The Ohio State University is ranked in the top 10 nationally among doctoral institutions for the number of students studying abroad and is in the top 20 for hosting international students, according to a national report released today.

Ohio State ranks 7th among the nation’s colleges and universities and 3rd in the Big Ten with 2,941 students studying abroad in 2017-18, an 8 percent increase over the previous academic year. The university also ranks 2nd in the nation for the number of students participating in short-term programs with 2,821 studying abroad for one to eight weeks during the academic year.

Ohio State ranks 19th in the nation with 8,020* international students enrolled in 2018, a 12.8 percent increase in enrollment from 2017. The move into the nation’s top 20 and the increase in enrollment can be attributed to more international students participating in Optional Practical Training (OPT) last year. In 2017, Ohio State had 928 students participating in OPT, while in 2018 there were 1,406 students. OPT is a program that offers international students the opportunity to continue their education through hands-on practical work experience that is directly related to a student’s major area of study. The training is authorized by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services for a maximum of 12 months.
These findings were issued as part of the 2019 Open Doors Report, an annual survey published by the Institute of International Education in partnership with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Factors contributing to students studying abroad at Ohio State include: programming geared toward first and second year students, the Second Year Transformational Experiences Program, a university-wide commitment to make international opportunities more accessible to diverse student populations, involvement of more than 100 Ohio State faculty leading programs, and offering close to 60 education abroad opportunities during the first half of summer session.

“One of our institutional priorities is to ensure that Ohio State students are afforded an opportunity to study abroad, experience different cultures and gain a better understanding of their field of study in global environments,” said Gil Latz, vice provost for global strategies and international affairs. “Our faculty-led programs contribute greatly to enriching the international learning experience both in the classroom and abroad.”

International students at Ohio State hail from more than 100 countries including, China (5,251); India (856); South Korea (390); Malaysia (267); and Taiwan (147). Nationally, the leading home countries for international students are China, India, South Korea, Saudi Arabia and Canada.

The top fields of study at Ohio State for international students include engineering, business, mathematics and statistics and the social sciences, similar to the national trend.

“The value of having international students on our campus is immeasurable and we are committed to providing enhanced programming to help our students adapt to a new cultural environment, while also supporting their academic success at Ohio State,” Latz said. “It is critical to implement activities that encourage cross-cultural
interactions and dialogue on differing perspectives in order to enhance the global engagement of all our students.”

The most popular destinations for Ohio State students to study abroad include the United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, Brazil and Canada. Nationally, the leading destinations for studying abroad are the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, France and Germany. The top fields of study for Ohio State students studying abroad are business, health professions, social sciences, biological and biomedical sciences, engineering and agriculture, whereas the national trend includes STEM fields, business and management and the social sciences.

The 2019 Open Doors Report is released as part of the nationwide observance of International Education Week (November 18-22), a joint initiative established by the U.S. Departments of Education and State. At Ohio State, International Education Week is celebrated with a number of activities supported by the Office of International Affairs, which oversees Ohio State’s education abroad programs and international student and scholar services. The office also advances high quality international education programs, scholarships and service activities to promote global opportunities for Ohio State, its faculty, staff and students. For more information, visit oia.osu.edu.

*The IIE’s collection of enrollment data for international students includes two categories of students who are not currently enrolled at Ohio State in classes for credit. They include “Optional Practical Training” students who are not taking classes, but are continuing their education through practical training in their field of study, and exchange students who are pursuing continuing (non-degree) education.*