



## 2016 Top Markets Report **Education** Country Case Study

### Canada

Over the past decade, Canada has consistently sent between 27,000 and 30,000 students annually to the United States for study. We expect that Canada will continue to send similar numbers of students during the coming years.

Overall  
Rank

5

Universities in Canada are a \$26 billion enterprise. In 2013, Canada had a total of 2,023,191 individuals enrolled in universities and colleges. The most popular programs of study are business/management (18 percent), humanities (16 percent), and social/behavioral sciences and law (13 percent). In addition to this robust domestic market for students, during the 2014/15 academic year, Canada was the fifth leading source of students studying in the United States with 27,240, a decline of 3.8 percent compared to 2013/14.<sup>1</sup>

#### United States is the Destination of Choice for Canadian Students

The Canadian market remains attractive as a result of sending between 26,800 to 30,000 students to the United States every year over the last decade. Furthermore, the United States is by far the leading country that Canadian students choose for study abroad. In 2013, the most recent data available, the United States attracted 54.9 percent of Canadian students who were studying abroad.<sup>2</sup>

Canada has a high quality and affordable higher education system. Many Canadian students are attracted to the United States by scholarships and specialized programs, such as art/design, religion, optometry and chiropractic studies, which can have

considerable appeal for Canadian applicants. Also, athletic scholarships are more widely available in the United States than in Canada. Finances (the cost of studying abroad) are the top barrier to Canadians looking to study abroad. The recent depreciation of the Canadian dollar has aggravated this problem.<sup>3</sup>

The economic impact of all Canadian students on the U.S. economy is significant, estimated by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis to be \$1.1 billion in 2014 (tuition, fees, and living expenses).<sup>4</sup>

#### Overview of Canadian Students in the United States

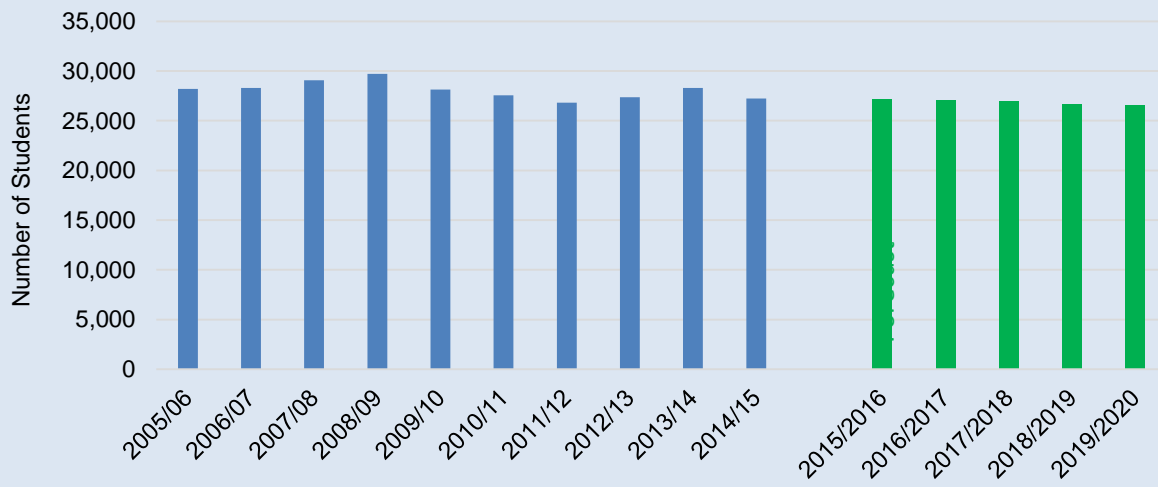
In 2014/15, 48 percent of Canadian students in the United States were undergraduates. Graduate students numbered 39 percent. Students in optional practical training were 10 percent of all students.<sup>5</sup>

Of all Canadian students, 37.4 percent study STEM subjects (engineering, health professions, math/computer science, physical/life sciences) and 15 percent study business/management.<sup>6</sup>

#### Future Growth/Opportunities

In the next few years, ITA forecasts small declines in Canadian enrollment with the number of students likely dropping to 26,600 by 2019/20.<sup>7</sup> The primary

**Figure 1: Canadian Students in the United States  
2005-2020\***



Source: Historical Data - Institute of International Education. (2015), Open Doors  
Forecast: International Trade Administration estimates.

factor potentially reducing the demand for U.S. education among Canadian students is growing competition from other countries.

Several avenues, however, offer potential to increase Canadian enrollment in U.S. institutions:

(1) Increased exchange programs and partnering with Canadian institutions;

- (2) Cross-border tuition agreements or in-state tuition for Canadians;
- (3) Athletic scholarships;
- (4) Marketing of U.S. institutions as a nearby foreign destination offering a variety of new experiences;
- (5) Marketing of foreign language teaching opportunities to French speakers.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Education and Training Services Resource Guide, Global Education Team, U.S. Department of Commerce (2016), article on Canada; IIE Open Doors Report 2015, Fast Facts

<sup>2</sup> IIE, Project Atlas 2015

<sup>3</sup> Education and Training Services Resource Guide, Education Team, U.S. Department of Commerce (2016), article on Canada.

<sup>4</sup> Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce, *International Services: Trade in Services in 2014 and Services Supplied Through Affiliates in 2013* (October 2015)

<sup>5</sup> IIE Open Doors Report 2015, International Students By Place Of Origin And Academic Level.

<sup>6</sup> Institute of International Education. *Open Doors*, Fields of Study by Place of Origin. Washington, D.C.: Open Doors, 2015. Accessed February 25, 2016. <http://www.iie.org/Research-and-Publications/Open-Doors/Data/International-Students/Fields-of-Study-Place-of-Origin/2014-15>

<sup>7</sup> Estimated by ITA.

<sup>8</sup> Education and Training Services Resource Guide, Education Team, U.S. Department of Commerce (2016), article on Canada.