

The American Consumer Mindset
and
How Overseas Institutions Can
Recruit U.S. Students

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In keeping with the liberal arts model of U.S. higher education, ambitious students seek a prestigious affiliation rather than strength in a particular major or course of study:

- * Acceptable to parents and peers
- * Highly ranked

Annual rankings are similar to collegiate athletic contests:

- * Graduates follow progress of alma maters
- * Much of selective college choice explained by rankings
- * Students underestimate impact

- * Rankings reinforce admission selectivity as the primary criterion by which the public, and the universities, judge academic excellence.
- * In a country that perceives itself as a meritocracy, college admission is the most tangible marker of distinction.

- * In U.S. college choice, selectivity generally outweighs perceived excellence in a particular field.
- * Because of high profile due to sports teams, graduate schools, etc., large universities are generally perceived as superior to smaller institutions.

Dramatic growth of U.S. students studying overseas:

- * Increasing affluence and mobility
- * Sept. 11 attacks feed desire to understand the world
- * U.S. institutions realize their insularity

Recruiting U.S. Students:

- * Identify select high schools with mobile populations and visit them.
- * Develop a strong, interactive web presence
- * Partner with U.S. universities

Recruiting U.S. Students:

- * Speak the language of selectivity
- * Cater to quality-of-life and mentoring expectations

A holistic view of the educational experience will feed long-term alumni loyalty and benefit fund-raising and external relations.