

International Students & Scholars

FALL 2026

Compliance

We educate international students and scholars on how to maintain immigration status. We advise faculty, staff and departments on what is required to host international students and scholars. We ensure that the university is in compliance with immigration regulations.

Engagement

We provide programming to support the professional and personal development of our international community. We also provide opportunities for our represented countries and cultures to share with the greater campus community. We facilitate ways for our international students and scholars to engage beyond the Lehigh campus.

Advocacy

We advocate on behalf of our students and scholars regarding immigration, academic and personal matters to ensure that their voices are heard within the Lehigh community and beyond.

At a Glance

847
Enrolled international students from 95 countries

139
Scholars from 35 countries

98%
International undergraduate students employed or continuing education
(CLASS OF 2025)

89
Total countries represented among international students
(CLASS OF 2025)

International Community

545
Graduate Students

213
Optional Practical Training (OPT) Students (12 month)*

139
Scholars

102
Dependents**

1,480
TOTAL

302
Undergraduate Students

179
OPT STEM Extension Students

*students work in the United States in their field of study for 1-3 years after graduation

**dependent spouse/children

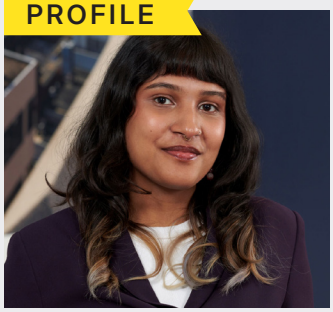
Optional Practical Training (OPT)

OPT is a type of US work authorization that allows international students on F-1 visas to gain hands-on experience in their field of study, enhancing their skills and employability through real-world training and application.

These are a few examples of places that Lehigh students have worked while on OPT:

- Amazon
- Argonne National Laboratory
- Goldman Sachs
- JPMorgan Chase
- Johnson and Johnson
- Harvard University
- Meta
- Microsoft
- MIT
- Siemens
- Stanford University
- Tesla

PROFILE



Ayushka Dhakal '27

Ayushka, an international student from Nepal, is a Lehigh University senior in the Integrated Degree in Engineering, Arts and Sciences (IDEAS) program, concentrating in Industrial and Systems Engineering and Political Science, with an interest in urban planning and design.

As a Creative Inquiry Impact Fellow, she participated in the Global Social Impact Fellowship's MetalMatter project, exploring sustainable approaches to metal recycling in the Philippines. She has also gained professional experience as an intern with the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission.

Beyond engineering and research, Ayushka is passionate about art and creative expression. A museum educator with Lehigh University Art Galleries, she led a student tour exploring the iconography and symbolism of Himalayan art. She also helps lead gallery tours and programming to facilitate deeper public and student engagement with art.

International Students

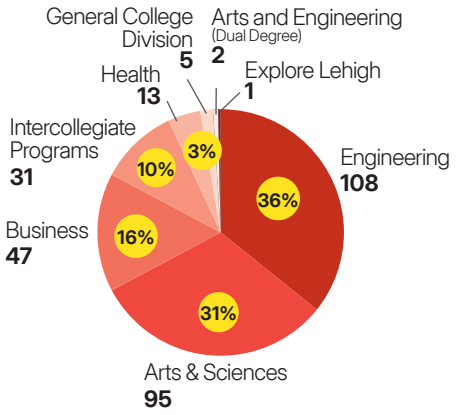
International Students by Country of Origin

	Graduate	Under-graduate
Afghanistan	1	
Argentina	2	
Armenia		1
Australia		4
Azerbaijan	3	
Bangladesh	20	7
Barbados	1	
Belarus	1	
Belgium	1	
Botswana		1
Brazil	3	5
Burundi		1
Cambodia		2
Cameroon	1	
Canada	3	12
Chile		2
China, People's Republic of	237	96
Colombia	4	4
Columbia	1	
Congo (Democratic Republic of)	1	1
Costa Rica		1
Croatia		1
Czech Republic	1	
Denmark	1	
Ecuador	1	3
Egypt	2	1
El Salvador	1	
Ethiopia	3	5
Finland		1
France	2	4
Georgia		2
Germany	4	5
Germany	1	1
Ghana	5	6
Greece	3	4
Greece		1
Guatemala	1	4
Guyana	1	
Haiti		1
Hong Kong		1
Hong Kong	1	
India	59	13
Indonesia	1	
Iran	32	
Iran	1	
Iraq	1	
Israel	1	1
Italy	1	1

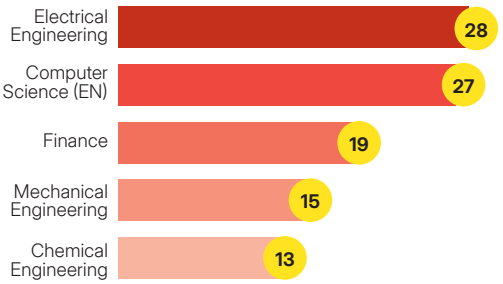
	Graduate	Under-graduate
Italy		1
Ivory Coast	1	
Jamaica		2
Japan	1	1
Jordan	3	
Kazakhstan	2	7
Kenya	1	3
Korea, Republic of (South)	8	3
Kyrgyzstan	1	3
Latvia		1
Lebanon	2	
Malaysia	1	
Mauritius	1	
Mexico	2	3
Mongolia		1
Morocco	1	
Nepal	16	5
Netherlands		1
New Zealand	1	1
Nicaragua		3
Nigeria	19	3
Oman		2
Pakistan	7	2
Palestine	1	
Panama		1
Peru	3	2
Philippines	2	
Portugal	1	1
Russia	1	2
Rwanda	1	1
Saudi Arabia	6	
Serbia		2
Singapore	2	1
South Africa		2
Spain	3	2
Sri Lanka	2	
Switzerland		1
Taiwan	11	2
Thailand		2
Thailand	1	
Trinidad and Tobago	1	
Turkey	14	3
United Kingdom	4	4
Uzbekistan		1
Venezuela	1	
Vietnam	10	40
Zambia	2	
Zimbabwe	8	

Undergraduate Students

Undergraduate Enrollment by College

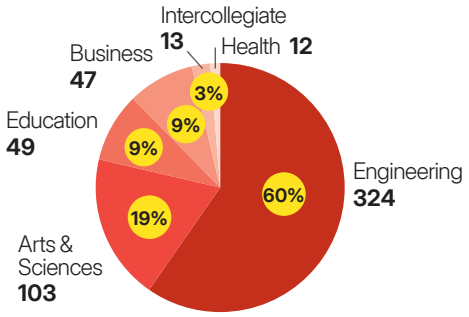


Undergraduate Top Programs

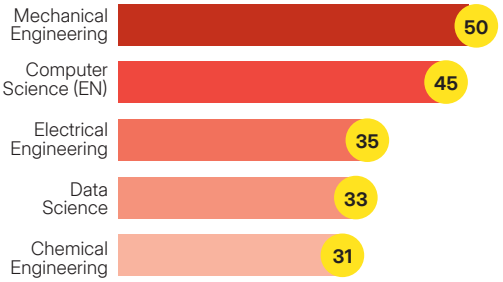


Graduate Students

Graduate Enrollment by College



Graduate Top Programs





International Scholars

Scholars are non-enrolled individuals who contribute to the Lehigh community in diverse and meaningful ways. This can include faculty, visiting professors, research scientists, postdoctoral scholars, staff members, or participants in Lehigh programs like Creative Inquiry's Mountaintop Program. Scholars play an important part in the teaching and research mission of Lehigh, and they bring a wide-ranging set of expertise and perspectives that enrich the Lehigh experience for all.

Examples of Lehigh Scholar Titles/Positions

- Advancing Future Faculty Development Postdoctoral Scholar
- Assistant Professor
- Associate Director
- Postdoctoral Research Associate
- Report Developer and CRM Administrator
- Research Scientist
- Senior Research Scientist
- Teaching Assistant Professor
- Visiting Professor

Scholars by Visa Category

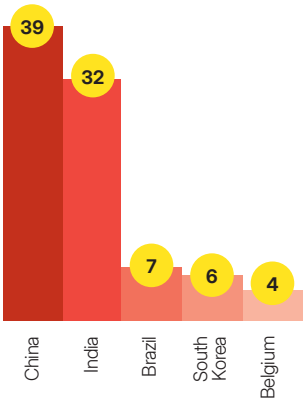
70
J-1
(Exchange Visitor Program)
scholars*

47
H-1B
(Employment Visa)
scholars

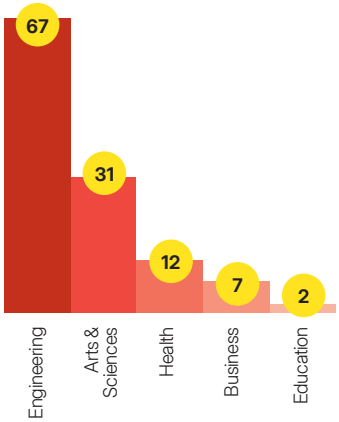
8
Non-Lehigh sponsored scholars

*J-1 scholars include research scholars/short-term scholars and student interns

Top Scholars' Countries of Citizenship



Top Scholars by College



PROFILE



Zelalem Ayalew '26 'G27

Zelalem, an international student from Ethiopia studying bioengineering at Lehigh University, has distinguished himself through research, mentorship and advocacy for fellow students. His contributions earned him induction into the inaugural Lehigh Future Makers Society.

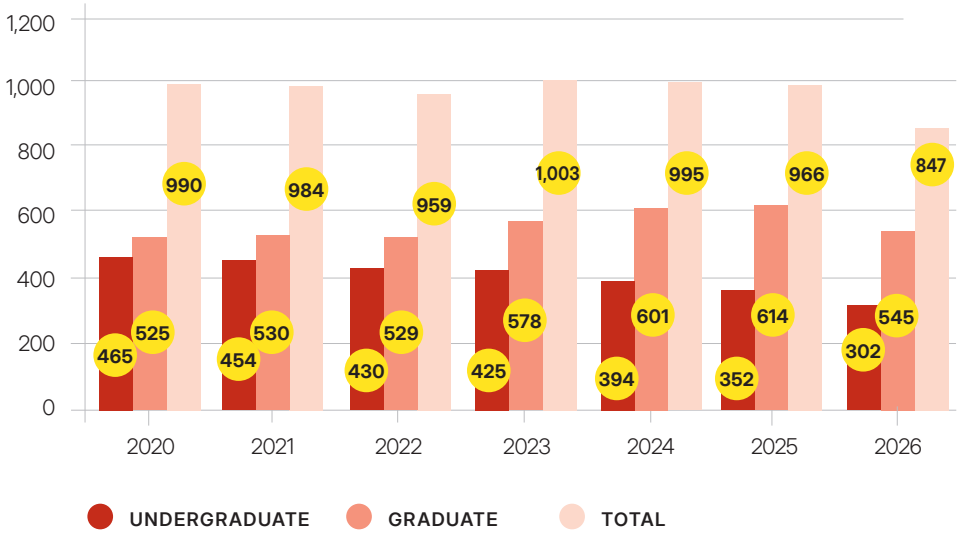
His extensive research includes investigating women's reproductive health and developing immersive educational experiences for students with learning challenges through Lehigh's ImmersED initiative. He has presented his research at national scientific conferences.

Beyond the laboratory, Zelalem serves as a student mentor for the Summer Engineering Institute. He is also a member of the International Student Advisory Board, advocating for improvements to the international student experience. Previously, he helped more than 100 incoming international students adjust to life at Lehigh as an Orientation Leader.

International Students Top Countries of Origin

Undergraduate						Graduate					
96 China	40 Vietnam	13 India	12 Canada	7 Kazakhstan	7 Bangladesh	237 China	59 India	33 Iran	20 Bangladesh	19 Nigeria	14 Turkey

International Enrollment Trends



Student Engagement and Programming

25+ EVENTS

1,500+ PARTICIPANTS

Top Events:

- International Bazaar
- Friendsgiving
- International Student Orientation
- Non-Resident Tax Workshops
- Global Family Friendship Program
- Winter Closet
- Summer Activities Series

Economic Impact of International Students

In addition to the immeasurable academic and cultural value that international students add to colleges/universities in the United States, they make an important economic impact. According to NAFSA: Association of International Educators, **for every four international students, one US job is created** and supported by spending in the higher education, accommodation, dining, retail, transportation, telecommunications and health insurance sectors.

	NATIONAL (AY 2025)	PENNSLYVANIA (AY 2024)	LEHIGH VALLEY (AY 2024)
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS (TOTAL)	1.15M	49.6M	1,736
CONTRIBUTE TO ECONOMY	$39.9B	$1.9B	$68.3M
AND SUPPORT JOBS (TOTAL)	309K	18K	569



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