



# Council of Graduate Schools

## PRESS RELEASE

**For immediate release:**  
November 8, 2011

**Contact:** Belle Woods  
(202) 223-3791 / [bwoods@cgs.nche.edu](mailto:bwoods@cgs.nche.edu)

### **First-Time International Graduate Student Enrollment surges 8%**

#### **Increase driven largely by China's 6<sup>th</sup> year of double-digit growth**

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is reporting today that there was an increase of 8% in first-time enrollment of international students at U.S. graduate schools from 2010 to 2011. This increase builds on last year's growth of 3%. The gain is the largest since 2006, when international first-time graduate enrollment increased 12%.

Fifty-seven percent of the institutions that responded to the survey reported an increase in international first-time enrollment, with an average increase of 15%; for those 92 institutions reporting a decrease, the average decline was 14%. Total enrollment of international graduate students rose 2%, compared to 1% in 2010 and 2% in 2009. (First-time and total enrollment trends differ due to the varying length of time required to complete graduate degrees, particularly doctorates.)

First-time enrollment changes vary considerably by country of origin. First-time enrollment of students from China, the country that sends the most graduate students to the U.S., increased by 21%, and the Middle East saw 14% growth. There was 2% growth in the number of students enrolling for the first-time from India, the second largest sending country, following a 3% drop last year and a 16% decline in 2009. First-time graduate enrollment of students from South Korea remained flat in 2011 after a 3% drop in 2010 and a 13% decline in 2009.

"This surge in new student enrollments tracks well with the increases in applications and offers of admission seen earlier this year," said Debra W. Stewart, CGS President. "In order to remain the first-choice for the best and brightest students from around the world, the U.S. must maintain our investments in graduate education and our outreach to prospective international students," she added.

#### **Enrollment trends by field of study and institution type**

The changes in international first-time graduate enrollment vary by field of study and institution type. The largest gains were seen in education and physical & earth sciences (both 12%). The increase in education was particularly strong after a decrease of 7% last year. Business (9%) and 'other fields' (8%) also saw strong growth, and engineering grew 6%, while life sciences saw the smallest growth of 1%.

*[more]*

**Council of Graduate Schools**

One Dupont Circle NW, Suite 230 • Washington, DC 20036

(202) 223-3791 • [www.cgsnet.org](http://www.cgsnet.org)

The survey also reports changes based on the number of graduate degrees granted to international students by institutions. Overall, the schools that award the largest number of degrees to international students were more likely to see an increase in international first-time graduate enrollment. There was 9% growth at the institutions granting the largest number of degrees, compared to a 4% increase at schools that award fewer degrees to international students.

Similar to years past, the increase in first-time international enrollment this year was driven primarily by doctoral institutions which enroll more international students than master's-focused institutions. Doctoral institutions saw first-time enrollment growth of 8% while master's-focused institutions saw a drop of 5% for the second year in a row.

There were increases in first-time graduate enrollment of international students by geographic region as well; the Northeast saw a 10% increase, the Midwest grew 8% and the West and South both saw 7% increases.

### **About the report**

***Findings from the 2011 CGS International Graduate Admissions Survey, Phase III: Final Offers of Admissions and Enrollment*** is based on the final phase of a three-part annual survey of international graduate student applications, admissions, and enrollment among CGS U.S. member institutions. The survey had a response rate of 48%, including 75 of the 100 institutions that grant the largest numbers of graduate degrees to international students.

The report is available at: [http://www.cgsnet.org/portals/0/pdf/R\\_IntlEnrl11\\_III.pdf](http://www.cgsnet.org/portals/0/pdf/R_IntlEnrl11_III.pdf).

###

*The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of over 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. Among U.S. institutions, CGS members award 92% of the doctoral degrees and 77% of the master's degrees.\* The organization's mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.*

*\* Based on data from the 2010 CGS/GRE Survey of Graduate Enrollment and Degrees*