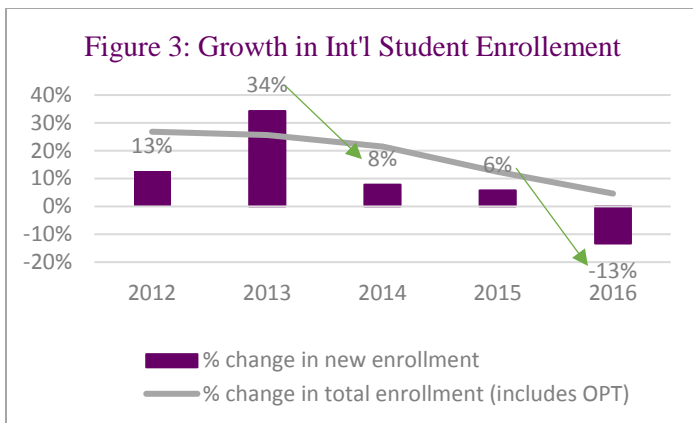
Massachusetts hosted 59,436 international students in 2015-16 and was ranked fourth among all states and Washington, D.C. while Boston ranked third among the U.S. metropolitan areas in hosting the highest number of international students. UMass Amherst hosted the highest number of international students in the UMass System, ranking fifth in the state, for the past five years.

Every Year, Total Enrollment is Growing at UMass Boston but at a Diminishing Rate

In Fall 2016, there were 2,427 international students (including Optional Practical Training or OPT) enrolled at UMass Boston, the largest class hosted by the institution.



These students were from 146 different countries and spoke more than 70 different languages. International students at UMass Boston accounted for 13 percent of total enrollment in Fall 2016. While the total number of enrollment for new and continuing students ballooned over the past six years, the growth rate of enrollment had actually dropped, dramatically, over these years.



UMass Boston Received the Highest Amount of Economic Benefit in UMass System from the International Students

While the international students' academic and cultural contributions are invaluable, a tool to measure the economic value and job created/supported by the international students has been developed by NAFSA.⁴ International students contribute \$32.8 billion and support 400,812 jobs to the U.S. economy that is, for every seven international students enrolled at a U.S. college or university, three U.S. jobs are created and supported. In 2015-16 academic year, Massachusetts received \$2.3 billion in financial contribution from the international students and 31,550 jobs were supported.

Rank	Institution	Economic contribution (in million)	Jobs created
5	UMass Boston	\$87.8	1,258
8	UMass Amherst	\$76.9	1,203
15	UMass Lowell	\$36.1	539
21	UMass Dartmouth	\$18.4	257
41	UMass Med. School	\$4.0	26

UMass Boston is the leading contributor of the economic value and job support among the UMass campuses and the fifth highest contributor among all Massachusetts institutions. International students at UMass Boston contributed \$87.8 million supporting 1,258 jobs. NAFSA

This research brief is written by the OIRAP Research Analyst Fatema Binte Ahad.

Sources: all national and state data: Farrugia, C. & Bhandari, R. (2016). Open Doors 2016 Report on International Educational Exchange. Institute of International Education. Economic value: NAFSA's *International Student Economic Value Tool*. Retrieved from: nafsa.org/economicvalue.

¹ Luo, J., & Jamieson-Drake, D. (2013). Examining the educational benefits of interacting with international students. *Journal of International Students*, 3(2), 85-101.

² De Wit, H. (2015). Recent trends and issues in international student mobility. *International Higher Education*, (59).

³ Choudaha, R. (2017). Are International Students "Cash Cows"? *International Higher Education*, (90), 5-6.

⁴ Baumgartner, J., The Economic Value of International Student Enrollment to the U.S. Economy. (November, 2016). NAFSA: Association of International Educators. Retrieved from: https://i-start.iu.edu/nafsa/files/docs/Methodology_Economic_Impact_2016_FINAL.pdf

⁵ Farrugia, C. & Andrejko, N. (July 2017), *Shifting Tides? Understanding International Student Yield for Fall 2017*, IIE Center for Academic Mobility Research and Impact.

started reporting the ranking since 2013-14. UMass Boston ranked fifth among all colleges and universities in Massachusetts for total financial contribution from the international students and the number of jobs supported by this contribution since then.

Percent Increase in Master's and Doctorate Enrollment Skyrocketed at UMass Boston

From 2012 to 2016, international student enrollment at UMass Boston's Master's and Doctorate programs grew by 110 and 101 percent, respectively. Enrollment in the undergraduate programs increased by 64 percent. China, India, South Korea, Vietnam, and Saudi Arabia were the top five countries of origin of our international students. The majority (62%) of the undergraduate and 45 percent of the graduate international students were female. Among the 2016 first-time international freshmen, 60 percent reported UMass Boston as their first choice. Thirty-six percent of all international students at UMass Boston were first-generation students.

International Student Enrollment Pattern Depends on Many External Factors

There have been small but very stable growths in the proportion of international students in total U.S. enrollment every year, for the past 25 years (from 2.9% in 1990-91 to 5.2% in 2015-16). After 9/11, national security concerns introduced a tougher screening, a tighter scrutiny, and a number of updated immigration policies that affected student visa programs. AY 2002-03 to 2006-07 is the only time we observed a decline in international student enrollment. However, policies for foreign students turned out to be a market-based discussion, in part, due to the fierce global competition to attract and retain foreign students and an increasing dependency on STEM fields. Examining the political climate and policy changes are crucial for strategic planning to recruit foreign students. Despite the recent political change in visa and immigration policies that led to significant concerns in the employment/technology industry over a possible drop in the number of international students, interest among the international students to enter in the U.S. higher education in Fall 2017 has remained stable.⁵