

MARITIME PROVINCES HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION – Record numbers of international students enrolled at Maritime universities

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For immediate release

(Fredericton, NB) – Maritime universities are increasing in popularity among international students. According to a report released today by the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission, the number of international students enrolling in the region's universities has more than doubled in the last decade. International students now represent more than one in ten students, up from one in twenty ten years ago.

"The increase in the number of international students has been remarkable, and it has helped to keep overall university enrolment stable in the region at a time when fewer Maritimers are enrolling," said Mireille Duguay, Chief Executive Officer of the Commission.

Maritime universities attract students from more than 160 countries, and there is a great deal of variability in student origin over time. For example, five years ago, Saudi Arabia was not in the top 10 sending countries, but today it is ranked second behind China. The introduction of a government program in Saudi Arabia supporting studies abroad likely explains this jump.

"When they come to the Maritimes to study, international students are much more interested in studying in applied programs," said Ms. Duguay. In undergraduate business programs, for example, they make up a quarter of the student body. At the graduate level, nearly half of engineering and applied sciences students have come to study from outside Canada.

What does it mean for universities in the region? "The fact that we have seen and will likely continue to see shifts in the top sending countries, and that international students tend to concentrate in certain fields create challenges in enrolment management, and in meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse group of students," said Ms. Duguay. "However, international students pay much higher tuition fees than do Canadian students, which helps offset the costs of providing those services. International students also enrich education by bringing cultural diversity and a global perspective to the classroom and to the region."

International Students in Maritime Universities presents key statistics from 2000-01 and 2010-11 in the 16 publicly-funded Maritime Universities. It is available from the MPHEC website (www.mphec.ca). Additional tables providing more detailed information on the sending countries is available on the Commission's website.

The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission was established in 1974 to help institutions and governments enhance the post-secondary learning environment. The Commission's 20 members are drawn from the Maritime provinces, and represent higher education institutions, provincial governments and the general public.

FOR BROADCAST USE:

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Students come from more than 160 countries to study at Maritime universities, and there is a great deal of variability in the countries of origin over time.

International students are much more interested in studying in applied programs such as business or engineering.

Commission CEO, Mireille Duguay said: "The fact that we have seen and will likely continue to see shifts in the top sending countries, and that international students tend to concentrate in certain fields, create challenges in enrolment management, and in meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse group of students."

Ms. Duguay added that international students pay much higher tuition fees than do Canadian students, which helps offset the costs of providing those services.

The report, *International Student Enrolment in Maritime Universities*, is available at www.mphec.ca.

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