

# A Sketch of Tertiary Education in Vietnam



Microsoft Illustration

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### Basic Country Information

- Population, 80 million.
- Literacy is at 94%.
- Approximately 65% of the population is under the age of 30.

### Student Enrollments

- Student enrollments for the 2003-04 academic year are 178,000 in colleges, 838,500 in universities, and 390,000 in vocational training centers.
- The system is unable to meet current demand for tertiary education.

### Universities

- 224 higher education institutions.
- Multidisciplinary Universities (national and regional)
  - Vietnam National University (Hanoi)
  - Vietnam National University (Ho Chi Minh City)
  - Da Nang University
  - Hue University
  - Thai Nguyen University
- Private (Non-public)
  - Semi-public - owned by the state and managed by a public authority. Costs covered by student fees.
  - People-founded - owned and managed by non-government organizations or private associations. Full cost recovery.
  - Private - owned and managed by private individuals.

## Admission to Colleges and Universities

- Students must pass the Secondary School Leaving Examination with a minimum of 20 points out of 40 in four subjects, math, literature, foreign language, and one science.
- Students must then take one of four groupings of university admission examinations:
  - Group A - tests knowledge of math, physics and chemistry (for students of engineering, computer science, physics)
  - Group B - tests knowledge of math, chemistry and biology (for students of medicine and biology)
  - Group C - tests knowledge of literature, history and geography (for students of social sciences and humanities)
  - Group D - tests knowledge of literature, math and foreign language (for students of foreign trade, foreign languages, either in education, translation, or interpretation)
- University admissions testing for 2002 has been significantly reformed. This year's testing may reduce opportunities for admission to tertiary education with result being a likely increase in the number of students seeking a foreign education.

## Categories of Higher Education Students

- Full-time - admitted through the examination process and receive the degree "chinh quy."
- Open - students who pay full fees for the same teachers and coursework as the full-time students irrespective of academic credentials. The degree received states "mo rong" and traditionally has not had a very high status.
- Part-time - Students seeking admission to a part time program must have a baccalaureate and one year's work experience (ham thu) including:
  - In service - students who undertake an abbreviated course while employed. They receive the degree "tai chuc".
  - Specialized or retraining - students return to university to upgrade their skills and remain current in the particular areas they may have studied previously (chuyen tu).
  - Short-term training - students pursuing an upgrade on their knowledge (ngan han).

## Undergraduate Courses

- Short Cycle (Cao dang) - three year programs at junior or community colleges which lead to the Certificate of Higher Education, Junior College Diploma or Associate degree.
- Long Cycle (Dai hoc) - approximately four to six year programs offered at universities. Students receive the Diploma of Higher Education or University Graduate Diploma or Bachelor. In the Long Cycle students undergo a two phase education system:
  - General Education (Dai cuong) - (phase one) - the first three to four semesters involve a core curriculum. Upon completion the student receives a Certificate of University Studies and is eligible for selection examinations to phase two.
  - Specialized Education (Chuyen nganh) - (phase two) - the final years of study in the student's area of specialty.

## Graduate Courses and Awards

- Master's Degrees - A two-year program of course work and thesis with entry based upon competitive examination.
- Doctoral Degree - Awarded after a minimum of two years of work after a master's degree and completion of a thesis or project. Students may sometimes be able to pursue an accelerated program after a bachelor's degree.

## Grading

Generally, grading is based on a ten point scale:

9.5-10	uu/xuat sac	excellent/outstanding	about 5% of students
8.5-9.4	gioi	very good	about 10% of students
7.5-8.4	kha	good	about 25% of students
5-7.4	trung binh	average	about 50% of students
less than 5	khong dat	fail	about 10% of students
		pass	for pass/fail courses

## Vietnamese Students and International Education

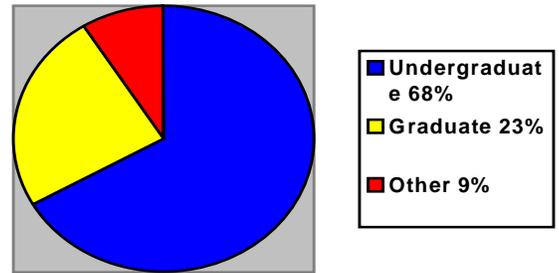
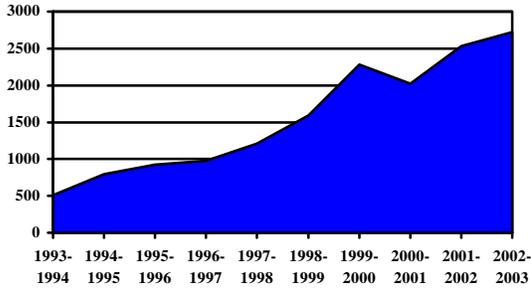
- A foreign education is a highly desirable asset. System cannot handle current demand for education. Within ten years, the Vietnamese government estimates that 2,000,000 students a year will be seeking tertiary education.
- Approximately 20,000 Vietnamese students are abroad at any one time.
- Several new joint venture and fully foreign owned educational programs are being developed in Vietnam.

## Vietnamese Students in the United States

- The 2,722 Vietnamese students studying in the United States are enrolled in over 522 different universities. The University of Oklahoma with 70 (3%) has the largest number of Vietnamese students of any college or university in the U.S. Santa Ana College (CA) which had 101 Vietnamese students last year did not respond this year.
- Vietnam ranks 41st of all countries with international students in the U.S.
- Twenty-eight percent (28%) of Vietnamese study in the top twenty most popular universities (18 or more Vietnamese students). The average number of students per university is four.
- California is the most popular state with Vietnamese students, attracting 535 (24%). States following in order of popularity with Vietnamese are: Texas (172 or 8%); Oklahoma (119 or 6%); Washington (117 or 5%); and New York (102 or 5%). Forty-eight percent (48%) of the Vietnamese students enrolled in U.S. institutions are concentrated in these five states.

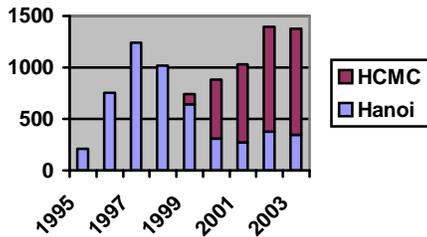
**Appendix**

Vietnamese Students Studying in the United States  
2002-03: 2,722



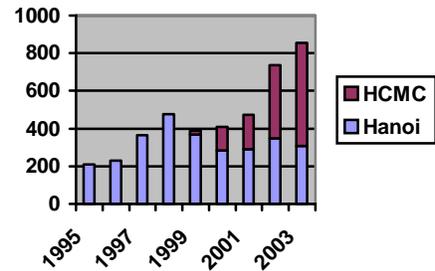
Breakdown of Vietnamese Students in the U.S.  
By Level of Study

Number F1 Visas Issued in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City

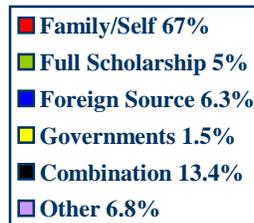
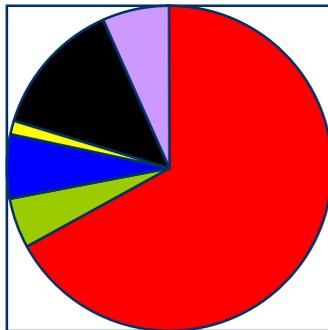


F1 Hanoi: 343  
F1 HCMC: 1,033

Number J1 Visas Issued in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City



J1 Hanoi: 307  
J1 HCMC: 549



Sources of Funding for Vietnamese Students in the U.S. (HCMC only, 1999-2000)