

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ENROLLMENT

A study of enrollment data at Ivy League and
Big 10 schools from 2012-2021



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<https://www.datascienceportfol.io/mairalemos>

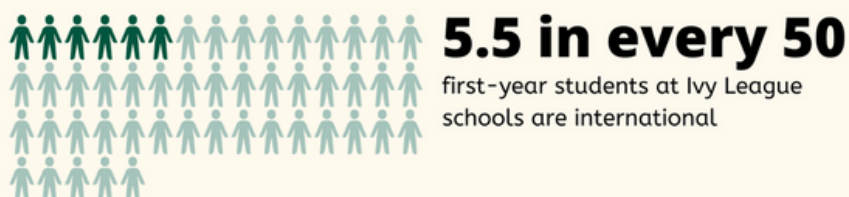
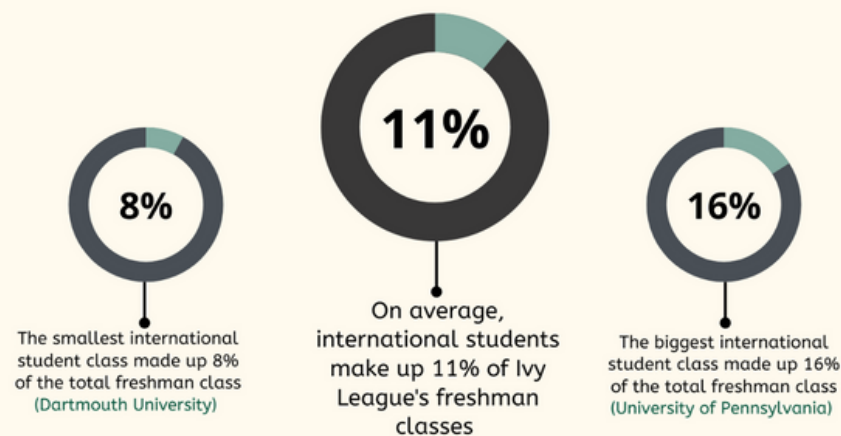
OVERVIEW

The reason for this study lies in my own life story. Originally from Brazil, I applied and was accepted as an international student at Indiana University in 2018. Throughout my undergraduate career, I did not meet that many others like me and always wondered why. After witnessing first-hand how life-changing it can be for an international student to have the wonderful opportunity to study abroad, I wondered if universities were fully aware of the impact they can have on someone's life by accepting an international student to their institution. How much do institutions really value international students? What does the data tell us?

Therefore, through this personal project, I have gathered and analyzed data from 2012-2021 on enrollment statistics for international students at Ivy League and Big 10 schools. I chose the Big 10 conference as that is the conference my school belongs to, and it is compared and contrasted to Ivy League data as they are more commonly known to be the most exclusive and sought after institutions in the United States, considered to be an example and trend setters worldwide. I also looked into the individual data for Indiana University, my alma mater.



International Student Enrollment at Ivy League Schools

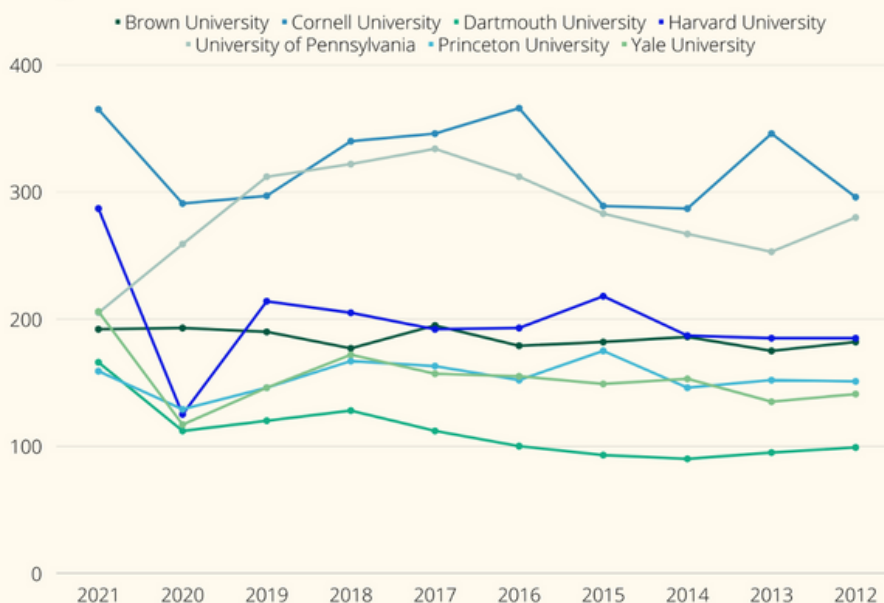


SCHOOLS RANKED IN AVERAGE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ENROLLMENT

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 University of Pennsylvania - 13% | 5 Cornell University - 10% |
| 2 Harvard University - 12% | 6 Dartmouth University - 10% |
| 3 Princeton University - 12% | 7 Yale University - 10% |
| 4 Brown University - 11% | |

International Student Enrollment Over the Years

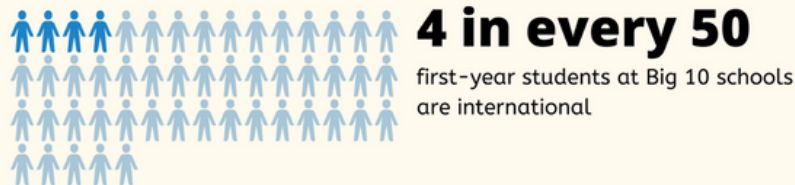
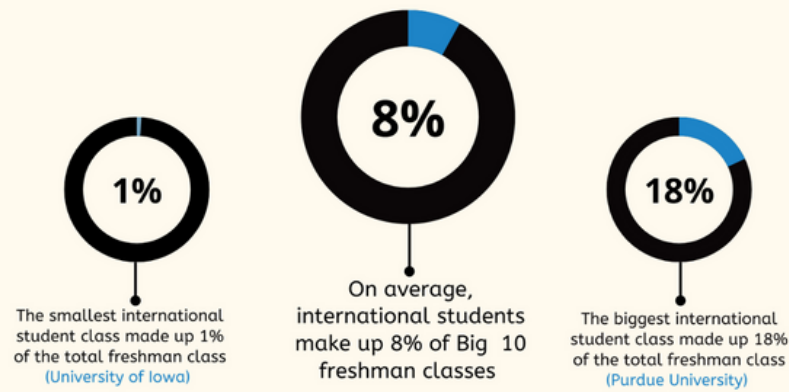
First-year student enrollment



Source: Common Data Set available on each school's website

*Columbia University does not release Common Data Set information and therefore is not included

International Student Enrollment at Big Ten Schools



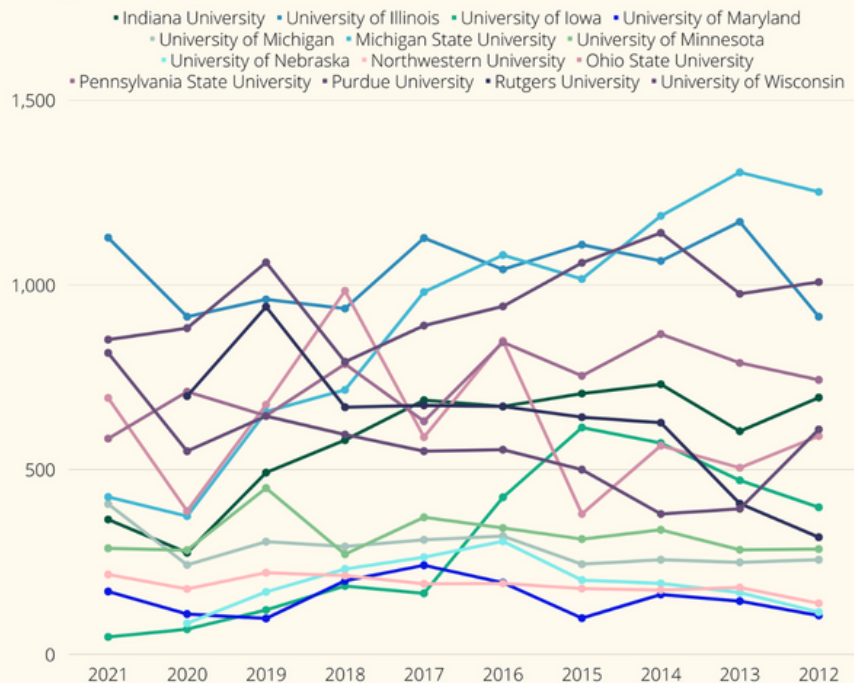
Average % of International Students of Total Freshman Classes

Univ. of Illinois	Purdue University	Michigan State Univ.	Pennsylvania State Univ.	Northwestern Univ.	Rutgers Univ.	Ohio State Univ.
14%	13%	11%	9%	9%	9%	8%

Univ. of Wisconsin	Indiana Univ.	Univ. of Iowa	Univ. of Minnesota	Univ. of Michigan	Univ. of Nebraska	Univ. of Maryland
8%	7%	6%	5%	4%	4%	3%

International Student Enrollment Over the Years

First-year student enrollment

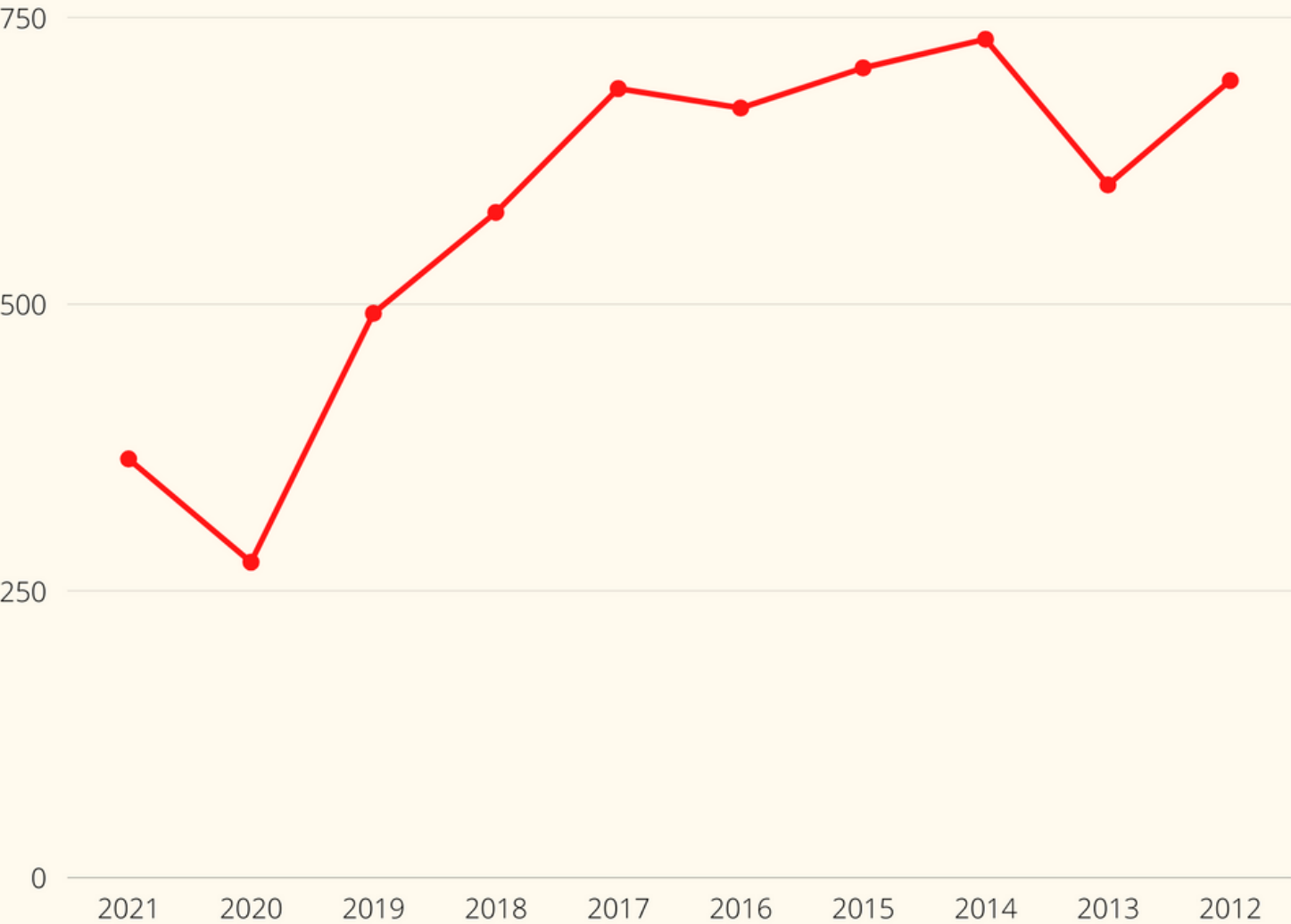


Source: Common Data Set available on each school's website

*Rutgers University and University of Nebraska Common Data Set information was not found for 2021 (as of 06/30/2022)

Indiana University International Student Enrollment

First-year student enrollment



Source: Common Data Set available on Indiana University's website



in 2021, only

2 in every 50

first-year students were international. This is half the average number of first-year international students in the Big10



DISCUSSION

The data shows interesting and important differences in enrollment data between Ivy League and Big 10 schools. Overall, Big 10 schools tend to have freshman classes 10 to 40x larger than Ivy League schools. Yet, international students make up a bigger percentage of total freshman students at Ivy Leagues than in Big 10 schools, as per the observation that 5.5 in every 50 Ivy League freshman students are international, versus 4 in every 50 in Big 10 schools.

Another important difference lies in the smallest number of first-year international students recorded. The smallest international student class made up 8% of the total first-year students at an Ivy League, while the smallest international student class in a Big 10 school made up only 1% of the total first-year students. The average percentage international students per freshman class is also higher in Ivy Leagues (11%) than in Big 10 schools (8%). Furthermore, Ivy League schools seem to keep international student enrollment at around 10% of the total freshman class. In comparison, only three of the fourteen Big 10 schools have average enrollment of 10% and over. In fact, four of the fourteen Big 10 schools show average first-year international student enrollment equal to or under 5%. It is worth noting the drop in international student enrollment for both Ivy League and Big 10 schools in 2020. This can probably be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, with most schools showing enrollment well under the usual amount.

Indiana University enrollment data shows a downward trend in international student enrollment since 2017. In fact, between 2017 and 2019, international student enrollment dropped by 71%. From 2019 to 2020, enrollment dropped by another 55%. In 2021, 2 in every 50 first-year students were international, compared to 4 on average in the Big 10 and 5.5 in every 50 in the Ivy League.

DISCUSSION

According to the overwhelmingly larger number of students in Big 10 schools than in Ivy League schools, the natural assumption would be that Big 10 schools would proportionately accept more international students and that therefore Big 10 schools would show a bigger percentage of international students per freshman class in comparison to smaller schools such as Ivy Leagues. However, that does not necessarily seem to be the case. Overall, Ivy League schools seem to make a more concentrated effort into ensuring that international student enrollment makes up a substantial amount of enrolled students every year.

There are a number of possible reasons why Ivy League schools seem to overall value international student enrollment more than Big 10 schools. Differences in funding, specific programs, scholarship opportunities, tuition prices, location, housing and more, can have an impact on enrollment data. For the future, a study on these different aspects that impact international student enrollment can be beneficial for both schools and students.