

# **International Undergraduate Students**

# International Undergraduates

## Fall 2008 Undergraduate International Students

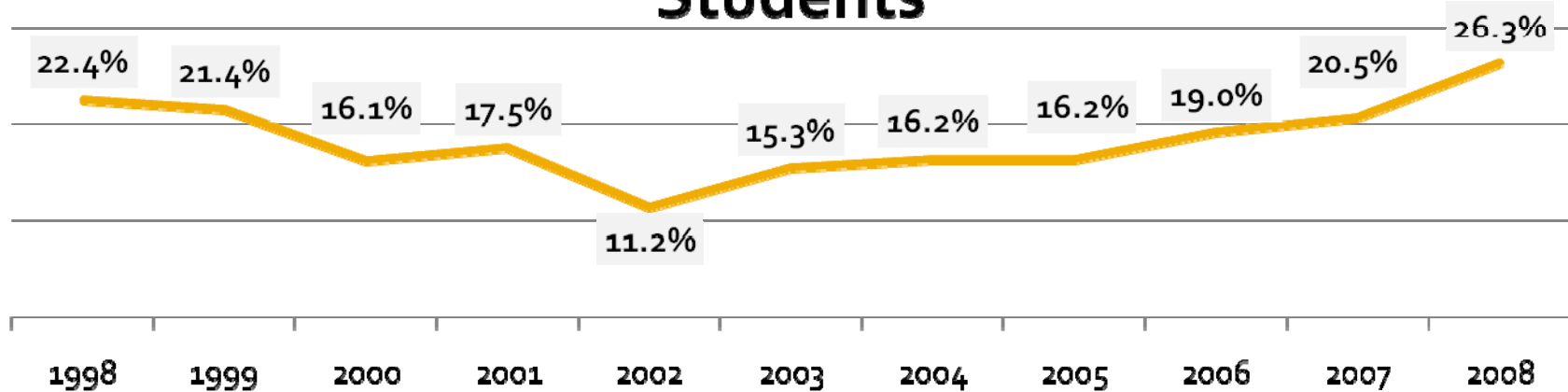
College	Number of International Students	Percentage of College Enrollment
Business	67	3.1%
Engineering	49	3.6%
Liberal Arts & Sciences	455	2.8%
Medicine	1	1.3%
Nursing	4	0.5%
<b>Total Undergraduate Enrollment</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>2.8%</b>

## Historic Fall Semester Enrollments

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Degree Seeking	294	279	200	273	172	25	254	262	258	300	461
Non-Degree	30	28	36	29	26	33	35	29	51	51	59
ESL Only	31	56	52	51	42	60	62	47	71	53	56
<b>Total</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>576</b>

# International Undergraduates

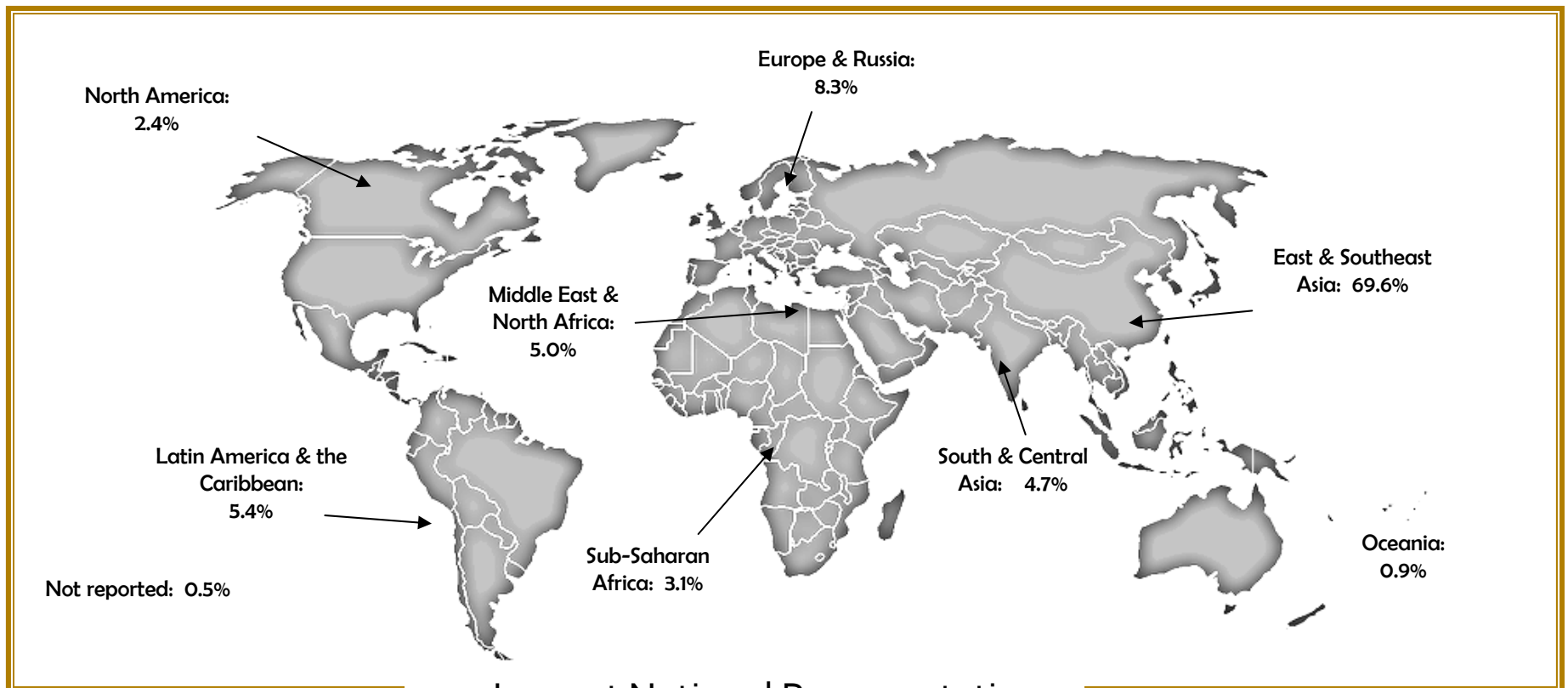
## Undergraduates as Percentage of All International Students



Primary Majors	Gender	Age	Funding Source
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Pre-business: 124</li> <li>•Actuarial Science: 30</li> <li>•Finance: 27</li> <li>•Economics: 17</li> <li>•Psychology: 16</li> <li>•Biology: 14</li> <li>•Mathematics: 14</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Male: 47.2%</li> <li>•Female: 52.8%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Under 18: 2.6%</li> <li>•18-22: 74.5%</li> <li>•23-25: 9.7%</li> <li>•26-30: 6.9%</li> <li>•Over 30: 6.3%</li> </ul> <p>Average age: 21.7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Family: 88.1%</li> <li>•University: 10.2%</li> <li>•Home Government: 1.5%</li> <li>•Other: 0.2%</li> </ul>

# International Undergraduates

## Undergraduate International Students by World Region



- Largest National Representations:
  - China: 218
  - South Korea: 123
  - India, Japan and Taiwan: 21

# Transition and Retention Issues

- Basics
  - Most the challenges faced by new international students are the same as domestic students
  - Differences are most often in
    - Scope and impact
    - Impact of culture or language
    - Student knowledge of resources available
    - Ability to make a quick correction of the problem

# Transition and Retention Issues

- Academic Challenges
  - Understanding academic structure and expectations
    - Course requirements
      - General education/Philosophy of liberal arts education
      - Relative flexibility of US education
    - Classroom expectations
      - Attendance/Participation
      - Ongoing assessment/Types of testing
      - Academic honesty as defined by US cultural norms

# Transition and Retention Issues

- Academic Challenges
  - Language
    - Adjusting to constant use of English language
    - Accepting ESL testing and course requirements
    - Anxiety about own (perceived or real) language ability
  - Academic relationships
    - Professor/student relationship
    - Student/student relationships

# Transition and Retention Issues

- Social and cultural challenges
  - Cultural adjustment
    - Academic schedule can leave little time for this normal process
    - Unique challenges for particular groups can occur (fall semester 2009 begins in midst of Ramadan)
    - Students (and others) often fail to recognize cultural adjustment problems and thus do not address them
    - Everyday challenges include food, religious practices, transportation, friendships
    - Family support system is not readily available



# Transition and Retention Issues

- Social and cultural challenges
  - Lack of background and knowledge of typical social and support structures on US campuses
    - Student Life/Student Development
    - Counseling/Advising
  - Some current issues on UI campus are culture bound and thus not easily understood
    - Alcohol use and abuse
    - Gender relationships/sexual harassment
    - Diversity
  - May depend on OISS for all their needs, and be hesitant about referrals—or may depend on friends (often of same nationality) to assist with problems

# Transition and Retention Issues

- Legal Challenges
  - Immigration law allows very little flexibility or alternatives for students who are having academic difficulties
    - Rare exceptions to full-time enrollment requirement
    - Suspensions usually amount to permanent dismissals, as a student who has failed will probably not get a new visa
  - Students who do not have current visas may be hesitant to travel home due to fear of visa refusal
- Financial Challenges
  - Limited options for students who have financial difficulties

# For Faculty and Staff Who Work with Students

- May need to adjust the balance between assisting student and helping student learn responsibility
  - May be different for international student due to missing cultural background, knowledge of our system, or language
- Realize that choice has not been a part of most international student's educational experience
  - The student may expect to be told what to do rather than be given alternatives

# For Faculty and Staff Who Work with Students

- Must avoid the natural tendency to view international student needs and concerns through our own and/or US student cultural norms
  - Can't assume sameness
- Realize that students may be hesitant to challenge or ask questions of “the authority”

# Challenges for Faculty and Staff Who Work with Students

- Language can be a barrier, often unrecognized
  - Often not a question of general fluency, but meanings of specialized words or fine points that get lost in the translation
  - Don't assume fluency means full understanding of the system
- Need to be aware of multiple resources available through OISS and other offices

# Specialized Resource Offices for International Students

- Office of International Students & Scholars
  - Role is far beyond only immigration advising
    - International Student Orientation
    - Life in Iowa and other enrichment and educational programs
    - Individual advising on transition issues, often in partnership with other offices (academic advising, counseling, etc.)
    - OISS Update
    - Faculty/staff resource
- International Admissions
  - Understanding academic background and credentials
- ESL Programs
  - Available to assist individual students to address language needs

# Current Support Structures and Activities

- International Student Committee appointed by Provost
  - Looking at infrastructure needs for growing undergraduate population, particularly
    - Orientation
    - Testing
    - Academic advising
    - Housing
- International Programs Executive Committee
  - Ongoing faculty resource for OISS

# The Future (as best we can plan)

- Anticipate undergraduate international population could grow to 1200-1500 students in next 5 years
  - Peer assistants within OISS
  - Improved software support for immigration reporting
  - Revised orientation program to serve larger population
- Growth will require flexibility and changes in structure in many areas