

## EDUCATION

# THE LEARNING CURVE

P

people-to-people ties between the U.S. and India have boomed recently, but probably in no other area is the trend clearer than in education. For years, the United States has been the preferred destination for thousands of Indian students going abroad for graduate, as well as specialized education. This trend continued, even when diplomatic relations between the world's two largest democracies experienced prolonged periods of frost. And recently the student numbers have jumped tremendously.

With the liberalization of the Indian economy and the subsequent boom in living standards of the Indian middle class in the early 1990s, the number of Indian youth traveling to study in the U.S. has increased dramatically. Despite the misperception that the U.S. has become less welcoming to foreign students in the post-9/11 period, the data for India show otherwise, and American universities warmly welcome Indian students for the cultural diversity and intellectual skills they bring.

While there were 32,534 Indians studying in U.S. campuses in the year 1991-92, the figure touched 54,664 a decade later. And 2001-02 saw India surpass a record long held by China: for the first time, there were more students from India enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities than from its large neighbor to the East. In 2002-03, there were 74,603 Indians on American campuses, comprising almost 12% of the nearly 600,000 foreign students pursuing studies in the U.S. The U.S. Ambassador to India, David Mulford, noting that India is the single largest source of foreign students in the U.S., has said: "It makes me optimistic just to think of all those Indian students on the campuses and in the

towns of America. Think of their potential impact on the future."

It is easy to see why Indian youth are attracted to the U.S. for higher studies. America has over 3,600 accredited colleges and universities, some of them among the oldest and finest in the world, and approximately 2,500 of them have international student enrollments. In the U.S., Indian students find the education system flexible, diverse, high-quality and student-friendly. They also enjoy the freedom and openness of American society and find the experience of learning and living in the U.S. professionally and personally enriching. In a 2002 survey of Indian students conducted by the United States Educational Foundation in India (USEFI), over 99% felt that the variety of academic programs and the flexibility, hands-on training and multicultural learning environment that educational institutions in the U.S. offered were the most appealing factors. Being at the forefront of technology and educational techniques, U.S. universities, the Indian students felt, were best able to equip them for future careers.

USEFI, the binational educational exchange organization established by the two governments in 1950, has played a major role in helping fulfill the dream of young Indians to acquire quality

SESHU BADRINATH



*Indian students add cultural diversity and intellectual skills to America's campuses*

## AMERICAN STUDIES IN INDIA

# GROWING INTEREST

**AMERICAN STUDIES ARE PART OF THE GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS AT NUMEROUS INDIAN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.**

For over fifty years, American Studies has had a significant presence in India. When the Indian School of International Studies (ISIS) was established in 1955, American Studies became part of its program. Later, ISIS became part of Jawaharlal Nehru University in 1969 as the School of International Studies (SIS). Its Department of American Studies now offers courses at Masters, M. Phil., and Ph.D. levels.

Today, American literature, history and politics are part of the undergraduate and graduate programs at numerous Indian colleges and universities. Several American Studies doctoral theses are produced each year including those with cross cultural and bilateral implications. Some premier universities in the country have active centers for American Studies, and a few institutions, especially in South India, have begun to offer full-fledged programs in American Studies.

The U.S. Educational Foundation in India (USEFI) has contributed immensely to the evolution of American Studies in India. The enthusiasm of U.S. Fulbright lecturers has been instrumental in introducing American Studies in many Indian institutions. The Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy also has extensively supported the development of American Studies programs in India. As part of its speaker programs, it organizes seminars and other interactive sessions with universities and colleges, donates gift collections of books to university libraries, and sends U.S. Studies teachers and students to American Studies Summer Institutes in the U.S. It also works closely with organizations such as the Indian Association of American Studies, South India American Studies Network, South Asian American Studies Association and Multi-Ethnic Literatures of the U.S. (MELUS) India. In addition, the branch for the Study of the U.S. at the U.S. Department of State has supported seminars in India conducted by USEFI on American Studies.

American Studies in India today, as elsewhere in the world, is at an interesting crossroads. The pressures of globalization and multiculturalism have brought about a reconsideration of the relevance and future of American Studies in India. The end of the Cold War, growing internationalism, and multi-disciplinary approaches within American Studies have opened new possibilities for discourse. As Indian universities are busy resetting their curricula, there is lot of interest and enthusiasm amongst teachers and students to learn more about the U.S.—its society, culture and politics.

education at American universities. USEFI administers Fulbright scholarships for Indian and American scholars and students; over 7,300 Fulbright fellowships have been awarded since 1950. Apart from its Fulbright programs, USEFI also runs the Educational Advising Services (EAS). Through its four offices in Delhi, Chennai, Mumbai and Calcutta and four satellite centers in Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Manipal, USEFI provides comprehensive, authoritative and up-to-date information on higher education opportunities in the U.S. According to Dr. Vijaya Khandavilli, Educational Advisor with USEFI in New Delhi, the EAS registered more than 320,000 "contacts" in the past year. The figure denotes the number of contacts Indian students made with the USEFI educational advising centers to seek information and guidance about pursuing higher studies in the United States.

The history of U.S.-India cooperation in higher education is not a recent phenomenon. In 1951, the Government of India set up the first of seven Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) in Kharagpur, West Bengal, along the lines of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Built within a 1,800-acre campus approximately 120 km from Calcutta, the institute benefited from guest faculty from the U.S. and also from the opportunity to send Indian faculty members to the U.S. for training.

A decade after the IITs were established, the Indian Government set up the first of the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) at Ahmedabad in Gujarat. In the early years, the IIM collaborated with the Harvard Business School, drawing heavily from its curriculum, as well as its teaching methods. Even the architecture of the IIM building at Ahmedabad has an American touch. The campus is set on a 60-acre site,

## USEFI

# NURTURING TALENT

**USEFI PROMOTES EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGES OF OUTSTANDING ACADEMICS FROM U.S. AND INDIA**

The U.S. Educational Foundation in India (USEFI) was established in 1950 when Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and U.S. Ambassador Loy Henderson signed a bilateral agreement on educational exchange. Also known as the Fulbright Commission, USEFI promotes mutual understanding between the citizens of India and of the U.S. through educational exchange of outstanding scholars, professionals and students.

USEFI fosters research, lecture and study primarily through fellowships for Indian and American citizens; educational ad-

by the Bureau of Cultural and Educational Affairs of the U.S. Department of State under policies established by a presidentially-appointed, independent scholarship board. Currently, the Program operates in India and 139 other countries.

USEFI has awarded/administered about 15,300 Fulbright and other grants to American and Indian scholars, professionals and students since its inception in 1950. Chosen for their academic merit and leadership potential, "Fulbrighters" are provided with the opportunity to study and teach in each other's countries, exchange ideas and develop joint solutions to address shared concerns.

USEFI alumni have formed 16 associations across India. In the U.S., Friends of Fulbright to India, Inc., a nonprofit organization, was formed in 1993 by former U.S. Fulbright scholars to India who have an ongoing interest in promoting academic exchange.



*Indian Fulbright scholars with USEFI Executive Director Jane E. Schukoske (seated third from right)*

vising for Indians interested in study opportunities in America; academic seminars in India involving the Fulbright community; and interaction with Fulbright alumni and supporters. USEFI also arranges visits by U.S. scholars to Indian institutions for lectures, research and consulting, and hosts seminars and roundtables to encourage dialogue with visiting and returning scholars. A binational Board of Directors consisting of five Americans nominated by the U.S. Ambassador and five Indians nominated by the Government of India governs USEFI.

USEFI has an annual budget of about Rs 10.5 crore (\$2.3 million). Its primary source of funding is an annual appropriation by the U.S. Congress. The Fulbright Program is sponsored

USEFI cooperates with a variety of institutions and partners in both countries. In India, for example, it also administers the Ford Foundation-funded International Fellowships Program and the Fulbright-Vanderbilt Fellowship in clinical legal education for an LL.M at Vanderbilt University, and offers cost-shared Fulbright fellowships with Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Tata Trusts and the National Council for Applied Economic Research.

USEFI also administers the U.S. Government-funded Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program for accomplished mid-level professionals committed to public service. USEFI also assists recruitment in India for the East-West Center programs in Honolulu.

## NET PROFIT

**TIES BETWEEN U.S. EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE INDIAN PRIVATE SECTOR ARE INCREASING AS A NEW SCHOOL CLEARLY ILLUSTRATES.**

The Indian School of Business (ISB) was set up in Hyderabad in 1997 with the aim of "creating an internationally ranked, research-driven independent management institution to groom future leaders for India and the world." It is a unique collaboration between some of the world's leading corporations, the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, the Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University in Illinois and the London School of Business. A Memorandum of Understanding signed between Kellogg, Wharton and the ISB provides for a sharing of expertise, resources, and a close partnership in the curriculum, admissions, faculty recruitment, and exchange programs. The certificates issued by the ISB will bear the signatures of deans of all three institutions.

Kellogg and Wharton have infused the best and latest in

global management techniques and thinking into the ISB's academic purview by helping to design the curriculum and develop course material. Most importantly, faculty and researchers from these and other leading institutions teach regularly at the ISB and also participate in research at the school.

The governing board of the ISB includes some of the best-known companies from India and around the world. Among them, Reliance Industries Ltd, Bajaj Auto, Mahindra and Mahindra, the Godrej Group, Daimler Chrysler, McKinsey and Company, Morgan Stanley, Goldman Sachs, Royal Dutch Petroleum, Philips and General Electric. The ISB has been funded entirely by private corporations, foundations and individuals.

The school offers a full-time residential post-graduate management program for candidates. Each year, the school admits 220 students who come from very diverse backgrounds and have varied experience. The average ISB student possesses approximately five years of work experience. As many as 22% of this year's students have worked abroad.

It is little wonder then that Donald P. Jacobs, former Dean, Kellogg School, has said: "It's unlikely that we will see more than one other business school of the stature of the ISB launched in our lifetime."

B.K. RAMESH



*ISB students on their campus in Hyderabad*

designed by American Louis Kahn, who is widely acknowledged as one of the foremost architects of the late 20th century.

A 2003 independent task force, co-sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations and the Asia Society, encouraged U.S. educational institutions to expand efforts to develop cooperative programs with Indian counterparts. The study reported: "American academic programs on India flourished in the 1950s and 1960s, but then fell off sharply during the next three decades. In part, this reflected the view that India had become relatively marginal for U.S. political and economic interests. Policy restrictions imposed by India on foreign scholars also reduced interest, and India programs and courses decreased in number and scope. In the past few years, the study of India has enjoyed a considerable revival. The desire of young Indian Americans to learn more about their heritage has been one reason. Another has been the perception that India was being neglected and warranted greater academic attention. Thus, in the past two years, George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs and the Johns Hopkins University's Nitze School of Advanced International Studies have both enhanced their South Asia programs, and the University of Pennsylvania has successfully completed a major fund-raising program to expand its Center for the Advanced Study of India. Indian Americans were major contributors to these efforts and to other programs being bolstered on campuses around the country. Think-tanks and research centers in Washington and

## COOPERATIVE TIES

**THE CENTER PROMOTES COOPERATION TO FORGE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING AMONG THE NATIONS OF ASIA, THE PACIFIC AND THE U.S.**

A variety of American educational institutions interact with India. One of the most famous is the East-West Center (EWC) in Honolulu, Hawaii. An internationally recognized education and research organization established by the U.S. Congress in 1960 to strengthen relations and understanding among the nations of Asia, the Pacific and the U.S., the Center promotes cooperative study, training, dialogue and research.

■ More than 1,900 Indian professionals, researchers and students have participated in EWC programs since 1960. EWC alumni groups are found in New Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai. EWC President Charles Morrison and U.S. Ambassador to India David Mulford were guests at a recent EWC alumni gathering in New Delhi.

■ Many Indian students have earned degrees at the University of Hawaii in Honolulu and conducted research while on EWC scholarships.

■ Indians have participated recently in such EWC programs as the Jefferson Fellowships for journalists, the New Generation Seminar for young leaders and the Senior Policy Seminar for

EAST-WEST CENTER



*American journalists on an EWC fellowship in India*

foreign affairs and security officials.

■ The EWC's annual Asia Pacific Executive Forum was held in New Delhi in early 2004. Cosponsored by the Confederation of Indian Industry, the Forum brought executives, policymakers and EWC experts together to discuss "India in a Global and Regional Context."

■ Indian industrialist Ratan N. Tata, who has served on the 18-member international board which governs the EWC, was the first recipient of the "EWC Asia Pacific Community Building Award," which was given for his "vision and professional and personal accomplishments" which exemplify the Center's mission.

# A BEACON FOR ACADEMICS

**AIIS HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR FOSTERING SEVERAL GENERATIONS OF NEW SCHOLARS AND IS RECOGNIZED AS THE LEADING PROPONENT OF INDIAN STUDIES IN THE UNITED STATES.**

American knowledge of India is shaped by the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS), a consortium of universities and colleges in the United States at which scholars actively engage in teaching and research about India. The Institute was established in 1961 by a group of American scholars involved in programs of Indian studies at leading American universities, and its Indian headquarters is located in Gurgaon, outside of Delhi. For more than forty years, the Institute has provided fellowship support for senior American scholars and Ph.D. candidates. It has offered on-site training in Indian languages through the superb facilities of its Language Centers. And it has extended knowledge of Indian culture through its two research centers.

More than 3,500 scholars have received AIIS support. Their work has spanned fields ranging from anthropology to zoology. The fruits of their work have resulted in hundreds of books and thousands of articles and help form the basis of America's knowledge about India. Collections of some 2,700 books directly

or indirectly resulting from AIIS-sponsored research have been given to major libraries in India, including the National Library of India in Calcutta, the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library in Delhi and the Adyar Library in Chennai. The listing of these books forms the core of a widely used and highly respected volume, *India and America*, published by the Institute. In addition, AIIS houses extensive archives of photographs and slides of India's artistic and archaeological heritage as well as recordings of Indian music and films of traditional rituals.

AIIS scholars also have come together with colleagues from India and often from other countries as well at major international conferences. These conferences have resulted in the publication of selected papers that often form the core of knowledge in many disciplines. Nearly fifty books have been published directly by the Institute so far, and others are under consideration by an active Publications Committee. Through its programs of research and documentation, the Institute has endeavored to



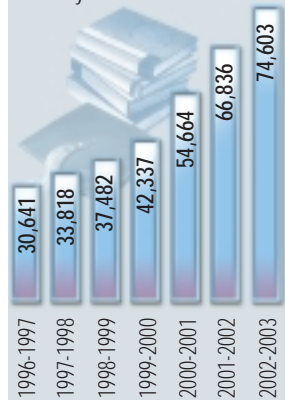
YASBANT NEGI/INDIA TODAY

achieve an accurate and probing knowledge of India's cultures, history, languages, and present-day dynamics. Through its own publications and those of its fellows, the Institute seeks to make the results of this research widely available and easily accessible to people in the United States, India and around the world. Already the impact has been considerable. The Institute has been directly responsible for fostering several generations of new scholars, and its senior fellows have returned to classrooms where they have taught tens of thousands of American college students.

Under the leadership of five presidents, the Institute has flourished and is today recognized as the leading proponent of Indian studies in the United States. Financial support for the Institute has come from a wide variety of sources. Originally, it was funded by private foundations. Prominent among them were the Ford, Mellon, Old Dominion, Carnegie, Rockefeller Foundation and the JDR 3rd Fund. Today the Institute receives primary funding from the Smithsonian Institution, the U.S. State Department, the Council of American Overseas Research Centers, the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the U.S. Department of Education.

## INCREASING NUMBER OF INDIAN STUDENTS IN AMERICA

The number of Indian students in the U.S. has risen steadily in recent years



Source: IIE

elsewhere have also been showing substantially greater interest in South Asia. In the 1990s, few had regional specialists and their focus was almost entirely on nuclear nonproliferation and the threat of India-Pakistan conflict. Today, more than half a dozen of the leading centers have programs on India and South Asia that consider a broad range of political and economic, as well as strategic, issues. Hardly a week goes by without several South Asia programs on the Washington think-tank or public-interest circuit. Here too, Indian Americans have become an important source of financial backing."

Until about a decade ago, higher education in India had been largely state-funded and state-run. Though the Government is still the principal provider of higher education, significant contributions are now coming from the private sector. The past few years have also seen another trend emerging—a trend of U.S. institutions delivering their academic programs through U.S.-India institutional linkage programs. This is an attractive option for Indian students who want to earn an American degree at a much lower cost.

Another trend is that of the opening of offshore campuses of foreign colleges and universities in India and "twinning" arrangements

between Indian and U.S. universities. In a typical "twinning" course, a student spends the first two years of his graduate course in an Indian affiliate of a U.S. university while the last two are spent on the university's American campus.

The fact is that there is a global revolution currently taking place in higher education, a revolution in which the involvement and contribution of Indians cannot be minimized. What is missing from the bigger picture is the woeful lack of American students studying at Indian universities. In December 2002, speaking at the golden jubilee celebrations of the University Grants Commission, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee asked for measures to be initiated to promote Indian institutions abroad so that the flow of students, which is now heavily skewed in favor of the U.S., is more balanced. But that, by any yardstick, is a long haul. Consider this: last year, there were nearly 75,000 Indian students enrolled in U.S. universities. During the same period, there were less than 300 Americans studying in Indian colleges. One reason is the limited number of courses offered. The Institute of International Education annually lists overseas study programs for U.S. students seeking to study abroad. The current directory lists just 34 programs for American students in India, while the figure for France is 483.

While other disincentives exist, the support for academic exchanges between institutions and individuals in the U.S. and India continues to increase. Greater bilateral cooperation in education fosters mutual understanding between the people of both countries and paves the way for young minds to receive valuable experiences that lay the foundation for strong ties and a brighter future.