International Graduate Students and the Work

of Applying to a Canadian University

by

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Abstract

In this study, the textually mediated processes of applying to a Canadian university are explored from the standpoint of international graduate students. As reduced government support makes universities in Canada increasingly reliant on differential fees paid by international students, there is little research or literature on how these individuals become cross-border learners in Canada. A federal government (2014) international education strategy for higher education calls for a dramatic increase in international students by 2022. At the same time, in Australia and elsewhere, there are growing concerns about the international student experience. Among other issues, this includes a lack of social integration, which may reduce retention and completion rates, and perhaps even settlement decisions among those who consider becoming new Canadians. Using institutional ethnography, this study adds a qualitative dimension to quantitative studies interrogating the experience of international students in Canada. This study supports the interview results from a CBIE (2014) study of international students, but takes issue with the high levels of satisfaction indicated by survey results that are reported in the same study.

Keywords: International Students, Institutional Ethnography,
Internationalization, International Education,
International Graduate Students

Preface

This thesis is an original work by Joseph Dominic Corrigan. The research project of which this thesis is a part, received research ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board, Project Name "A Study on the Textual Processes of Applying as an International Graduate Student to a Canadian University", PRO00036999, May 28, 2013.

Dedication

Thank-you Grandma Anne J. Frost (Silver Cross Mother); Grandpa Pte. Ernest C. H. J. Frost (466032); Uncles Pte. Henry J. Frost; CSM (Company Sergeant Major) William J. Frost; Pte. Bernard J. Frost; Pte. Ernest J. Frost; Pte. John J. Corrigan—all Canadian Army; and Wireless Air Gunner, later Flying Officer W. Howard Nurse, Royal Canadian Air Force. Together with families across Canada, your volunteer service and sacrifice secured our rights and freedom. In the pages to follow—in your honour—I exercise those rights and freedom.

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Chapter One: Knowing the Neighbours

Back to School

Prior to returning to school in January of 2008, my career of 20 years was made considerably richer and more rewarding because of the people I worked with from Cuba, the Maghreb, Kenya and Tanzania, South America, Asia and elsewhere. I tried taking various courses and learning French during this period to build on the horizon-expanding experience of my undergraduate learning, but I was largely unsuccessful. While working life seemed to crowd time away from my own formal learning aspirations, interaction and everyday work with people from such highly diverse backgrounds and belief systems was a constant source of renewal. In addition, the specialized learning projects our small group was involved in brought me into close contact with Canadians who were eminently knowledgeable industry practitioners, researchers or other specialists who I admired. These course leaders often brought a collegial or even a self-effacing approach to sharing their knowledge with international participants, and it was a great privilege to be in this milieu. As a participant in this setting, I often found myself passing time on field trip buses or at coffee with engineers, geologists, drillers, geophysicists and other specialists who almost inevitably had something interesting to discuss. Given my roots in rural Alberta, I was delighted by work that took me to famous places (e.g., Algiers, Cairo, Havana, Kuwait, Tehran) and also to not-so-famous places such as Füzesgyarmat, N'gaoundere, Songo Songo Island or Tagaytay. The organization I worked for was owned by two large universities, and when it pulled up stakes and moved, I stayed behind and went back to school.

My classmates in graduate courses were from all over, and it was fun for me to be able to speak with someone who was from a place I had been or knew something about. Although not part of any particular research plan, I was embedded in two graduate programs over a span of

approximately eight years that had me working side by side with graduate students from many other countries. Over time, my experience and interest sensitized me to some of the social alienation, work and housing issues these students experienced in various ways. In *Learning to Pay Attention*, Boostrom (1994) described six ever-deeper conditions of observation a researcher might progress through when observing and trying to make sense out of events in a noisy educational setting. Although not fully the same, I believe my immersion among international graduate students and my role as a Teaching Assistant in courses that included international undergraduate students helped me to be more conscious of these experiences. Whether attentive, in Boostrom's terms, as a simple video-camera (level one) recording events in certain circumstances, or for example, as an *insider* (level 5) who is informed and attuned deeply to events as a participant, I had an ethnographer's exposure to events as they unfolded around me. Some of the difficulties experienced in and around me were *routine* problems that were experienced by both domestic and international graduate students, while others were not.

If routine problems represented the shallow end of the pool, I came to see the deep end for international graduate students as acute isolation, housing problems and health issues exacerbated by unmanaged pressures. For example, in response to a relatively casual question, a friend began to cry when talking about her adjustment as an international graduate student in Canada, and this was shocking to me. I became aware of a classmate who was trying to live in his office on campus because financial support he was counting on did not arrive. In another case, a friend told me she had been given only a few days by her roommate to find a new place to live because the informal sublet agreement was ending earlier than she had been told. In another case, familial, personal and societal expectations drove a classmate to jeopardize her physical health, and when these warning signs were ignored, her mental health followed. It also needs to

be said that I became aware of certain faculty members and classmates who acted with great compassion and selflessness in their work to try and address what, for now, might be called *cracks in the system*, and others who worked to create community so issues experienced by international graduate students would not become insurmountable barriers. At the very same time as these events with my classmates were unfolding, I was reading and hearing about how very important these international graduate students were to universities in Canada, and it made me wonder how these circumstances came about.

I also learned that one of the main challenges faced by international graduate students was encountered even before they could start to make plans to leave their home country for a university in Canada: the process of applying for graduate studies. Because I saw this as an early step in a larger program of post-secondary internationalization, I identified the application process as a way of entering into this study. I explain this in the next section of this chapter. The following section points out the dynamic national and international policy environment in which Canadian universities are required to operate, followed by discussion about how I came to see and explore the international student experience of applying for a graduate program as a problematic. The final section of this chapter introduces the research questions that guide this study.

Frontline Focus: About Applying

In this study, I explore the international graduate student application process as a source of insight into how one Canadian University has become active internationally. Canadian University[1] has many international projects, agreements and memorandums that span research,

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[1] Canadian University is pseudonym used throughout this study to describe the large research intensive institution where this study took place. In-text citations related to Canadian University are listed under Canadian University in references. Informants and key informants are also quoted and referred to using pseudonyms. Identifying document titles, webpages and associated uniform resource locators have been masked for confidentiality.

teaching and service, and this study is limited to only a small, but I argue highly important subsector of those activities. Canadian University identifies increasing international graduate student enrolment as essential to bringing the university up to "globally competitive levels" (Comprehensive Institutional Plan, 2012, p. 21). To gain insight into a critical step in the international student enrolment process, I examine how, through textually mediated processes, the work of completing the application to graduate programs is organized at Canadian University. This focus is deliberate because, to the extent that individuals from China, India, Iran, Russia and elsewhere were willing to talk with me about it, this work is observable. In contrast, the internal workings of Canadian University administrative processes and decision-making related to, for example, admissions and enrolment planning, are embedded and obscured within provincial privacy legislation (e.g., Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act) and are not subject to the same type of scrutiny. This narrows the kind of research that can be done and, thus, had implications for the methods I was able to use in the research. While the protection of privacy is an important policy aim, this legislation also insulates and shields the internal workings of Canadian University from scrutiny. It contributes to a bewildering lack of research on the activities of recruiting and admitting international graduate students to universities in Canada. This is so, even while it is claimed that attracting these students is key to the success of Canadian universities (AUCC, 2011; 2014; DFAIT, 2009a; 2009b) and even the future prosperity of Canada (DFAIT, 2012; DFATD, 2014).

I therefore rely on the mediating texts and institutional processes related to the international graduate student application that are accessible (i.e., open to observation, publicly visible). I also rely on the accounts shared with me by international graduate students about the self-representation and communication necessary in applying (e.g., transcript(s), reference

letters, and statement of intent). The work focus takes place at the intersection of those applying

and those working as frontline staff at Canadian University. While, for applicants, this work

generally takes place at a distance, in over 150 countries around the world, it is nevertheless

coordinated locally and centrally by the university. It is this coordination and, furthermore, the

eventual disjuncture between the application process and the everyday experience of graduate

students after they arrive that offers unique insight into how Canadian University is becoming an

international institution.

In this study, the faculty of graduate studies (FGS) is a pseudonym for the faculty on

campus to which international students apply, usually after consultation and advice from the

faculty and department that offers the relevant program of study. This pseudonym, the one for

Canadian University, and those assigned to research participants from Canada and elsewhere are

used to protect the anonymity of individuals. Methods to protect anonymity also include the

replacement of identifying information in web page addresses or unique governmental or

university documents. For example, unique institutional documents consist of forward looking or

planning materials, reports on current or historic events, and representations from a particular

document cohort (i.e., circa 2011–2014). Measures for confidentiality reduce the possibility of

certain documents and in-text references being traced to institutions or individuals. In this study,

this is particularly necessary as the rights enjoyed by Canadians, described within the *Canadian*

Charter of Rights and Freedoms and enshrined within the Constitutions Act (1982), cannot be

assumed to operate in the home countries of international students.

Membership

Canadian University is one of the 97 not-for-profit public and private members of

Universities Canada, formerly known as the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada

(www.univcan.ca). Universities comprise a network of institutional governance in Canada; as such they are both products and reproducers of the social contexts in which they originate. Each is a reflection of their unique origins, and while membership in this exclusive institutional group depends upon criteria related to the authorities, governance structures and commitment to scholarship of each, they are also bound together by shared values, such as those articulated within *Universities Canada Statement on Academic Freedom* (2011), which defines academic freedom as unlike freedom of speech because it is dependent upon "institutional integrity, rigorous standards for enquiry and institutional autonomy, which allows universities to set their research and educational priorities" (p. 1). This independence and autonomy of universities is founded on the Haldane Principle[2], originating in British research (1918), which asserts that universities should operate with an independence beyond the influence of short-term government policy, including economic development (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). To pursue these aims and act in common cause, Universities Canada is an association or network that advocates federally for institutions that are predominantly the creation of provincial governments.

Universities in Canada depend on provincial governments for the majority of their funding, and Canadian University is a large corporation with an operating budget of almost a billion dollars annually (Comprehensive Institutional Plan, 2012), and holdings of over 500 buildings. The majority of funds in university budgets in Alberta are still provided through public sector sources (72%), with private sources (13%) and tuition fees (15%) comprising the rest (Statistics Canada: Spending on Post-Secondary Education, 2011). The tuition for domestic and international students represents 15% of the overall cost of the education, but while there is

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[2] Although the origin and first articulation of the Haldane Principle has been the subject of controversies, it is widely recognized in the United Kingdom. For a detailed discussion of its influence, effects and interpretation, see for example http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmselect/cmdius/168/16807.htm

substantive public pressure on provincial governments to keep resident tuition fees low, the same cannot be said for international tuitions or differential fees. Given the dramatic reduction in provincial government support to post-secondary institutions in Canada over the last two decades (Canadian Federation of Students, 2013), universities have become dependent upon charging non-residents differential fees to cover budget shortfalls. In 2014, Canada was able to attract approximately 44,000 full-time international students to graduate programs, and this was almost 28% of all graduate students in Canada (www.univan.ca). The fiscal pressure caused by reductions in provincial government support make universities vulnerable to "losing their sense of public mission" (Giroux, 2014, p. 139).

The Evolving University

Canadian universities, many of which were created by provincial legislation half a century ago and others which pre-date Confederation, grapple with how to become international institutions. Given new suppliers of educational services working to attract learners, competition for research funding, and a fast-changing technological landscape in which Canadian universities must operate, the singular traditional authority of the institution is eroding (Peters, 2007; Polster, 2007; UNESCO, 2005). Rapidly changing technologies did not simply change the way universities in Canada conducted their international affairs over the last three decades, the same technologies changed the information, options and interactions available to learners when selecting an international institution. Mobility, telecommunication and information infrastructures enhanced options for students in isolated regions where institutions may have previously been almost exclusive providers. Where institutional authority may previously have been unchallenged, it is now possible to challenge institutions as they compete for legitimacy and acceptance as service providers. Canadian universities that cling to their out-dated insistence

on traditional authorities and do not adapt to this evolving landscape risk their long-standing ability to attract international students.

Policy related to how Canadian universities become international institutions, referred to as *internationalization* in this study, is of great interest and importance to post-secondary institutions (AUCC, 2011; 2014; CBIE, 2009; 2014). While there are many and varied ideas about internationalization policy circulating at the institutional and provincial level in Canada, there are also substantive federal interests related to economic development, immigration and national competitiveness. For example, a central recommendation of a federal government (DFAIT) report, entitled *International Education: A Key Driver of Canada's Future Prosperity* (2012), is to increase the number of full-time international students registered in Canada from 239,131[3] in 2011, to more than 450,000 in 2022. It also recommends adapting provincial and federal legislation that will orientate legal and regulatory environments to international education and international students, with particular attention to labour, industry, immigration, trade, and finance. Differing from the AUCC (2014) survey results, which focus on the enhanced priority, planning and resource allocation to internationalization taking place within particular institutions, this report emphasizes the national priorities (e.g., economic, immigration) to be achieved via the recruitment of international students to Canadian universities. For clarity, this report sets out a national argument for attracting international students from large *sending* nations such as China, France or the United States. This is not the same as Global Affairs Canada publications, such as *DFAIT: Best Practices on Managing the Delivery of Canadian Education Marketing* (2009a), that compare Canadian marketing initiatives and efforts with large *receiving* nations such as Australia, France, Germany, New Zealand, United Kingdom and the United

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[3] Exact totals may vary because of non-uniform statistical categories, and changing registration or visa status of individuals. The total for 2011 cited in this report represents a continuation of dramatic growth levels from 53,000 international students in 2000, to more than 95,000 in 2008 (DFAIT, 2009a).

States. From an institutional perspective, it is important to understand that Canadian universities are open systems, peers to other institutions, and international actors. Today, the policy of Canadian universities have international implications, impacts and influence far beyond the geographical catchment areas in which these institutions were first constituted.

As Canadian University works to navigate provincial and federal government pressures to internationalize, it is caught-up in a complex of relations beyond national borders. Education is commodified within trade agreements between nations (Scherrer, 2007), and when it is organized within the conceptual practices related to financial and economic texts, it is no longer within the everyday knowledge and aims of educators. For example, Darville (2014) describes a social representation of literacy that is "systematically alienated from the way in which literacy is experienced in everyday lives" (p. 28). Literacy is transformed into a measure of national competitiveness, and this denies or displaces human motivations for achieving it. It is clear that literacy has been transformed by its objectification, and that "literacy for competitiveness fits into the transnational neoliberal policy developments and dissemination conducted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development" (p. 28). At Canadian University, education is also transformed into a priority for the knowledge economy and national workforce by immigration and economic development policy, and these priorities compete with other educational priorities for operational dominance.

The Problematic

Smith (1987) describes the *problematic* as the focus of an enquiry that asks how the present structure of local social relations is "organized by social relations external to it" (p. 94). As discussed earlier, I have had the privilege of working as a graduate student and peer learner with a great variety of people from around the world who have chosen to study in Canada. At

times the rich knowledge and expertise they brought with them did not fit neatly within pre-determined and institutionalized compartments of our university and our graduate program, and because of this, their experience, knowledge, qualifications or credentials were often downgraded or discounted. This happened at the same time they paid differential fees. Borrowing from G. Smith's (2014) description of a problematic, my inquiry began with my own observations of how being a Canadian graduate student was one thing and being an international student was another, and I was able to "render this opaque feature of our everyday world problematic" (p. 23). By studying these experiences as they appear in our everyday lives, the aim is to surface the hierarchies of relevance or discursive frames that organize them. However, choices need to be made when figuring out how to study this problematic in order to "keep the ethnographic project under control" (Smith & Turner, 2014, p. 306). Finding this entry point and structuring research questions that allowed for the collection of data through cohering research methods was a key challenge in conducting this research.

Another key challenge in this research was revealing those accountabilities which transcend the setting of my local learning, but which nevertheless operate through the university and result in a learning environment that defines international and Canadian graduate student experiences. In this context, assumptions about accountability require further consideration as the procedures of institutions "make some things visible while others as much a part of the overall work organization that performs the institution do not come into view at all or as other than themselves" (Smith, 1987, p. 162). This is a selective accountability then, where work that is invisible to the institution but nevertheless necessary to submit an application, is of particular interest. There is also a directional component within the concept of accountability, and without diligent attention to the way it operates, it is quite possible to misread who is accountable to

whom. For example, writing in the context of a Danish university, Wright (2014) recounts how newly appointed leaders in what had been a democratic institution, now "owed commitment, loyalty, and accountability to those above them, not those below them" (p. 317). More will be said about accountability, but it is raised here because it will be necessary to explore certain accountabilities related to applying at Canadian University to determine what work performs the institution in the myriad countries from which international graduate students apply.

Research Questions

This research explores the intersection and interaction that occurs in the work of international graduate students and university staff at the frontlines of the application process, as well as the disjuncture between the work of those applying and their everyday experience as graduate students. The following questions use the language of institutional ethnography (IE) for clarity and to remain consistent with the methodological commitments of IE, as described by Dorothy Smith (1987, 2004; 2005), Griffith and Smith (2014), and Smith and Turner (2014). The specialized terms and conceptual practices of IE used in these questions are detailed in the next chapter. These questions guide the research design, data generation and analysis in this study:

1) What relations of ruling exist in trans-local sites of practice related to the international student application for graduate studies at Canadian University? How do the textually mediated processes of completing the application form activate and coordinate the work required of international graduate students to make application?

2) How do text-based interrogative devices and sequential processes (i.e., application and required documentation) coordinate local sites of practice?

3) How do text-reader conversations of these same texts activate and coordinate work knowledge(s) in local sites of practice?

Organization of Thesis

Canadian universities tend to be large and decentralized institutions with a rich and extensive history of international involvements. Even if we were able to visit all of the countries where a single university in Canada was active, there would be no clear way to assess, compare or attach meaning to its activities and impacts because of the uniqueness of contexts. But if studying the international activities of a Canadian university is worthwhile, the first challenge is to outline the research parameters and methods. While the above clarifies what questions guide this study, the next describes the methodology that was used. Framing the question in a way that it can be answered requires delimiting what *applying* means here. It also requires the use of clear language and acknowledging that dis-entangling the work of applying from the social context in which it occurs is part of the researcher role in this study. In the following pages, I follow the questions asked to the frontline of Canadian University, and the work of applying.

This study refers to international students and international graduate students, but these may not appear as distinct categories in literature or statistical data. Discussions may refer to literature, issues or aims related to international graduate students as a subset of international students, or simply as international graduate students. When statistical categories are uneven, or it is not possible to discern the precise meaning intended by an author, the term *international student* or plural variation will be used as a larger and all-inclusive term. While all statistics in the document are cited directly from the sources provided, there are discrepancies within statistical categorizations, approaches and methodology. In each case, I have tried to use descriptively accurate language together with the most authoritative sources (e.g., Statistics Canada) available. In cases where the name of an organization or department has changed (e.g., Universities Canada, Global Affairs Canada), I cite literature according to the name in use at

time of publication (e.g., Association of Universities and Colleges Canada (AUCC), Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), or Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Development (DFATD)). When the names of these organizations appear in titles, I use the name as current at time of publication.

The research questions are explored using IE in a research design customized to focus on applying for graduate studies at Canadian University. By focusing on the detail and specificity which surrounds a core international text (i.e., application form), the aim is to advance understanding of internationalization policy through inductive reasoning and use of inference. In Chapter Two, the methodological approach is described by introducing selected concepts and terms of institutional ethnography. Chapter Three surveys the literature and discursive framing that orients how and why Canadian universities are becoming international institutions. Chapter Four outlines the research methods used in this study. Chapter Five introduces key local texts that produce and represent international graduate students. Chapter Six introduces the application form and explores the frontline work of applying. Chapter Seven brings the results of Chapter Five and Six forward for analysis. A brief summary and discussion in Chapter Eight concludes this study.

Chapter 2: IE is a Distinct Project

This study takes place on the international frontline of Canadian University, a frontline explored first through the work of those international graduate students applying, and who are external to it. In this way, I borrow from Sinding's (2014) study of institutional circuits and the *intended* patient's role in their own cancer care. If it were possible, a more conventional IE approach might be to work ethnographically from within the institution. However, it is not possible to observe the inner workings of Canadian University directly, and so this research approach aligns with Griffith and Smith's (2014) invitation to bring "into view the work of someone on the other side of the front-line" (p. 341). This study of the institution focuses on work it causes to have done, responding to the challenge of following "directions for research that take up the work being done by the people served or otherwise dealt with institutionally as they participate in institutional courses of action" (p. 341). The legislated privacy and confidentiality laws governing Canadian University mean that its internal workings are not open to direct scrutiny, but the work of applying is and it offers a unique opportunity to study an international course of action. This is consistent with Smith and Turner's (2014) invitation to use new and indirect approaches, suggesting "our intention is to open up the range of possibilities for designing and doing ethnographies that explore what may otherwise be ethnographically impenetrable aspects of institutions and organization" (p. 14).

Smith's (1987) work began with an examination of the exclusion of women within patriarchy, and the recognition of the everyday world as problematic because "social relations external to it are present in its organization" (p. 187). Since then, Smith's (2004; 2005; 2006) sociology for women has been applied more broadly and in a variety of sectors including

childcare, healthcare and beyond[4]. Now better understood as a sociology for people, institutional ethnography provides a means to uncover the ruling relations, or extra-local organization of the social, by investigating local sites of practice. Griffith and Smith (2014) suggest:

> Institutional ethnography can best be described as a method of inquiry designed to discover how our everyday lives and worlds are embodied in and organized by relations that transcend them, relations coordinating what we do with what others are doing elsewhere and elsewhen [sic]. It starts and remains always with actual individuals and what they are doing in the actual situations of their bodily being, but focuses on how what they do is coordinated beyond local settings. (p. 10)

My everyday graduate studies experience was organized by ruling relations that transcended it, and that also coordinated the experiences of other graduate students at Canadian universities beyond our locale. I have drawn on a variety of IE anthologies, with particular focus on Griffith and Smith (2014) and Smith and Turner (2014), in the preparation of this study.

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce institutional ethnography (IE) and the terms and concepts used within it that are helpful in thinking about how applying to Canadian University happens. Section one describes IE as a stance of enquiry. Section two focuses on foundational terms and concepts used in IE, such as institution, discourse, ideological codes, ruling relations, translocal and discursive hierarchy. The third section introduces text-reader conversations and institutional circuits. In the fourth section I introduce specialized concepts that are common to IE research, but which have a unique meaning in this study. Throughout this

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[4] See, for example, P. Lirette (2012), *Child Care Accreditation in Alberta: An Institutional Ethnography* or J. Rankin (2004), *How Nurses Practise Health Care Reform: An Institutional Ethnography*. Also, see for example, the regulation of organic farming (Wagner, 2014), negotiating UN policy (Eastwood, 2014), child protection work (de Montigny, 2014), development projects (Campbell, 2014), and land use planning (Turner, 2014).

chapter, I refer to other studies using IE as points of reference or in support of this research design and methodology. In Chapter Three, I discuss some of this literature in greater detail.

1. **Stance of Enquiry**

IE is interested in the way institutions coordinate subjectivities among people, rather than exploring motivated individual subjects (Smith & Turner, 2014). This study explores the textually mediated processes shaping how international graduate students applied to Canadian University, and it is the everyday work of applying that is of interest, not the psychological orientations or predisposition of the subject. I may be interested in the psychological orientations, dispositions and identities of the learner, but those are topics best suited for a study where the individual, rather than the institution, is the unit of analysis. Smith and Turner acknowledge, "institutional ethnography's ontology is distinctive among approaches to texts and to the ethnography of texts in its reliance and focus upon the coordination of subjectivities, consciousness, activities, and relations among people" (p. 7). This coordination of *relations among people* provides for the integration of standpoint, a subject discussed later in this chapter. There is an institutional capacity to coordinate, without "reliance on an ontology of the social as organization produced by motivated individual subjects" (p. 7). By starting with the work of applying, from a particular standpoint, it is possible to focus on those applying as a group and follow them into the institution using the text of the application as a guide. Careful attention to this process provides additional institutional avenues to explore, and insight into how and why Canadian University is becoming an international institution.

Institutional ethnography (IE) is a critical stance of enquiry that begins with human experience—not conventional sociological theory—as a point of entry into how a particular ordering or organization of the institution impacts society. As conceptualized by Smith (1987;

2004; 2005), it interrogates the institution and focuses on the texts that enact and reify it. IE resides within the tradition of critical and qualitative theory, but "it is not an accidental development that institutional ethnography avoids claiming affiliation with the category label of constructionism" (McCoy, 2008, p. 710). The commitment from IE is not to conventional sociological theory of any stripe, but instead to begin in the actualities of people's everyday experience, and by doing so surface how lives become socially organized and coordinated. Imagine the independent legislator, "whose shifting alliances are rooted in the concerns of her constituency, Smith's approach to other theorists and schools is grounded in her commitment to inquiry that starts with actual people in the actualities of their lives" (McCoy, 2008, p. 710). This autonomy can be difficult to maintain because it "has a strong family resemblance in parts; it is critical of the limitations of constructionist research but shares many empirical interests. Institutional ethnography is a distinct project, an alternative, 'sociology for people', as Dorothy Smith calls it" (p. 712). One important reason for using IE in this study of Canadian University is that it does not unquestioningly accept the social organization of relations among people by institutions or institutional texts as natural or inevitable.

The stance and application of IE varies according to the project of inquiry, and while there is no standard application, G. Smith (2014) set out four procedures for IE as summarized below. These were provided in the context of a study entitled, *Policing the Gay Community: An Inquiry into Textually-mediated Social Relations*. They are not presented as a standard or required set of procedures, but instead an approximation of four steps the institutional ethnographer might envision and customize to their own project of inquiry. The first is to locate a text or account in an institutionally mandated action. The second is to analyse the social organization of the text account to surface the extra-local relations of ruling. A third step looks at

how events in the everyday world are reframed and transformed (i.e., standardized, inscription) into a documentary reality as *facts*. Fourth, the researcher asks how the inscription encodes actualities to intend the schema. This brief summary is explored in more detail in the pages to follow. In the next section, I review key terms used within IE and this study.

2. Foundational Terms

A. Text

Within IE, the specialized characteristics of text and the text itself are an important focus of ethnographic enquiry. For the ethnographer, "the materiality of the text, its replicability and hence, iterability, is key to addressing discourse as actual social relations between reading, writing, speaking, hearing subjects—actual people, you and me" (Smith, 2014, p. 227). These characteristics of text make it a conduit of actual social relations, where text may be authorized to project an organization of consciousness across vast distance, and in relatively recent mediums such as email, the Internet and webpages. The organization of consciousness and social relations projected through text is of course not absolute, because "the reader's consciousness is not wholly subdued to the text; she brings her own sociological projects and concerns of the reading, as well as resources of memory and attention" (p. 240). The reader brings their own predispositions and resources to the text, as well as powers of assessment and discernment. The content and the materiality of the text are of concern to the reader. Media such as email, webpages and other Internet based communication use font, uniform resource locators, cresting, visual identity systems and other embedded means to communicate beyond lexical content when communicating a text's authority, authenticity and meaning. Still, these specialized characteristics of text also make it an ideal medium to project discourse, as "the text pursues its

remorse-less way unresponsive to the impassioned marginal notes, the exclamation points of question marks, the underlining, through which the reader tries to force dialogue on it" (p. 240).

Texts, such as the application form in use at Canadian University, organize and structure social relations both as a function of their ideological character, and their presence prior to being enacted within a social context. Consider an example offered by Diamond (2006), in an exchange in which an administrator in an extended care facility asks, "how has Mary Ryan been eating lately" (p. 56)? The healthcare worker responds by describing Mary Ryan's appetite of late, and from this detailed response it is evident this worker knows and has experience of her daily eating habits. From the administrator, "no, no, I'm not interested in any of that…. Is she 'independent, requires assistance, dependent on staff', or a 'tube feeder?'" (p. 56). In this brief exchange, it is possible to see the "two-sidedness" (Smith, 2005, p. 77) of language, and the ability for categories present in the administrator's form to coordinate consciousness and relations among people. The implication is not that the healthcare worker's initial interpretation of the question has disappeared, but rather the presence of an ideological text enacted by the administrator has structured these social relations and coordinated the consciousness of both participants. Here the appeal to a dominant discursive and ideological structure (Smith, 1987) of budgetary constraint and fiscal rectitude has re-organized the social relations among people and the consciousness of participants in this dialogue away from healthcare concerns and toward discursively present fiscal priorities. In this study, I explore discourse that may organize relations or consciousness through the text of the application.

B. The Everyday and the Institution

Institutional ethnography focuses on the institution, using the everyday actualities of life as a way into understanding the work of the institution. One component is recognizing that "in

institutional settings people are active in producing the general out of the particular" (Smith, 2005, p. 225). IE may be used to explore how that is done, how everyday activities are abstracted into institutional genres. In doing so, the "the focus is always on uncovering what people are actually doing" (Smith & Turner, 2014, p. 8). The *ethnography* within institutional ethnography refers to how practitioners use "ethnographic practice that insists on always returning to people's doings" (Griffith & Smith, 2014, p. 343). In this study, I interviewed international graduate students who had applied to Canadian University, and their accounts explain what people were actually doing to apply. The purpose of those interviews was not to gain a deeper understanding of individual motivations and subjectivities, it was to "bring into view the institutional field in which the individual and her or his experience are located for the purpose of identifying institutional sites and processes for further investigation" (McCoy, 2006, p. 117). At some time in the future, I may become interested in learner identity and wish to pursue it as a course of inquiry, but institutional ethnography required that the focus of my inquiry was institutional sites and processes. In this study, interviewing international graduate students about their work of applying did not provide insight into the central operations of Canadian University directly, instead these interviews illuminated the work Canadian University intended or caused to have done, and this represented an everyday or ethnographic entry into institutional sites and processes.

C. Discourse

The term discourse is used throughout this study, and "in institutional ethnography, discourse identifies texts connecting people through what they read, how they talk" (Griffith & Smith, 2014, p. 5). A great benefit of using IE in this study is that it ties together multiple sites of practice, those various locales in different countries around the world from which international

graduate students apply to Canadian University. In IE, "translocal" (Smith, 2005, p. 224) signals that relations extend across multiple sites. "Discourse refers to translocal relations COORDINATING the practices of definite individuals talking, writing, reading, watching, and so forth, in particular local places at particular times" [capitalization in original] (Smith, 2005, p. 224). People participate in and reproduce discourse locally, and although it regulates what can be said or written, each instance of use asserts it. More recently, Smith (2014) suggested discourse is "explored as what we are part of and active in, including our local practices of thinking, writing, and listening to what other participants have to say and reading texts, our own and others" (p. 227). The use of the word *thinking* focuses attention on the pervasive role of discourse in coordinating and organizing thought and consciousness. But again, IE is more interested in relations *among* people rather than individual consciousness. Given the above, it is worth taking a moment to further consider how discourse works.

In the discussion above, discourses are active and coordinating when present in language or text, but consider the way it may impact thinking even when it is not present. Smith (2004) uses "the term 'ideological code' as an analogy to 'genetic code'" (p. 159). Reviewing a particular conception of *family* as consisting of a legally married male and female couple sharing a household as a standard North American family (SNAF), she observes the isomorphic properties of this term. How "the code reproduces its *organization* in the discursive texts" (p. 163), where it appears, and the conceptually isomorphic properties that follow it are an important part of discourse. It plays an integral role in normalizing one particular view of family, while framing alternative conceptions of family outside of the discursive order. Similarly, Luken and Vaughan (2014) describe how an ideological code, standard American housing (SAH), became pervasive among parents. The authors do not claim it was always enacted or even present,

"rather, the discourse's organizing character can also be seen in the ways parents use it as a standard to which their everyday practices are compared, evaluated, or even rejected and to which parents feel accountable" (p. 257). While IE is still more interested in the institution than the individual, the SNAF and SAH show how ideological codes shape relations among people, and importantly for this study, how discourse related to the international graduate student may be active whether visible or not in the local setting.

D. Ideological Codes

The organizing character and effect of discourse is enhanced when ideological codes provide and conceptually coordinate a "unified understanding of the social world" (Luken & Vaughan, 2014, p. 259). In the discussion above, SAH became a discursive object or standard to which a parent might make themselves accountable in their everyday lives. The social representation of SAH differs substantially from the lived experience of most parents, but nevertheless "it ties people's child-rearing and housing work to a commercial market selling and leasing housing and offering household goods and services for young families and their children regardless of their material circumstances" (p. 266). In doing so, it normalizes a uniform understanding of one small part of the social world, a small part that asserts discursive order while contributing to a larger and idealized view of American life or perhaps *The American Dream*. Here I suggest the dream American car, job or vacation may contribute to and be a part of an interlocking pattern of schemata coordinating other ideological codes to produce a unified understanding of the social world. Just as Luken and Vaughan illustrate the role of an ideological code (SAH) in becoming a discursive object, international graduate students are objectified within institutional discourse. This social or institutional identity is objectifying, and may differ substantially from the lived experience of most international graduate students, but it unifies

understanding as objectified knowledge. When seen as a discursive object, international graduate student operates as an ideological code within discourse to unify understanding and extend discursive order.

Following Luken and Vaughan (2014), establishing a uniform understanding of international graduate student within institutional discourse serves the useful purpose of then being able to frame what is abnormal. As Luken and Vaughan's (2014) study illustrates, when parents hold themselves accountable to normalizing standards (i.e., SAH), they can have a strong impact, but it is worth noting "they also generate evaluative procedures for determining what is a deviant or defective case" (p. 259). The discourse's ability to frame what is abnormal has a discreet, but discursively important effect of suppressing alternative and competing discursive structures. This indirect suppression of alternate discursive forms can be subtle when it is present only as the effect of self-policing, but it can also be visible and abrupt, as illustrated by the healthcare administrator's overwrite of a healthcare worker's interpretation of her question in the example introduced earlier from Diamond (2006). In this study, international graduate students who hold themselves accountable to the discursive object or standard as illustrated within institutional discourse, risk being a defective case.

Institutions coordinate people's work through processes or courses of action, and by using institutional discourses that take-up the actualities of everyday lives and transpose them into the professional genres of institutional discourse (Smith, 2005). At the institutional level, discourses, or institutional discourses "select those aspects of what people do that are accountable within in it, subsuming ACTUALITIES as integral to the production of the institution" [capitalization in original] (Smith, 2005, p. 225). Citing Schmid (2000), Smith (2005) pointed out that words such as "thing, fact, case, reason" (p. 112) are *shells* empty of

subjective meaning, but are distinctive because they displace the individual subject other than as an institutional category. "They lack perspective; they subsume the particularities of everyday lived experience" (p. 113). These shells are a mechanism that integrates the actualities of everyday lives into objectifying institutional discourses. Turner (2014) observed the shells operating in the context of reading practices related to a land use hearing, where a diagram is able to orient and shape the reader's consciousness. Individual readers "fill the 'shells' of the professional and institutional lexicon, picking out the graphical markings in the text as they bring the terms of the discourse into their utterances to accomplish a council's 'consideration and decision' task" (p. 219). This is a generalizing, standardizing and objectifying property of discourse, and it can be found wherever human activity is inscribed into institutional discourse. Just as Luken and Vaughan's (2014) study illustrated how SAH became a standard by which a parent might make themselves accountable, it is possible that representations of technologically savvy, affluent and socially connected international graduate students may become a standard by which cross-border learners might hold themselves accountable at Canadian University.

E. Ruling Relations

This section introduces the notion that software, email and other technologies such as a point system applied in a Danish university (Wright, 2014) can be thought of as examples of a ruling apparatus that mediates the priorities and intentions of multilateral organizations such as the OECD, World Economic Forum, and the World Bank into local settings. As defined by Smith (2005), ruling relations are "objectified forms of consciousness and organization, constituted externally to particular people and places creating and relying on textually based realities" (p. 227). Ruling relations selectively (1) subsume the lived experience of the subject, (2) objectify that experience in discourse, (3) coordinate subjects through institutions and other

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neutral mediums, and (4) obscure the work of certain actors or groups while making the work of others visible. For Smith (1987), "the ruling apparatus is that familiar complex of management, government administration, professions, and intelligentsia, as well as the textually mediated discourses that coordinate and interpenetrate it" (p. 108). An example of ruling relations as mediated through institutional discourse that is mediated technologically through software is included below.

Consider the example provided by Kerr (2014) on how ruling relations organize the local in her study entitled, *E-governance and Data-driven Accountability*. She describes the Ontario School Information System (OnSIS) project, a partnership between the Ministry of Education and SRB Education Solutions Inc., and its role in producing everyday educational activities as institutional data in alignment with the purposes and aims of Statistics Canada, the Council of Ministers of Education Canada (CMEC) and the OECD. Kerr explores how educational knowledge is displaced by accounting logic and through her study it is possible to see how the priorities and statistical orientations of the OECD work in discursive and operational alignment with CMEC's representation of Canada in OECD programs, and the Ontario government's participation in CMEC. She observed that:

> within these relations of ruling, accountability for student achievement (as understood by the ministry) is effectively downloaded on to teachers, and directors as well as 'supervisory officers' are granted the legal authority to 'suspend' or otherwise 'reassign' teachers who are not in compliance with the purpose provisions. (p. 106)

Here, the relations of ruling organized by the OECD and CMEC organize local settings according to their own priorities. Learners are only visible in so far as they align (or not) with an OnSIS schemata configured by the Ontario Ministry and SRB Education Solutions Inc.

In Kerr's (2014) study, the educator's knowledge and ethic of care is displaced as a burden lost under the weight of compliance and accounting logic. In the context of a Danish university, Wright (2014) outlined the imposition of quality and performance indicators in an article entitled, *Knowledge that Counts: Points Systems and the Governance of Danish Universities*. Starting with multilateral agencies (e.g., World Economic Forum), this article traces the Danish government's attempt to use quality control and performance indicators to yoke the university to the "competition state, with ways that the institution should be organized and managed, and the appropriate behavior for 'responsible' academics and students to adopt" (p. 296). These point systems use standardizing technologies to objectify and attach priority to the complex work of faculty, with the result of positioning them as "wage workers" (p. 319). A similar effect can also be seen in the healthcare sector, where for example, Rankin and Tate (2014) trace an OECD policy priority, through to HSPnet[5] where the software works to "entrench relevancies that are at odds with some of the goals of nursing and nursing education" (p. 122). Rankin and Campbell (2014) illustrate how an admissions, discharge and transfer (ADT) software made certain human aspects of care invisible, and in doing so it accomplished "a partial restructuring of nursing practice" (p. 154). In this study I ask what ruling relations, if any, may shape or pattern as visible or not, the work of applying as an international graduate student.

F. Translocal

Ruling relations may act upon a multiplicity of local settings at the same time and when they act across multiple sites they are *translocal* forms of social organization and social relations. "The concept of the ruling relations directs attention to the distinctive translocal forms of SOCIAL ORGANIZATION and SOCIAL RELATIONS mediated by TEXTS of all kinds (print,

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[5] HSPnet is software first started in British Columbia. It was designed to streamline how practicums for healthcare practicums are organized. It is now administered within a national alliance supporting provincial networks.

television, computer, and so on) that have emerged and become dominant in the last two hundred years" [capitalization in original] (Smith, 2005, p. 227). Here it is possible to see how the replicability and iterative character of text serve discourse and the ideology present within it across multiple local sites. The addition of statistical or standardizing mechanisms such as the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) described by Darville (2014) may contribute to the authority of OECD discourse related to the international competitiveness of national workforces. The prestige and perceived accuracy of such mechanisms integrate a numerical comparison discourse, regardless of what IALS may or may not measure, and this particular discursive formation focuses "literacy work towards individual deficits" (p. 23). A discourse of literacy as *individual deficit* carries with it other discursive formations related to the knowledge economy, where "literacy policy as 'social investment' allows the triaging out of poor investments" (p. 47). Again, the social organization and social relations which organize discursively across local sites are translocal. However, rather than singular or isolated discourses, they work in formations and in conjunction with ideological codes to assert a discursive order on distinct parts of the social world. Together, and through an almost mechanistic interlocking of these small but distinct parts in combination, they interconnect to project a uniform discursive order onto and into the social world.

G. Discursive Hierarchy of Knowledge

The OnSIS example illustrates how an ethic of care and educational discourse can be trumped by an efficiency or market discourse in the healthcare sector; ideas of efficiency, accounting logic and market discourses are establishing dominance over educational knowledge, priorities and practice. McCoy (2014) observes that like much of the public sector across Canada, "post-secondary education is undergoing a process of restructuring driven by reduced

operating grants and shaped by government policies designed to expose the delivery of public services to the discipline of the market" (p. 97). This organizing discourse, *discipline of the market*, structures reformist discourse over and above the everyday work, educational knowledge and concerns of educators. Discourses related to KE and HCT are used to manufacture a need for educational reform including discourses of the *fiscal crisis of the state*, the *unhappy parent*, and the *dissatisfied employer* (Taylor, 2001). In the context of literacy education, Darville (2014) observed how "these technologies organize the transposition of actual learning and teaching into the terms that coordinate their management" (Darville, 2014, p. 28). What is being observed is a hierarchy within discourse that structures and reinforces the view that educational management is separate, as well as over and above, educational practice. Technologies such as OnSIS produce tidy results, as "the standardizing effect of texts for academic and non-academic reporting obliterates the uncertainties and indeterminacies of practice and reproduces the relevancies of the governing framework to the official record" (Kerr, 2014, p. 90). The official record becomes the documentary reality, and accounting logic is used to "articulate its many work processes to the market" (McCoy, 2014, p. 97). The discursive market frames of new public management suppress and displace educational knowledge and priorities into a second tier. In this study, I ask if there are hierarchies of knowledge at work within Canadian University. In the following section, the text-reader conversation, a text-work-text sequence and the institutional circuits that constitute the extended work of applying will be discussed.

3. Institutional Reality

H. Text-Reader Conversations

The text-reader conversation is conceptualized by Smith (2005) as "a special kind of conversation in which the reader plays both parts" (p. 105). This view recognizes (1) text appears

the same for all readers, (2) the reader activates text, (3) the text-reader conversation is made visible as an ongoing localized activity, (4) it takes place within a particular social context, and (5) the reader may use interpretive procedures found in the text. The text-reader conversation with the text of the application to Canadian University is composed of a subjective and regulatory component, where the regulatory component is constituted by the institutional discourse and itemized requirements of an application. The subjective component is comprised of the unique characteristics and resources of the individual who is enacting the text in the process of applying. Discourse embedded in text is enacted through the text-reader conversation, and here it is possible to see the actualities of the individual subsumed into the institutional discourse discussed earlier in this chapter. The reader becomes the texts proxy. As "she or he takes on the role of the text's agent, taking up in the social act of the conversation the attitudes it puts into place as procedures for anticipating, recognizing and then assembling coherence" (p. 108). In this study, the text of the application is enacted within local text-reader conversations, and those applying become the *text's agent* in sequences of action.

I. Institutional Circuits

One feature of using IE in this research is that the application form is a text that is activated in local settings around the world, and thus can be mapped to institutional relations or ruling relations. In this sense, when the reader activates a conversation with the application, this activates a text-work-text sequence that is part of the work of applying. More recently, *institutional circuit* has been used as a "term that locates sequences of text-coordinated action making people's actualities representable, and hence actionable within the institutional frames that authorize institutional action" (Smith & Turner, 2014, p. 10). Here, sequences of text-coordinated action become *actionable* within the institution. In this context, the onus is on the

individual to act and make their work recognizable to the institution. This might take the form of a language proficiency test, where those applying enact the regulatory text and do the work required for the examination, producing yet another—in this case a numeric score—text, indicating the results to the institution. Provided the work of the examination was undertaken according to the provisions as specified by the regulatory text, the recognition of the result by Canadian University will not be in question. Whether or not the numeric test result falls within acceptable parameters is a separate question, but what is important is that an entire cluster of organizing relations (e.g., monetary, scheduling, evaluation and reporting) which surround the language proficiency exam are enacted locally according to the relations specified by Canadian University. Far more than simple replication, text aspires to recreate the social relations which surround specified work in the local setting, prior to reporting back to the institution as text, within institutional circuits.

The recognition that occurs in one institutional circuit is part of a larger process of developing representations such as status as a *complete* application, where it is now eligible for larger institutional processes related to the disposition (i.e., acceptance, rejection) of it. Griffith and Smith (2014) put it this way:

> Institutional circuits are recognizable and traceable sequences of institutional actions in which work is done to reproduce texts that select from actualities to build textual representations fitting authoritative or 'boss' text (law, policy, managerial objectives, frames of discourse, etc.) in such a way that an institutional course of action can follow. (12)

A series of related institutional circuits may result in a completed application, but in the course of becoming recognizable, the actualities of individuals must become textual representations that

fit into the discursive frames of Canadian University. It is this institutional status or categorization of being complete that bestows agentic status on the application, as opposed to the individual, and makes this cluster of institutional circuits eligible for disposition.

Institutional circuits tie individual work into the discursive frames of institutions so that it is recognizable and eligible for larger institutional processes. One large institutional circuit may have multiple smaller institutional circuits within it. Reflecting back on the language proficiency test introduced as an institutional circuit earlier, consider now regulatory texts within the application that specify a certain score in order for those applying to be eligible. The onus on the individual applying is not only to make their result recognizable, but also accountable to a pre-determined standard or score on the test. In this way, "accountability circuits are a special type of institutional circuit focusing on making performance or outcomes produced at the frontline accountable in terms of managerial categories and objectives" (Griffith & Smith, 2014, p. 340). It is possible to imagine a person doing part of the work of applying by taking a language proficiency examination within the regulatory parameters specified by Canadian University to make it recognizable, but not achieving the minimum score specified to clear an entrance hurdle. In that case, the accountability circuit is complete because the result is recognizable to Canadian University, but it would not make the individual applying eligible for larger institutional processes. Accountability circuits have differing specifications, and at Canadian University those applying are eligible to take a language proficiency exam on more than one occasion in an effort to achieve a higher mark. In this study, a substantial number of smaller institutional and accountability circuits were required to produce one large institutional and accountability circuit, the completed application.

4. Terms Inviting Special Attention

J. Standpoint

This research begins and proceeds from the standpoint of international graduate students applying to Canadian University. Smith (1987) described standpoint as a position "situated outside textually mediated discourses in the actualities of our everyday lives" (p. 107). Campbell and Manicom (1995) suggest standpoint provides a place to begin, "acknowledging the way an inquiry is 'situated' vis-à-vis other knowers" (p. 7). This study begins in the standpoint of those applying to become international graduate students at Canadian University, and that is the place from which I begin to look. Following G. Smith (2014), I am attempting to enquire with a sociology that does not take international graduate students as object, "but rather starts from their location as subject—a sociology that is *for* them" (p. 19). In this study, the work of those applying as international graduate students to Canadian University is a place to begin, and the application serves as a concrete text organizing that work in various countries around the world.

All of the work of applying is important within IE, and it is a rich source of data for the ethnographer in several ways. When Smith (1987) talks about the standpoint of women, she says, "indeed when we take up inquiry from the standpoint of women, we are specially conscious of work essential to the accomplishment of accountable order, that is not itself made observable-reportable as work" (p. 165). In my thinking about this study, I suggest a similar exploratory approach might be adopted with international graduate students. McCoy (2006) observes:

> Analysing informants' stories and accounts through the notion of work has two related goals. One is to develop an understanding and appreciation of individuals' embodied experience—what happens to them, what they do, what it feels like. The second is to use those stories and accounts to bring into view the institutional field in which the individual

and her or his experience are located for the purpose of identifying institutional sites and

processes for further investigation. (p. 117)

Sensitized to essential work that is not *observable-reportable*, the aims of using the international

graduate student standpoint will be to find out what happens to them and to identify institutional

sites and processes for further investigation. From the outset then, this requires flexibility and

reflexivity on the part of the researcher, who at the beginning is "unable to lay out precisely the

parameters of the research… …a source of difficulty with the ethical review processes… …that

require a clear account of who the 'subjects' are and what kinds of questions they will be asked"

(Smith, 2005, p. 35).

K. The Problematic

One technique of IE is to work back from human experience in local settings to

interrogate how it was organized by social relations external to it (Smith, 2005). Within IE, "a

problematic is a territory to be discovered" (Smith, 2005, p. 41). The investigation of a research

project starts with a problematic and starts out from the standpoint of those subjects who are in a

position to inform the research. In Chapter One, I describe how although cross-border learners

were highly important to Canadian universities, they were experiencing substantive problems. I

chose to render what would normally be an opaque feature of my everyday world as a graduate

student problematic.

L. Ideology

Within IE, ideology is defined as "those ideas and images through which the class that

rules the society by virtue of its domination of the means of production orders, organizes and

sanctions the social relations that sustain its domination" (Smith, 1987, p. 54). Ideology is

understood to work through discourse and language, but ideology may also work discursively

through technologies such as health industry software (Rankin & Campbell, 2014; Rankin & Tate, 2014), regulatory email networks (Wagner, 2014), and university point systems (Wright, 2014). The presence of ideology within mechanisms such as point systems or software may be more difficult to see because proponents of the technology assert improvements in quality, efficiency, effectiveness, or continuous improvement. These fit into larger and more established market discourses, such as knowledge economy, human capital theory and the competition state, and these "discourses have particular ideological force, shaping our knowledge of the everyday world to conform to interests outside our own" (Griffith, 1995, p. 110). Ideology may obscure the relationship between ruling relations and our everyday experience as subject when it is mediated through institutional technologies. Working through discourse, ideology is able to organize multiple local settings from afar.

An example offered by Wright (2014) occurs in a Danish University where the government of the day wishes to reform a previously democratic institution and re-shape it according to principles of NPM and the competition state. Here a discursive formation in the form of a point system is imposed within the institution, representing "a single technical measure that would operate on all three scales at once and that would simultaneously order the competitive state, the enterprising organization and the 'responsibilized' [sic] individual according to the government's ideological and political vision" (p. 295). In this reformist view, the Danish University is charged with defending and securing national prosperity, where "from idea to invoice" (p. 298) is the new mantra. In this example, I think of the point system as a discursive and ideological technology that shapes relations among people. One goal of IE is consciousness-raising, a surfacing of the coordinating effects of discourse so they may be better

understood, and in particular, understood better by those who are directly affected. In this study I ask what, if any, ideology works through the text of the application at Canadian University.

M. Frontline

The new public management (NPM) taking hold of institutions, agencies and public sector organizations across Canada and elsewhere provides a frontline entry point for ethnographic inquiry (Griffith & Smith, 2014). The *moves* of NPM include an organizational initiative that is located in frontline units, where each unit performs independently, and there are obstacles to the direct supervision of these frontline units. By focusing on the work of people on the frontline, and:

> the recording of that work in new managerial terms, then we would be able to (1) show how front-line work was changing; (2) highlight the governing relations that were coordinating the changes; (3) identify the disjunctures between front-line work and what can be 'objectively' recorded; and (4) bring into view the invisible work at the front line as people managed the gaps between what people are actually getting done and producing the information required for managerial governing" (p. 340).

In this study, the work of applying is frontline work, and although it is intended by Canadian University, it occurs outside of the institution. By "using the 'generous' conceptions of work, those who are served *are also working*; they put in time and energy and are active in actual local settings as they engage with or are caught up in an institutional process" (p. 11). A source of interest in the conduct of this study is what the institution intends from those applying. By carefully considering what the institution requires of those applying, "there is much to be learned by exploring how new managerial practices enter into and reorganize the work of being a client, a patient, a prisoner, and so on" (p. 346). The expansion of NPM is accompanied by an

opportunity to analyze visible and invisible frontline work, and the accountability structures that make it so.

Summary

At the beginning of this chapter I reviewed some of the language and commitments of institutional ethnography as a distinct project, including the notion that IE adopts a standpoint and stance of enquiry, and may be distrustful of more conventional sociology. In the second section I introduced foundational terms often used within IE, and that are useful in this study as well. Even with text and the institution having a place of priority within this mode of inquiry, IE begins within the everyday of real people. This notion of the everyday might be considered an ethnographic component, and how the everyday in transposed into the objectifying genres of institutional discourse is a focus of investigative curiosity. In the third section, I introduced the text-reader conversation and institutional circuits. In this study, these are internal processes that articulate the internal reality and logic of Canadian University. The fourth section examined some of the terms inviting special attention within IE, and these include standpoint, the problematic, ideology, and the frontline as it is understood and used within this study. In the chapter to follow, I review literature that is shaping the discursive environment as universities in Canada and elsewhere become international institutions.

Chapter Three: Review of Literature and Management-by-Measure

This review of literature related to internationalization at universities in Canada and elsewhere begins with a discussion of transnational organizations, and then considers the national, institutional and learner levels or entry points. This chapter moves from conceptually wide topics to narrower ones but will not discuss specific documents related to internationalization at Canadian University, as these will be introduced separately in Chapter Five. While universities in Canada are a product of the Westphalian state, they are also sub-national entities with a role in spheres (i.e., immigration, economic development) far beyond the geography of national boundaries. At the same time and in multiple sectors beyond higher education, universities in Canada and many other countries are subject to the *management-by-measure* principles of new public management (NPM) as described by Griffith and Smith (2014). Here, I rely upon other institutional ethnographers, particularly those doing work on the frontline of institutions to show how "new managerial practices are imposed and operate in public sector services in which the major work focus of realizing objectives is done at the front line" (p. 7). Working first from a wide transnational landscape, and then narrowing toward the national, institutional and learner levels, literature related to internationalization and international graduate students is introduced and explored in the following pages.

This chapter is organized into six sections. The first and largest focuses on the work of multilateral organizations such as the OECD and World Bank. A second section focuses on literature at the national level, introducing new public management (NPM) and a discursively produced emphasis on measures that are described and reviewed in the context of literacy work (Darville, 2014). Section three introduces Canada's relatively new international education strategy, as well as contributions from Universities Canada and the Canadian Bureau for

International Education on international graduate students in Canada. Still at the national level, section four reviews literature from outside of the dominant transnational discourse, and the particular case of Danish universities as described by Wright (2014). Section five focuses on the institution and issues of funding, ranking and self-representation that work to define Canadian University and universities across Canada. Section six briefly examines literature on the learner, and the discursive framing of international graduate students. This review is not addressing a cohering institutional field of literature because internationalization is an emergent area and the literature available is limited. Literature by and about international students in Canada is also limited, and what I have been able to find is included in section six. This chapter works to weave a contested field together in a unifying frame that will support this study in exploring the work of applying at Canadian University as an international graduate student.

There are important reasons why other institutional ethnographies are given priority in this review: First, they share a set of methodological and conceptual tools. Text, discourse, and institutional circuits all contribute to the study of institutions, and more particularly aid in the wresting of those institutions from bureaucratic control to other technologies of control such as those of NPM (Griffith & Smith, 2014; Smith & Turner, 2014). A second reason for attaching priority to these studies is the shared and common difficulty of conceptualizing how the institution is to be accountable, rather than seeing the institution exclusively as an implementer of accountability. Researchers who work to see past institutional gates may be confronted by privacy legislation barriers that work to protect individual information, but these may also inadvertently shield internal processes of the institution from scrutiny. A third reason is a concern for the social organization of knowledge; some of the studies introduced illustrate how mechanisms of accountability make some forms of work visible, and others not (McCoy, 2014).

In the analysis in Chapter Seven, the everyday work of applying that is visible to the institution becomes what the institution knows, and this pattern of selective knowing will provide insight into how Canadian University is becoming an international institution. Finally, institutional ethnographies are featured here because, as described in Chapter Two, discourse structures hierarchies of knowledge, and both in the studies referred to here and in the specialized documents produced by Canadian University introduced later, knowledge forms compete for acceptance, legitimacy and dominance.

1. Transnational Governance

This section begins with transnational texts that order discourse across countries, educational systems and settings including the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the World Bank (WB), as well as other multilateral banks and institutions. If it is possible to think of Canadian University as representing an institutional level, with Canada representing the national level, then imagine how transnational texts and discourses cascade and scale across a great variety of countries, and an even greater variety of universities. Griffith and Smith (2014) find "distinct institutions are embedded in yet other relations—those of the institutionally relevant discourse of government, and, beyond regional government, of the transnational governance of organizations" (p. 342). The authors go on to list the International Monetary Fund (IMF), United Nations (UN), World Bank (WB), and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as examples of organizations asserting transnational governance. Darville (2014) enhances this description, observing, "the OECD works as a transnational think tank, articulating and promoting policy ideas in any way related to its economic aims and also as a centre for international policy deliberations and exchange" (p. 33). By circulating freely beyond the political tensions of any one particular national government

or subset of provincial, state or regional politics, the OECD is able to work and operate with singular purpose toward the promotion of economic development through market principles.

While some of the policies impacting Canadian University are provincial and national, the OECD operates as a transnational entity comparing, coordinating and projecting policy across nations. In Chapter Two, I discussed how the provincial Ministry of Education in Ontario worked to align the OnSIS software system with the statistical requirements of the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada (Kerr, 2014). Each province or territory collects data to this end, and the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program (PCEIP) provides a cumulative set of national statistics (PCEIP, 2013) about education and learning in Canada from this provincial and territorial data collection. The "report has been designed to complement and expand upon the information for Canada that is provided annually to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) for publication in its *Education at a Glance* (EAG) report" (p. 5). Through the EAG series and other publications, but notably "without enforcement powers, and even without overt prescription, OECD discourse comes into force as the currency of policy action, in Canada as in other nations" (Darville, 2014, p. 38). For now, I mark the trail of data collection from Ontario classrooms using OnSIS into the Ministry of Education in Ontario, to CMEC and the PCEIP national statistics program, and finally to the annual EAG series where Darville observes OECD discourse comes into force as the currency of policy action.

The multilateral banks and other institutions (i.e., OECD, WB) are important to consider because of shared origins, economic orientations and interconnections. For example, the WB includes both the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA). Both the IMF and the IBRD are a creation of the Bretton Woods Agreement made in July of 1944 (http://www.oecd.org/about/history/). A unitary

fiscal policy, and the economic aims and origins of those early meetings led to the establishment of an Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) in 1948—the predecessor organization to the OECD—which was established in 1960. In addition to the IBRD and the IDA, The World Bank Group includes the International Financial Corporation (IFC), Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) (http://www.worldbank.org/en/about). Multilateral institutions or multilateral development banks also include the African Development Bank (AFDB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the European Bank for Development and Reconstruction (EBDR). The World Bank is by far the largest global lender and so this review tends to focus on it and the OECD, but it is important to realize they dominate a larger field of regional banks and institutions that each have their own history, culture, territoriality and politics.

The notion of transnational governance from the OECD, an institution without powers of enforcement and without "overt prescription" (Darville, 2014, p. 38), may be more understandable within the overlapping memberships and economic aims it shares with the lending and procurement operations of the multilateral banks. In 2010 for instance, these multilateral development banks provided "close to US $150 billion in loans and grants to developing countries for poverty alleviation and economic development initiatives" (SEAMSN, 2011, p. 10). This volume of lending and financial assistance is an important source of influence in any community of nations because which countries gets these loans, under what terms and conditions, and under what repayment terms is a matter of judgement and discretion. In the same year, these multilateral banks awarded $146,512,425 USD worth of consulting, goods and service contracts to Canadian companies, with the World Bank alone awarding $72,215,577

USD worth of contracts to Canadian companies in the same year (p. 10). More recently, in the sub-category of consultant contract awards, five other countries received a cumulative value of WB contracts higher than Canada in 2010. From the Office of the Chief Economist (personal communication, July 22, 2016), the value of contracts awarded to Canadian organizations from the World Bank in 2000-2004 was $405 million USD, from 2005-2009 it was $276 million USD, and from 2010-2014 it was $426 million USD. Canadian companies have received WB contracts valued in amounts that often place Canada within the top ten countries when compared using the value of consultant service contracts.

The 35 member countries in the OECD tend to have the largest economies and among the highest percentage of member voting shares required to vote in both the IFC, and the IBRD (http://www.oecd.org). These organizations (i.e., IFC, IDA, OECD, IBRD, ADB) share certain values, mission and vision related to transnational economic order. For example, while a "global reach has been an integral part of the OECD mission from its beginning", those countries who are not members can still be involved or associated in specific ways through the OECD's Global Relations Secretariat (GRS). The WB and other regional development banks, as well as other institutions are featured prominently as official partners of the GSR. Kerr (2014) suggested the OECD "operates as an international data clearing house and policy think tank that 'harmonizes' public sector policies across member states through its inquisitive and meditative activities; policy frameworks are devised and 'experts' are legitimated at the OECD" (p. 109). The circulation and intermingling of these experts and the methods they use in proposals, managing or monitoring projects, and reporting on them contributes to a shared language and mindset (Mundy & Menashy, 2012). Whether it is countries seeking loans or grants, organizations or consultants seeking project work, there is substantial influence to be found within the fashion of

ideas and language that circulates around a nucleus of identity and purpose at the OECD: economic growth through markets. Within the multilateral banks and associated institutions, this might be thought of as a porous consensus that clusters around economic aims, and what constitutes knowledge within the multilateral landscape.

2. National Interests: Explicit and Measurable

Griffith and Smith (2014) use the introduction of *Under New Public Management: Institutional Ethnographies of Changing Front-line Work*, to describe how neoliberalism is changing the role of governments and the public sector. In this way, a reduction in the power of the state within global markets adheres conceptually to a new emphasis on human development as an investment, and it "suggested a shift away from service to citizens, and towards a labour force management strategy oriented to providing a service to employers" (p. 5). New public management (NPM) is a focus in this study of Canadian University, but it is worth noting that public sector reform and NPM in Canada is happening as part of a much larger project. This study unfolds in the context of *globalization*, "a deliberate ideological project of economic liberalization that subjects states and individuals to more intense market forces" (Rizvi & Lingard, 2006, p. 251). Again, while the focus is on Canada and Canadian University, parallel processes of globalization and public sector reform through NPM are unfolding across myriad other nations and at the same time, the universities in those nations. One way to think of NPM was offered by Griffith and Smith (2014), who described its impact on the public sector as the "adoption and adaptation of strategies and textual technologies that revolutionized corporate management during the 1980s and 1990s" (p. 6).

Working from Christopher Hood (1995), Griffith and Smith (2014) outline *moves* that are characteristic of NPM, and important within IE for understanding the managerial background

and context in which Canadian University and other universities operate. From an original list of seven, the authors summarize four movements. The first is to the increasing use of private sector management practices within the public sector. The second is toward a growing emphasis on "discipline and parsimony in resource use" (p. 7), and an ongoing search for ways to deliver public services at less cost. Third, there is a move toward an active *hands-on* and visible management style by top managers with discretionary authority. A fourth move is toward "explicit and measurable" (p. 7) indicators of organizational progress or performance, and where "the major work focus of realizing objectives is done at the front line" (p. 7). Finally, and in summary, it is how these "managerial practices are imposed and operate in public sector services in which the major work focus of realizing objectives is done at the front line" (p. 7). Citing G. Smith (1970), Griffith and Smith (2014) suggest frontline organizations are distinctive in that organizational initiative or action happens on the periphery, where work is done independently of other units and direct supervision is difficult or impossible to accomplish. This is where the work of applying as an international graduate student to Canadian University fits. It is frontline work external to the institution, but nevertheless work that is organized by the university as a component of institutional work outside of Canada, and as such it should provide insight into the international activities of the university, or what is now often referred to as internationalization.

Darville (2014) illustrated how OECD discourse is able to transpose literacy education from a responsive and relational undertaking inspired by human motivations in the local setting, to a labour force indicator within the context of a competition state. As introduced in Chapter Two, the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) described by Darville plays a central role in legitimating OECD discourse and serves here as an example of a technology that can "organize the transposition of actual learning and teaching into the terms that coordinate their

management" (p. 28). The ruling narrative of illiteracy (i.e., causing mistakes on the job) are produced and circulate in a way that are almost unrecognizable to everyday literacy workers and learners, as they construct partial literacy as a workforce problem that ultimately makes the country less competitive. The author finds "literacy for competitiveness fits into the transnational neoliberal policy developments and dissemination conducted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)" (p. 28). Recast within a ruling discourse of individual deficit, the "courage and resourcefulness" (p. 29) adult learners bring to literacy acquisition is lost or forgotten. Within the dominant narrative of individual deficit and the competition state, "discourse and statistics are reinstantiated [sic] in media and public discourse. They organize surveillance of policy and policy outcomes" (p. 44). This study shows how literacy education is transposed from actual learning into terms that coordinate its management. The individual courage and resourcefulness required by literacy learning disappears in its transposition into the discursively produced and intensely competitive knowledge economy of the competition state. In a similar way, the international graduate students in this study may find themselves cast within ruling discourses related to individual deficit, and the competition state.

The language and discourse of government funding is also important to Canadian University. Darville (2014) connects the discursive production of literacy work with funding proposals or appeals. These dominant discursive formations (discussed above) are inextricably linked to funding mechanisms. Most organizations or individuals who seek funding to do literacy work will need to reinforce the worldview of funding agencies through the use of ruling discourses, an organization of language and terms that may increase the probability of success in funding proposals. Darville observes "these terms are woven into the funding arrangements and decisions and so are ineluctable" (p. 28). As noted in Chapter Two, Smith and Turner (2014) see

text as key coordinators of subjectivities, consciousness, activities, and relations among people. Thus, an organization that mimics the language of the funder in a funding proposal—irrespective of their own tensions with the funding body—may find themselves orientating toward the funder's view and drifting away from their own. McCoy (2014) observed a similar effect in a negotiation, whereby a union president took up "managerial relevances and the documentary forms that concretize them, and in so doing, was helping to bring these relevances even further into the day-to-day organization of teachers work" (p. 116). Seen in this way, the isomorphic tendencies of text and language are more evident when we consider the context of large-scale lending and procurement conducted by the multilateral banks, noted earlier in this chapter. This study uses standpoint within IE to avoid being caught-up in the presumptive discourse of government funding at Canadian University.

3. National Interests: Economic Performance

When transnational governance organizations (OECD, WB) discursively produce their own membership, they do so with particular ideas about how universities should serve the competition state. It is perhaps not surprising the OECD would see a primarily economic role for universities; as the OECD (2008) *Tertiary Education for the Knowledge Society* suggests, "at the national level, internationalisation also matters, insofar as it allows countries to maintain or improve their economic performance and relative standing, and to achieve a number of social goals" (p. 237). In this view, the university is defined by its relationship to market, and by its ability to contribute to the economic standing of the country in which it is situated. International graduate students are seen through the same economic lens, as they too are defined by relationship to market. They further suggest, "internationalisation may thus bring significant economic, trade and diplomatic benefits as former international students are likely to keep

privileged relationships with their countries of study throughout their lives and careers" (p. 238).

Here, the value of internationalization policy at universities or policy as it relates to international

graduate students can be evaluated in relation to the contribution it makes to the economic

performance of the country. In the following discussion I refer to this position operating at the

national level as the dominant economic view, or dominant view.

An international education strategy entitled, *Canada's International Education Strategy:*

Harnessing our Knowledge Advantage to Drive Innovation and Prosperity (DFATD, 2014), is in

alignment with the dominant economic view and sees higher education growth being driven by

branding, marketing and partnering. It positions international education as folding into pre-

established trade priorities and patterns, and addressing labour force issues in the Canadian

economy. As seen in the following excerpts, it continues to emphasize fiscal rectitude, while

encouraging innovation and trade. This recent national strategy is "firmly rooted in the federal

government's focus on creating jobs and economic opportunities, and its commitment to

returning to balanced budgets in the short term" (p. 13). The integration of internationalization

policy with job creation, economic development and deficit reduction is clear. The strategy also

states that "international partnerships in research and innovation are vital to building prosperity

in the new knowledge-driven economy" (p. 16). Here research and innovation are identified as

the path to prosperity in a knowledge economy. The emphasis on commercialization can also be

seen within the federal government's interest and enthusiasm for integrating and helping

educational institutions operate abroad. "Indeed, all education-related activities will mirror the

Government of Canada's new focus on trade promotion" (p. 16). This national strategy re-

affirms the international student number targets identified in Chapter One (DFAIT, 2012), where

full-time international student enrolment will move from 239,131 in 2011, "to more than 450,000

in 2022 (without displacing Canadian students)" (DFATD, 2014, p. 11). It has a strong emphasis

on performance measures and measuring results, and builds upon a series of other documents

featuring direct alignment with a dominant economic view.

Global Affairs Canada, (*formerly* Foreign Affairs and International Trade or DFAIT) has

been the federal ministry assuming responsibility and authorship on the promotion of

international education in Canada. Prior to the national strategy document (DFATD, 2014), a

panel of prominent educators produced *International Education: A Key Driver of Canada's*

Future Prosperity (DFAIT, 2012). Here too, as the name implies, the Advisory Panel connected

international graduate student targets and emphasized the contribution they make to the Canadian

economy, labour force, and the future prosperity of Canada. A study commissioned by Foreign

Affairs and International Trade Canada (2009a) entitled *DFAIT: Best Practices on Managing the*

Delivery of Canadian Education Marketing, describes international graduate student recruitment

competition among Australia, France, Germany, New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States

and Canada. It acknowledges the previous success Canada has enjoyed, but suggests it was "due

more to the strength of Canadian education rather than the quality of promotion activities" (p.

14). Another report commissioned by DFAIT entitled, *Economic Impact of International*

Education in Canada (2009b), emphasizes the various economic and social contributions made

by cross-border learners, suggesting their contribution exceeded the value of Canadian coal

exports in 2008. These documents see the dramatic growth of international graduate students as

unproblematic, and the result of applying competitive strategy to address the future demographic

issues and labour force requirements of the Canadian economy. Given its consistency and

discursive positioning within the dominant transnational governance discourses of the OECD

and the WB, literature from DFAIT has been reviewed here first. However, there are additional

sources of literature from national or international education associations that begin to challenge the notion of dramatic international student growth as unproblematic, included below.

Survey Says…

There are a wide variety of regional, national and special interest associations of Canadian post-secondary institutions, but literature from the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE), and Universities Canada (*formerly* Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada or AUCC) are the focus here. The AUCC's (2014) *Universities in the World: AUCC Internationalization Survey*, is an update of the 2006 survey, with a response rate of 80% from the 97 Canadian public and private not for profit institutions. Up from 77% in 2006, 82% of respondent universities said internationalization was one of their top five priorities. Respondents report using websites (87%), promotional materials (86%), recruitment fairs (81%), promotional visits (73%), and agents (57%) to recruit international students. In 2012, the top five countries sending students to Canada included China (39,000), France (12,500), the United States (8,100), India (6,550) and Saudi Arabia (5,770), and this amounted to approximately 55% of all international students traveling to Canada for study. The next tier sending international students to Canada (including Iran, South Korea, Nigeria, Pakistan, the United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, and Hong Kong) accounted for approximately 19,500 students or 15% of the total 190,000.

This AUCC (2014) report is aimed at more than just the enrollment of international students, as it explores institutional partnerships abroad, teaching and learning, research collaboration and issues of equity. This report also operates within a knowledge economy framework that sees dramatic growth in numbers of international graduate students as unproblematic. It also notes the limited participation of Canadian learners in study abroad

programs and adds, "students do not seem to favour the parts of the world where universities, business and government are eager to encourage greater ties" (p. 40). In addition to emphasizing the need for further research, this report affirms concepts (e.g., comprehensive internationalization) from the American Council on Education, and the measurement systems needed to evaluate it. The national group most directly involved in gathering data on the experience of international graduate students in Canada is the CBIE, but prior to introducing their latest study, it is worth noting their experience studying international students using web-based surveys. Surveys were completed in 2004 and 2009, and they document financial pressures, difficulty with immigration, and incidents of racism experienced by international students on Canadian university campuses. This literature reports that, while international students in Canada are generally satisfied or very satisfied with their experience, their satisfaction level has eroded in recent years. The authors lament the lack of research on the international student experience in Canada and urge that surveys and other scholarship be conducted in order to achieve greater insight into their experience in Canada.

The CBIE (2014) survey entitled, *A World of Learning: Canada's Performance and Potential in International Education*, received responses from 3,095 international students at 25 member institutions[6] across Canada. International graduate students constituted approximately 40% of all respondents. (This level of response is approximately 1.3% of all international students attending post-secondary institutions in Canada during 2013, as reported by Citizenship and Immigration Canada.) About 28% of respondents had applied to institutions in other countries, and 22% of respondents had attended another institution in Canada prior to the one in which they were currently enrolled. Approximately 55.5% chose the country prior to selecting their particular institution (44.5%) within Canada, and while 50% were *very concerned* with

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[6] Canadian University is a member of the Canadian Bureau for International Education.

costs, 31% were *somewhat concerned* with costs. The majority (88%) of students reported being active on social media, and of those respondents, Facebook (94%) was most popular, and Sina Weibo (45%) and Tencent (42%) were the most popular among East Asian students. When asked how satisfied (overall) they were with all aspects of the Canadian experience, 29% responded *very satisfied*, and 61% responded *satisfied*. When asked if they would recommend Canada, 61% responded *definitely yes*, and 34% responded *probably yes*. Another 82% of respondents consider Canada to be a "welcoming and tolerant society" (p. 41), and 76% agree with the statement: "Canadians are friendly once you get to know them" (p. 41). Given these relatively buoyant survey numbers, consider the following additional findings from interviews related to the social opportunities and inclusion (or not) experienced by international graduate students.

The CBIE (2014) survey also used semi-structured webcam interviews held between June and August 2014, to explore the degree of social integration international graduate students experienced in Canada. In sixteen interviews, 56% of these students did not report having Canadian friends. One-third of those interviewed found it difficult to get to know Canadian students, and half of those students interviewed found it difficult to meet Canadians outside of their learning environment. Participants in these interviews reported meeting Canadians most often within their program of study in the classroom, study groups and group projects. Other common sources of contact with Canadians included interest groups, religious groups, volunteering, employment and sports activities. These students described meeting and forming friendships with other international students, and 46% were participating in international student groups or associations. When international events were planned and publicized on campus, interview participants perceived low participation rates among Canadian students. In the larger sample of survey respondents (3,095), 50% of all respondents indicated their intention to apply

for permanent resident status. Survey results indicating high levels of satisfaction and perceived friendliness in the Canadian experience are difficult to reconcile with a startling lack of social integration emerging from the semi-structured interviews held with international graduate students. It is worth noting that the highly positive feedback came via a relatively anonymous survey, and the lack of social integration emerged in semi-structured interviews. This is an area for further study, but it may flag the difficulty of using large scale survey instruments to advance insight into psycho-social issues of identity, belonging and social inclusion faced by international graduate students.

4. National Interests: Agreement in Principle?

Nations are more than the sum of their economic parts, and achieving the economic aims of transnational governance and national trade is a narrow view of more complex social phenomenon. Writing from a political economy perspective, Marginson (1993) carefully examines and challenges foundational, but assumptive building-blocks of human capital theory and knowledge economy discourses. These discourses are a driving force behind higher education policy in Australia, Canada, other nations in the OECD and elsewhere. For example, in the dominant economic view, pure market principles are uncritically applied to the conduct of education, as illustrated in the growing use of "input method" (p. 104), which includes all identifiable costs, but none of the offsetting outputs and benefits of public education and higher education in public ledgers. More recently, Marginson (2011) described the meteoric rise and market-oriented expansion of higher education services in Australia. Education became that country's fourth largest export in 2009, before the reductions in quality, migration scams, violence against Asian students, and migration resistance brought it all down (ACPET, 2009; DFAIT, 2009a; 2012). Becker's (1993; 2006) human capital theory positions education as an

individual investment, where instrumental education is rewarded within a knowledge economy. From this perspective, cross-border learners are consumers who choose Canadian universities because they will yield a high rate of return. In Canada, a report from the AUCC (2011) suggests that degrees generally lead to higher income, less labour disruptions, and shorter low wage periods, but care needs to be taken in making broad assumptions about individual benefits accruing from a university degree. This narrow, but widely accepted discursive framework positions education as a private good, and may not satisfactorily address the larger mandate of serving the public good at publicly funded universities in Canada.

There is a strong tradition of collective and cooperative education values in the history of Canadian education policy (Manzer, 1994), and a discourse competing with the dominant view holds out a more cooperative model of internationalization. This discourse, which emphasizes the public good, suggests international and intercultural alliances enrich learner experiences, and produce leaders able to work across international borders in a globalized world (ACCC, 2010; Devine, Green & McDowell, 2010; Honigsfeld, 2009; Nwufo, 2008). The Association of Canadian Deans of Education (2014) note in the *Accord on the Internationalization of Education* that benefits to internationalization include the (1) enrichment of learner experiences, (2) increased potential for mutual understanding and interdependence, (3) reciprocity, (4) more open pedagogy, and (5) the potential to guide positive system change. Just as education as a private good is a feature of knowledge economy discourse, notions of education as a public good inspire some citizens to support universities, irrespective of whether they see a direct benefit or not.

Individual international graduate students applying to Canadian University may be thought of as one key component of internationalization, but universities play a great variety of other roles in multilateral, institutional linkages and development assistance projects. In

exploring the ethical partnership principles from the Canadian Council for International

Cooperation (CCIC), Shultz (2013) pointed out university partnerships may extend or even

exacerbate power differentials operating between center-periphery institutions. She advocates for

an ethical international space of engagement for universities because these international

partnerships may operate in an ethical blind spot, where international partners may work together

in "mute juxtaposition" (p. 76). This argument is made more compelling because Shultz

integrates indigenous scholars such as Ermine (2007), individuals able to bear witness to the high

cost of agreements formed in the absence of an ethical space of engagement. For those who

believe public education ought to advance equity for all, it is a point well made. This is an

important area for future research, and Canadian universities need look no further than the

international graduate students in their own institutions if they seek an impetus to act within

CCIC ethical guidelines and citizenship values.

5. Institutional Level: Economic Survival

This section describes how ranking and self-representation work in discursive

conjunction to shape the contemporary university in Canada, but first I begin with a brief

description of the funding pressures facing these public institutions. Writing from an American

context, but describing a larger trend, Peters (2007) describes how "a rising demand for post-

secondary education, together with cuts in levels of State appropriation, has forced universities to

rely increasingly on tuition fees and to look for alternative sources of revenue to ensure

economic survival" (p. 131). In the context of shrinking government revenues, student fees are of

growing importance to Canadian post-secondary institutions, as indicated on the next page in

Table 3.1. Universities are looking to student fees to make up an increasing proportion of annual

budgets. Although domestic tuition fees in Canada are variable across provincial governments

they are subject to domestic electoral pressures, whereas differential fees are a virtually

unregulated source of highly sought after revenue, the average tuition fee paid was $13,628

Canadian dollars. This amount follows a pattern over the last five years of differential fees being

set at least double the tuition fees for domestic students. International graduate students at

Canadian University and universities across Canada have been organized and outspoken about

this growing dependence upon differential fees.

Table 3.1

University Revenue Sources: Percentage of Annual Budget (Custom CANSIM Table 477-0106)

	2005/2006	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
Government Revenues	53.1	54.2	53.7	51	48.9
All Student Fees	20	21.5	23.5	24.1	24.7

Conforming Culture

Canadian University, like many other universities inside and outside of Canada, is locked

into an increasingly comparative and conforming culture of quantifiable performances (Apple,

2006; Barnett & Standish, 2002; Bernstein, 2006; Giroux, 2007; 2008; 2014; Hartmann, 2007;

Martens, 2007; Peters, 2007; Scherrer, 2007). Performance measures are intended to

ideologically steer universities toward financial health, prestige and advancement among peer

institutions. The larger politics of transnational governance and quantification feed upon the

assumptive prestige of commercialization opportunities that define *real* science within the

knowledge economy of the competition state, and leave little room for indigenous, traditional or

non-western knowledge. In such an environment, leadership becomes dependent upon rising

within institutional rankings among peer institutions to attract the unregulated differential fees

needed to replace government revenues. The net effect of these systems is to homogenize and

standardize universities in ways that are at odds with the unique circumstances, histories and organic strengths which propel universities forward, and lead them to distinguish themselves in a great variety of ways.

Wright (2014) provides an insightful example of the cross-threading of purpose that can occur in her study of Danish universities, entitled, *Knowledge that Counts: Points Systems and the Governance of Danish Universities*. In alignment with transnational governance (i.e., OECD, WB) organizations and priorities discussed earlier, and as espoused in the European Union (EU), and the World Economic Forum (WEF), the Danish government argued a global knowledge economy was inevitable and the Danish standard of living depended upon a swift and capable response from Danish universities. "Each country's economic survival, they maintained, lay in its ability to generate a highly skilled workforce capable of developing new knowledge and transferring it quickly into innovative products" (p. 298). This was the impetus, rationale or pretext that required transforming what had been democratic institutions into enterprising organizations and faculty that could go "from idea to invoice" (p. 298). In this context, the goal was to "find a single technical measure that would operate on all three scales at once and that would simultaneously order the competitive state, the enterprising organization and the 'responsibilized' [sic] individual according to the government's ideological and political vision" (p. 295). This research follows the collision between a mantra of markets in transnational governance and the everyday experience of those (i.e., administrative, technical, faculty) who do the work of Danish universities. Although there were exceptions, the instrumental rationality and continuous expansion mandate was largely discredited in the Danish context. The point system worked against the type of engagement and professional judgement that internally motivated faculty and other knowledge workers apply in their everyday work contexts.

University ranking systems can work in much the same way as the Danish point system when they work to advance a particular and exclusive model of a university in service to the "competition state" (Marginson & Pusser, 2013, p. 562). Normalizing relations based upon hierarchy and competition serve to justify and legitimate growing economic inequalities between nations and universities, an important ideological function if a neoliberal world view is to be widely accepted. Institutional ranking and comparison produces isomorphic responses among institutions, seen both within their positional behaviour within ordinal ranking and as a response to outside stimulus (DiMaggio & Powell, 2007). For emphasis then, the utility of these ranking systems (e.g., Times Higher Education World University Rankings, QS World University Rankings) may be understood by their indirect functions of promoting (1) a particular model of what a university ought to be, (2) policing Canadian universities wishing to improve their ranking, and (3) legitimating and justifying inequalities through a neoliberal worldview. Learners read about the very institutions that are ranking them as individuals amongst their peers—being ranked themselves. This provides a conceptual normalcy, consistency and rationalization for the competitive frame to apply. Learners are socialized early (e.g., grades, sports, chess club) to see competition as normal and natural within Canadian educational institutions. Cross-border learners may bring their own expectations of comparison and competition with them, and grading may appear as the logical extension of both ranking schemes and a competitive admissions policy at Canadian University.

Brown and Tannock (2009) suggested the assertion and discursive production of a talent war in higher education positions universities as an instrument of international economic competitiveness. This further enmeshes the contemporary university in the task of normalizing and justifying a neoliberal worldview that embraces KE and HCT (Tannock, 2008; 2013). In

addition to the institution itself having the status of a regional economic development project as described by Tannock (2009) in Wales, it is also responsible for promoting knowledge economy discourse. Canadian universities advance national priorities by working to fulfill state objectives related to immigration and economic development (i.e., technology and innovation), and this has the effect of narrowing the purposes of education under the neoliberal mantra of efficiency. Still, the projection of a discursive war for talent continues at universities in Canada, and this is a means of legitimizing and normalizing policy within organizations (e.g., competitive admissions policy) that are consistent with a neoliberal worldview.

Self-Representation

Although the scholarship discussed above is not about universities in Canada, it is indicative of the dilemma Canadian and other nations' universities and post-secondary institutions find themselves in as they become internationally active. Publishing from Sweden, Stier (2004) differentiates and compares three distinct ideological approaches to internationalization in European education. While suggesting that (1) idealism, (2) instrumentalism and (3) educationalism are distinct categories of internationalization with unique visions, goals and strategies, Stier describes a prevailing and ongoing contestation regarding internationalization policy. He notes a duality in the outlook of administration and faculty, and the heterogeneity of individual belief systems within departments and faculties that ultimately defines work unit priorities and what gets done. In relation to internationalization at the university level, these findings suggest that institutional ambiguities associated with processes of internationalization are not limited to Canadian University and other universities in Canada.

Stier and Börjesson (2010) included 31 universities from 12 countries across the European Union (EU) in a study to explore how universities discursively construct themselves

using a variety of self-representation and rhetorical technologies, such as origin narratives and mission statements. This study categorizes internationalized universities in five ideal and overlapping categories, including catalyst, magnet, success story, moral stronghold, and melting pot. The authors found that universities facing ideological dilemmas often had conflicting self-representations. In one example, a university is presented as independent and useful for society, as working both locally and globally, and as looking to the future while being traditional in perspective. Such representations reflect divergent ideologies that compete for operational dominance. While international linkages may promote information exchange, the authors suggest that universities attach more priority and importance to their role of visibly transmitting information so they can be seen as the disseminators of knowledge amongst peers. The authors conclude by indicating university administrators may choose revenue, visibility and competitiveness above dialogue, debate and inclusion. The duality between administrators and faculty, the role of individuals who enact policy, and the need for political self-representation among stakeholders suggest a contemporary university—such as Canadian University—has a more political role than that suggested by its neutral institutional facade. In addition, this study also illustrates the difficulties of representing complex organizations such as the de-centralized contemporary university in the European Union or Canada, as a unitary corporate entity.

6. Learner Level: Deficient or Expert?

The first-person voice of international graduate students in Canada is largely missing from the literature, and this may result in part from the way relations are structured between universities in Canada and non-center universities (Abdi & Shultz, 2008; Freire, 1994; 1998; Mignolo, 2010; Sankara, 2007). The voices of international graduate students in Canada are a product of the everyday social origins in which they are articulated, or not, and the local values,

traditions and politics of what constitutes knowledge. For example, human capital theory and knowledge economy discourse place a higher value on technology, innovation and learning for the economy than traditional forms of knowledge and wisdom (Ermine, 2007; Lavallée, 2009; Little Bear, 2000; Longino, 2002; Mander & Tauli-Corpuz, 2006; Swanson, 2007). Indigenous and traditional knowledge forms may be welcomed within Canadian universities, but they do not escape the politics of knowledge and knowledge hierarchies that are also present within local settings. So too, individual international graduate students are said to be critically important to Canada and the future prosperity of all Canadians (DFAIT, 2012; DFATD, 2014), yet little is written by or about cross-border learners in Canada.

Within the dominant economic discourse, international graduate students are an undifferentiated and abstracted group labouring under the continuing mythos of an *ideal*, and this brings shame and silence to those who do not thrive (Fredeen, 2013). In her research on the academic experiences of English as Additional Language (EAL) students, Fredeen focused on how their subjective experiences were an effect of specific higher education internationalization practices and policy discourses at a Canadian university. She documents the silences which may surround international students, and observes how they may fear "being seen as needy, not getting it, a problem, stupid, dependent, and not successful" (p. 259). Cross-border learners are assessed on deficits in relation to what an ideal international graduate student could be, and an example of this surfaces when multilingual students who are transitioning into local English language use become "visible as deficient English users rather than as expert bilingual or multilingual users of language" (p. 161). In his extensive interviews with international students in the Australian context, Marginson (2014) described international student reaction to this deficit frame as "galling" (p. 9). Still, the persistence of assessing cross-border learners within

such a frame is highly resistant to change. In her study, Fredeen (2013) comments that an idealized discursive *student-consumer* subjectivity operating at the Canadian university in her study depicts the international student as one who is becoming knowledgeable, open, skilled, mobile and competitive in preparing to be a global citizen. This construction of cross-border learners fits snugly with discourses related to human capital theory, knowledge economy and the competition state as introduced by Brown and Tannock (2009).

The following is a review of articles concerned with the social conditions and policy formulation related to international students in Canada. Trilokekar (2010) historicized the interaction between Canadian official development assistance and foreign policy as it relates to Canada's ability to attract international students. The author argues that Canada is well served by enhancing rather than narrowing a traditionally collaborative approach to international relations. In a post-secondary education policy case study across three provinces, Fisher, Rubenson, Jones and Shanahan (2009) highlight the implications of a federal policy priority centering on economic interests, while social welfare and education remain the purview of provinces. While not about international student policy, this article applies the concept of *academic capitalism* and may support policy analysis related to international students. Chen (2007) offers a largely technocratic model focusing on return on investment to describe why East-Asian students choose Canadian graduate schools. Crosby (2010) reports on the problem of racism on Canadian campuses, and documents the institutional resistance to acknowledging or taking steps to deal effectively with it. This article identifies economic stratification as an institutional response to international students, and urges a restructuring of institutional priorities to address international student needs based on diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Beck's (2008) doctoral dissertation describes the particular issues of learning faced by undergraduate and graduate students at a university in Western Canada. This qualitative research centers the experience of international students, and finds the social conditions of learning to be pivotal in achieving learner outcomes. For example, quotations from international students describe the difficulties of learning English, and the low self-esteem that can result when strong academic abilities are judged exclusively on an ability to express oneself in English. This work is also concerned with why students chose to study in Canada and provides insight into their social conditions and experiences. It is explicit in describing how economic priorities are over-shadowing the importance of learner outcomes for some international students.

Guo and Chase (2011) observe that, while international graduate students play an important role in producing and disseminating knowledge, little is known about how they are adjusting to the academic community in Canada. They investigate a course in British Columbia designed to help international graduate teaching assistants integrate into the Canadian academic environment. In response to a survey, international students reported feelings of alienation, isolation and low self-esteem. In the second part of the survey taken after the course, these students reported "feelings of belonging: being valued as a person with knowledge; and being able to communicate effectively, creatively, and with confidence" (p. 316). In addition to the apparent success of the course, this article contributes to the literature by positioning the participation of international students away from their economic contributions, and towards their support and social needs. It is also worth noting that further research of both international and non-international student experiences will aid in determining to what extent alienation, isolation and low self-esteem are symptomatic of the graduate student experience or unique to the international graduate student experience.

Li, DiPetta and Woloshyn (2012) conducted a qualitative study on why Chinese students chose Canada for their Master of Education degree, and they report on the experience of these students. Individual interviews were conducted with nine students in the Mandarin language during February of 2009. The researchers report candid comments about why the students chose Canada, and criteria included quality, cost, safety and work or immigration opportunities. This article cites a Canadian Bureau of International Education study stating that 50% of international students plan to stay in Canada after they have completed their studies. While it provides fascinating glimpses into the destination selection process, the article stops short of revealing important elements related to the experience of studying in Canada.

A word on counselling and support services for international graduate students is also included here because in the absence of first person accounts, they are among the few groups addressing this group directly. Arthur (1997) contributes a thoughtful perspective on how counselling services on a university campus in Western Canada have not been responsive to the diverse needs and cultural norms of international students. This author and others (Kenyon, Frohard-Dourlent & Roth, 2012) identify a homogenizing tendency within the provision of campus services, and a propensity to view culturally diverse groups as within a single uniform category. While acknowledging the heuristic utility of culture shock models, Arthur (1997) emphasizes the need to assess the specific concerns identified by international students and the stress and anxiety that may result from identity diffusion and role conflict. This article includes a variety of practical advice on how counsellors can bring their practices out of their offices and make them more culturally accessible on campus. Everall (2013) follows with a report that includes the unique characteristics and requirements (e.g., social isolation, low help-seeking rates) of international student service and counselling provision.

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Self-Formation

In tension with the rational actor theory that underpins economic models, Marginson (2014) puts forward the notion that international students engage in a deliberate project of self-formation, where plural identities are dynamically formed in dialogic interaction with the host-culture. In this long overdue reconceptualization, Marginson (2014) challenges the presumption that "deficient" international students need to "adjust" (p. 8) to host country norms. He also challenges the widely accepted view of the university as sole arbiter of knowledge that has value, and creates room for the possibility that self-directed learning and self-knowledge may have legitimacy. In this view of identity formation, the possibility exists that universities may choose teaching and learning techniques that will support the emerging identities of international students. Where the discursive construction of international students in economic models abstract and objectify these learners, self-formation accommodates the unique histories, characteristics and trajectories of these learners. When international graduate students are conceptualised as autonomous and self-motivated learners, as Marginson would have us do, the rational choice theory so commonly assumed within HCT, KE, and economic discourses becomes a much less satisfactory way to think about cross-border learners.

Marginson (1993; 2011; 2014) is also prescient in his observation that while a trend toward education as a private good (e.g., human capital theory) may enjoy discursive and ideological favour today, it also makes universities as institutions vulnerable. As universities increasingly transform into an aggregation of private interests or private goods, they lose their claim to legitimacy and public support. The university is increasingly caught in a rankings-based "status-incentive trap" (p. 429), where self-representation and posturing among universities displaces a public good. Hazelkorn (2008) also notes the increasing influence of university

ranking schemes and their conformist impact on policy makers. In the Canadian context and perhaps in others, where universities play a role in articulating and reflecting the regional aspirations of a citizenry within confederation, the conformist pressures induced by a status-incentive trap may have detrimental effects on community-based initiatives and projects. In addition, ranking systems lack real vision, offering only a short-term focus and policy horizon based upon the quantifiable. For example, they do not provide for *soft power* as described by Trilokekar (2010), a longer term and more optimistic view of higher education that is seen as part of the cultural, economic and political bridges that Canada's diplomatic, defence and development assistance efforts aim to build. This is a missed opportunity, and as Marginson observes, it speaks to the vulnerability of institutions as public support for universities in Canada is diminished.

Summary

This chapter began by illustrating how multilateral organizations use language, text, software, tests and a variety of other standardizing mechanisms to coordinate translocal relations operating through discourse. This is transnational governance that is achieved by organizations such as the OECD and WB, and illustrated in Kerr's (2014) study of the OnSIS system showing how the everyday classroom work of educators could be traced-up through the ministry of education in Ontario. A similar trail could be traced up and through each province in a system for collecting and feeding each set of provincial statistical data into a national statistical hub called PIECE, a statistical program designed to attend CMEC's obligation to represent Canadian education within the OECD's annual international *Education at a Glance* program. At the same time, it was possible to see how OECD member countries were important members of the multilateral bank system, lending almost $150 billion (USD) to other countries in 2011. In the

same year, those banks awarded $146,512,425 million (USD) worth of contracts to Canadian companies, and I suggested the discretionary power to lend and award contracts is an important way for these organizations to extend informal authorities. Collectively, this literature provides a foundation for later claims (Chapter Seven) about how the local work of applying at Canadian University can be traced up and through standardizing mechanisms (i.e. TOEFL, IELTS), provincial and federal government priorities, and multilateral organizations. While it was important to begin in the transnational governance literature, there are substantive national interests weighing on universities in Canada.

At the national level, the rise of NPM as outlined by Griffith and Smith (2014) was described as a series of moves reforming the public sector in general, and providing a discursive background in which universities in Canada and elsewhere must operate. As an example of NPM in the everyday, Darville (2014) illustrated how the human endeavour to acquire literacy could be socially organized as personal deficit, and subsumed as a labour force issue within the competition state. Following the vision for national governments within higher education internationalization policy from the OECD, I reviewed Canada's relatively new international education strategy, major surveys from Universities Canada and the Canadian Bureau for International Education and related literature. This literature generally supported the widely held view that international graduate students were strategically important for the continuing economic health of Canadian post-secondary institutions. In tension with the survey responses, a small, but perhaps significant level of social isolation surfaced during interviews with international graduate students, and at minimum this discrepancy in the literature suggests it would be prudent to consider whether dramatic growth is as unproblematic as much of the literature currently suggests. This literature provides a foundation for later claims, where I

suggest fiscal priorities and knowledge associated with NPM may displace educational knowledge and priorities at Canadian University.

Again at the national level, a more independent body of literature introduced comment and critique of established internationalization policy in Canada and elsewhere. Leading this group was Marginson, Wright, Shultz, and the Association of Canadian Deans of Education (ACDE). Marginson (2014) viewed the starting assumptions and discursive portrayal of international graduate students in deficit frame as being so deeply entrenched, a project of self-formation was difficult for many to acknowledge. Wright (2014) provided an insightful window into the experience of Danish universities as lofty transnational governance principles and NPM measures crashed head-on into the social complexity of democratic institutions being performed by internally motivated individuals. Working from the partnership principles of the CCIC, Shultz (2013) argued that other forms of internationalization at Canadian universities—including partnership agreements—ought to redress, rather than further consolidate power differentials between universities. I also introduced the ACDE (2014) *Accord on the Internationalization of Education*, which calls for universities to enact a public good through ethical internationalization. This literature asks the reader to look behind the curtain of tidy discourse and consider questions that are important to this study, for example, is the dramatic growth of international students unproblematic, especially within the context of NPM and performative accountability? This literature illustrates how independent comment and critique (i.e., Brown & Tannock, Fredeen, Marginson) operating outside of the discursive order, show how narrow and unsatisfactory discourse is when tasked with addressing the social complexity in which Canadian University must operate.

At the institutional level, it is possible to see in the figures provided by Statistics Canada, the financial pressures on universities in Canada and elsewhere, as public financial support decreases steadily each year. As critical as the funding shortfalls are, global competition among universities may be equally detrimental to their long-term standing as institutional posturing and competition use up scarce resources. These ranking systems (e.g., Times Higher Education World University Rankings, QS World University Rankings) are *one-size-fits-all* notions of what a university ought to be, and they diminish the authentic origins and distinctive capacities of universities in Canada and elsewhere. This literature positions universities within the discursive frame of the competition state striving to survive financially in a NPM environment. Stier and Börjesson (2010) illustrate the rhetorical contortions that universities in Europe must do to integrate stakeholders, and I suggest their research is highly applicable to the difficult task universities in Canada have when presenting themselves to seemingly incommensurable stakeholder groups. Having introduced this literature, I now turn our attention to the research methods used for this study in the following chapter.

Chapter Four: Methods

This chapter provides an overview of the research framework, including texts, mapping and interviews that were used to conduct this study. Each data collection method is intended to add a new angle into Canadian University, and in the case of mapping and interviews, they build on one another to show how the work of applying happens. In this study, the mediating text of the application is centrally important, and it was accessed online through the webpage of Canadian University. This study is also concerned with the literature reviewed in Chapter Three, and in addition, other documents or texts unique to Canadian University that will be introduced later. Mapping is used within this study to uncover the work international graduate students do to apply in relation to the formal institutional process, and in this way explore how the institutional process of applying is enacted in a great variety of countries around the world. The international graduate students who participate in this research are interviewed as experts on the work they did to apply, and a subsequent round of interviews was held with insiders to the internationalization process. The interviews were being conducted in the summer and early fall of 2013, a time of reduction in government support for Canadian University and other universities in the province and across Canada, and at a time when differential fees were receiving attention in the campus, provincial and national media.

This chapter is divided into six sections. The first is an overview of the research framework guiding the collection of data. The second is a review of how text works within this study. A third section is on mapping and that is divided into subsections on institutional and international graduate student perspectives. A fourth section is on interviews, containing subsections on both international graduate students and institutional insiders. A fifth section

provides an overview of research participant recruitment. A sixth and final section covers

summary topics related to ethics, limitations, and researcher location.

Research Framework

These research methods work together and build upon one another in a framework

consisting of five steps, see Figure 4.1, *Five Recursive Steps to Analysis*, below. In the first step,

review of texts, literature related to transnational governance and the discursive environment in

which Canadian University operates is reviewed. There is an additional and subsequent step that

is not part of a conventional literature review, and this requires reviewing unique documents that

produce, construct and represent international graduate students locally within Canadian

University. In step two, a map of the institutional process of applying is produced. Interviews

with the international graduate students take place in step three, and that is used to produce a

map of the work of applying which is represented by step four. The maps are brought together,

and the differences between them are indicative of what is visible to the institution and what is

not. The fifth step consists of interviews with insiders to the internationalization process, or key

informants, as illustrated below.

Figure 4.1: Five Recursive Steps to Analysis
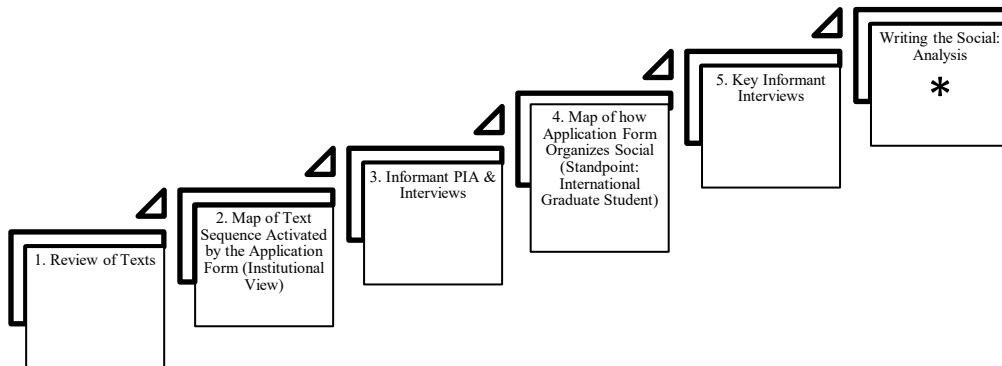
There are practical reasons for delimiting the parameters of any study. For example in this study, the textually mediated process of applying at Canadian University is at the forefront of this study, but that also means the study permit application process that inextricably links Immigration, Refugee, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to the university is not. Although the IRCC application receives peripheral attention in this study as it relates to the administrative processes of applying, the application for campus housing does not. In the complex social environments and technology-intensive administrative systems in which Canadian University operates, these are not isolated processes. Still, the pragmatic need of the researcher to identify what is possible to include in any particular project is a product of the human systems (i.e., political, economic, social) which circulate around it, and are not a property of the phenomenon itself. In this study then, extricating the work of applying at Canadian University is a deliberate part of what the researcher must do.

2. Review of Texts

Text is an active organizer of consciousness and social relations, it is an important conduit for language, discourse, and the ideological codes to be found in language. Text in this usage includes not just words, but symbols or images which can increasingly operate through online software and systems for specialized purposes, such as applying as an international graduate student to Canadian University. Within IE, the replicability and distributive qualities of text are an important focus of ethnographic enquiry, and in this study the mediating text of the application is explored as it projects an organizing consciousness across vast distances. Canadian University operates within its own discursive environment where transnational, national and provincial bodies, as well as peer universities across Canada, are constantly reading, processing and generating a great variety of discursive messaging from stakeholders. This discursive

landscape in which Canadian University resides is constituted in part by the literature reviewed in Chapter Three. Another inter-connected, and semi-permeable sphere includes the institutional and professional discourses or genres of the university that are used internally. These internal texts, documents and genres are reviewed later, but for now I suggest they include objectifying language or mechanisms that may generalize or objectify, or discursively separate and reinforce a hierarchy of knowledge at work within the institution. Together, the discursive landscape and the internal professional discourses, provide a foundation within IE on which to explore ruling relations at Canadian University.

3. Mapping

In this study, the aim of mapping is to first understand, and then transcend the presumptive institutional discourse by contrasting it with a map of the work of applying, and then bringing the two maps together in one illustration to show how applying happens. Mapping aids in this study because "ruling relations form a complex field of coordinated activities, based in technologies of print and increasingly in computer technologies" (Smith, 2004, p. 79). This "'mapping' in research design means anticipating 'the lay of the land' in a particular research site for the purposes of 'exposure' and 'intertextuality'" (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012, p. 84). First, I trace the application process from the perspective of Canadian University (intertextual), and propose it as a series of mediating texts and regulatory frames surrounded by institutional discourse (Smith, 2005). A second purpose is to help visualize (for exposure) the borders of the institutional application process, so that additional requirements—not included within the formal application process—but necessary for acceptance, might be identified. The differences and tensions between these two perspectives are of direct interest to the institutional ethnographer, both in terms of how accountabilities and visibilities are organized, but also how and where this

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work takes place. Much of the work of applying may take place outside of Canadian University, but it is still work the institution designs and intends to have done, and so, just as Sinding (2014) uncovered the role of cancer patients in their own treatment, applying is understood through the applicant's interaction with the institution. It is the comparative differences between these two perspectives that will guide the introduction of interview data in Chapter Six.

Institutional Perspective

An aim of mapping the institutional perspective is to establish a point of reference and contrast in relation to the international graduate student standpoint. Within IE, relations of ruling are embedded within institutions and so the institution may "transcend local particularities but at the same time exists only in them" (Smith, 1987, p. 108). The power embedded in the coordinating and concerting actions of any university tend to be obscured as institutional discourses "create relations between subjects appearing as a body of knowledge existing in its own right" (Smith, 1987, p. 214). Canadian University is the focus in this study, but it is worth remembering that discursive conditions and categories of institutional discourse may be held in common with peer institutions in the same province, region of the country, or nation as a whole and beyond. Within this study then, insight into the institutional perspective at Canadian University may surface in part as it relates to a broader discursive network of peer universities in Canada and elsewhere.

International Graduate Student Standpoint

Mapping from the international graduate student standpoint uncovers that work which may or may not be accountable within the formal Canadian University application process, but which nevertheless is necessary for the application to be submitted. Placing the international graduate student standpoint in tension with the institutional perspective is to graphically illustrate

differences, and part of isolating the accountable and non-accountable work necessary to submit an application. From the perspective of an international graduate student, an example of this work might be contacting an institution you previously attended, and asking individual contacts (e.g., administrators, professors) to construct a record of your academic achievement in relation to your peers during your enrolment. This type of work is necessary when applying from countries and educational systems that do not share notions of grading, transcripts and other academic documentation. In order to complete an application, those applying may adopt and adapt culturally meaningful equivalencies from their home culture and work to construct an artifact of sufficient *facticity* that it is able to structure the socially organized practices or discourse which surround it (Smith, 1990). The additional work of document conversion, translation and notarizing academic records is a way for the applicant to ensure the Canadian institution recognizes them (e.g., transcript, reference letters, and statement of intent) within institutional discourse. This is but one example of work that may be necessary for acceptance, but which may not be visible or accountable within the formal process of applying, and this study aims to surface this work through mapping.

4. Interviews

Two distinctive types of interviews were conducted during this research; the first type consisted of interviews held with international graduate students (informants) and a second set was held with insiders to the internationalization process (key informants) at Canadian University. These interviews took place in the context of larger political issues and budgetary cutbacks taking place at the university in 2013-2014. In a climate where austerity and fiscal rectitude were being articulated by senior institutional leadership, and the growing dissatisfaction of international student associations culminated in an open letter to the Board of Governors

suggesting the university was willing to "ruin a good relationship between international students" and the university by initiating precipitously high fee increases for international students (December 13, 2013). This open letter was signed by twelve concerned associations and included some of the larger and better organized international student groups on campus. This letter re-emphasized the sensitive political climate on campus regarding international graduate students, and the need to use abundant ethical care if I chose to use direct quotations from informants or key informants.

International Graduate Students

Interviews were conducted with informants (international graduate students) from China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Mexico, Russia, Tanzania, Turkey, and the United States from June to September in 2013. One important purpose of these semi-structured interviews was to understand, from the international graduate student standpoint, how and what work was required to submit the application form. The transcripts from these interviews were—I believe—among the most persuasive and compelling data generated in this study. Each individual who agreed to participate contributed in unique ways to my understandings of the work of applying, and specifically, the additional work required to undertake graduate studies outside of one's country of origin. The individuals who took part were highly articulate and thoughtful individuals who shared deeply personal stories that alternated between frustration, resilience, alienation, engagement and back again. Depending upon the political culture in the country of origin, the characteristics of the individual and the level of rapport, certain informants spoke more freely than others about difficult aspects of completing the application form. The interview package included (1) an interview procedures sheet, (2) a large font interview question sheet, (3) a

consent form, and (4) a thank-you note with a $10 gift card enclosed; informant interview procedures are attached as Appendix A.

One interview was held with each informant ranging from 50 to 70 minutes. The diversity of informants (e.g., linguistically, culturally) was reinforced by the length of time they had already been working in their respective graduate programs, and it is worth noting that two of the individuals applied from countries other than their country of origin. In at least four cases, more than two years had passed since the informant had completed the application form. The pre-interview activity (PIA) and illustrated application form contributed to the recollection of interview participants and the general success of these interviews (Ellis, 1998). It is Appendix B. Prior to the interview, informants were sent a collection of screen captures from the web-based application process and they were asked to complete the following statement: Applying to attend this Canadian university was like _____. In all but three cases, the informants prepared a response, and in one case an informant reflected upon their written answer, and revised it in a new direction at the end of the interview. As hoped, the PIA activated memories, reinforced the role of the informant as expert on their own experience of applying, and helped to create enough trust for a conversation with depth to take place. The purpose of the IE interview differs from that of qualitative interviews concerned with developing deep understandings of informant perception and experience. Open-ended questions did yield rich and insightful narratives based on personal experience (Mishler, 1986). However, the goal of these interviews was to (1) uncover or trace the work of application, (2) explore expectations about living, studying and possibly working in Canada, and (3) discover how or why this informant was able to do the work of applying. Perhaps because the focus of these interviews was consistent, clear,

and had deep personal meaning to the international graduate student, these were a rich source of data for this study.

Institutional Insiders

The interviews with institutional insiders (key informants) took place on campus during the early fall of 2013. These interviews were conducted with *insiders* to the internationalization process at Canadian University, a highly diverse group of professionals with responsibilities that ranged from navigating relatively unchartered international waters, working with international graduate students that were struggling, or working in highly specified capacities (e.g., central/faculty recruitment). Interviewing a diverse group of key informants was a necessary part of addressing some of the issues (e.g., differential fees, international student enrolment, budget cutbacks, social isolation) that surfaced during the previous stages of research, particularly the graduate student interviews. This secondary set of interviews is an element of flexibility readily seen in other IE designs, and within IE as part of an emergent research direction (Campbell & Gregor, 2004; Smith, 1987; 2005). I am grateful to the key informants who took time to speak with me. Although they yielded important insights on complex issues, these interviews were more challenging in part because of anxiety expressed about uncertainty over jobs or cherished projects, and other interruptions during office meetings. At the same time, participants were an exceptionally knowledgeable and experienced group of individuals who acted as a sounding board, offering insight and experience on their own interactions with internationalization issues, sometimes from the frontline.

Preparation for interviews with the key informants was also a different process than with the international graduate students. Perhaps because of the diverse range of professionals on campus that were represented, and because of my interest in having my own doubts, concerns,

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and questions dealt with, I prepared a separate interview questionnaire for each key informant interview (Appendix C). I prepared more fully for these interviews by reading what I could find publicly available on websites and public domain documents related to the key informant's role within internationalization at the institution. This ranged from reading descriptions of international projects and programs or previous annual reports in certain instances, to reading parts of the doctoral dissertation of a key informant in another. The purpose of these interviews was to refine my own understanding of the graduate student application process and related issues.

Key informants were intensely involved in particular aspects of internationalization at the institution; they included an instructor who taught in a bridging program for international students, two senior administrators from the registrar's office, a senior manager in the international student office, and two international student recruitment specialists, one from the department, and another from central administration. In addition, an assistant dean, a director and a manager responsible for international programs were interviewed, as well as a director responsible for writing and providing other program supports to international graduate students. At times, rather than clarifying certain issues such as differential tuition fees, these individuals often added layers of complexity. In three and perhaps more instances, the key informants offered new ways of thinking about the institution and internationalization that had a significant effect on my thinking about certain issues within the study. Among others, these included (1) institutional reforms related to student services, (2) impact of recruitment pressure on admission standards, and (3) hope for this institution because of the exceptional and strong individuals who work within it. It is also worth noting that during this series of interviews, much of the discussion

was focused on selected issues (e.g., differential fees) that were prominently reflected in popular media on and around campus at the time.

Recruitment of participants

Recruiting international graduate students to be informants in this study was much more difficult than I anticipated. In my plan for the recruitment of informants, I proposed (1) posting to the international student network electronic list service, (2) posting an invitation where informants may congregate on campus, and (3) using snowball sampling where informants may assist and support the recruitment of other informants. The list service was also a useful listening post as the issues, practical challenges and problems (e.g., housing, transport, social isolation) of international students became apparent in myriad ways. When my proposed post on the electronic list serve did not receive approval, I posted ads in multiple locations within 15 separate buildings on campus. Although buildings were chosen because I thought they may be high traffic areas for international students, this poster blitz failed to attract informants, albeit with one exception. Finally, by making a personal appeal to a class with a large number of international graduate students, I was able to find additional informants to complete this phase of the research.

Finding insiders to the internationalization process who would agree to be interviewed was also difficult, but with e-introductions and recommendations from academic committee members I was able to get interviews with insiders to the internationalization process. Only two out of ten of these key informants agreed to be recorded during these interviews, which necessarily impacted the quality of data. A high level of media interest in differential fees and international student advocacy related to these fees produced a sense of caution on the part of some key informants. Cutbacks to university funding during this same period were also receiving

prominent media coverage at this time. While each interview was uniquely helpful and informative, the backgrounds of these individuals tended to be diverse and highly specialized.

5. Ethics

The challenge of conducting research with international graduate students at Canadian University required an ethic of care towards these informants. An overview of ethical considerations, and a sample invitation and consent letter are attached as Appendix D–F (Ellis, 1998). Participation in this research by informants and key informants was a voluntary activity, and they were able to withdraw their participation at any time. I established informed written consent and procedures in accordance with those commitments made to the Research Ethics Office under approved ethics application Pro00036999.

Limitations

There are substantive practical (e.g., time, resources) reasons for limiting the parameters of any study completed in a doctoral program. Still, this particular configuration of methods attaches reasonable limits to the research and produces a cohering and commensurate body of data presented in the chapters that follow.

Delimitations

Canadian University and other universities in Canada operate within federal and provincial legislation that protects privacy, confidentiality and access to information that is collected from individuals under the auspices of their educational function. While presumably intended to protect individuals, these protections might also be used to shield institutional operations from public scrutiny, and I did not explore related precedents or case law. In addition, the sole use of English in the conduct of interviews, observation and text analyses was practical, but may have reinforced social barriers originating in notions of linguistic capital, and unequal

relations of power within the international community (Altbach, 1998; 2013; Bourdieu, 1991; 2006; Peters, 2007). This study balanced doctoral program requirements with a research scope and sample size that was achievable within given constraints.

Trustworthiness

Within IE, the researcher is an instrument of the research, and where possible operates with transparency and openness so the reader may assess the contribution of the research. Packer and Addison (1989) suggested that (1) coherence, (2) relationship to external evidence, (3) quality of informant interpretation, (4) consensus among inquirers and (5) utility for bridging into future understandings are appropriate criteria for the evaluation of interpretive accounts found in qualitative research. Ellis (1998) provided evaluative questions that may be asked of an interpretive account, with the primary question being: Has our understanding of the issue that motivated this inquiry advanced? Questions related to trustworthiness include asking if the interpretive account was plausible, does it fit with other knowledge of the phenomena, and can it change practice? In addition, evaluative questions ask if the researcher's understanding has been transformed, has a solution been uncovered, and what new research possibilities have been opened by this inquiry? Qualitative research is immersed within social complexity and must use broader and more ambiguous criterion and questions than those asked in the evaluative frameworks of positivists (Creswell, 2007; Crotty, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). This is in tension with objectivist notions of validity and evaluation, but it is entirely consistent with the way qualitative research attaches priority to an understanding of knowledge and meaning as created within the individual. This broad criterion is also suitable for the expansive social research required to advance understanding of how Canadian University is becoming an international institution.

Researcher Location

This research aspires to support the dignity, resilience and persistence of international graduate students who seek knowledge and understanding beyond their borders. As with other qualitative research, my location as a researcher no doubt influenced the decisions I made in the conduct of this research. As an English speaking, male, and middle-class person who has membership in dominant social groupings (i.e., European ethnicity, Catholic, able-bodied), my appearance, gender socialization and background no doubt influenced the gathering, interpretation, analysis, and findings of this research. My approach also reflects an affinity and respect for the aspirations of international students and the shared values of public and higher education in Canada.

Chapter 5: Keeping Canadian University in View

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce texts that produce, construct and represent international graduate students locally within Canadian University. The literature reviewed in Chapter Three began at the top with transnational texts that order discourse across countries, myriad educational systems and settings. In contrast, this chapter works from a historic and ground-up perspective to explore the discursive origins and even the key financial disputes that frame international graduate students within the local setting. Although the documents and websites reviewed in this chapter are organized into four discrete sections, they tend to overlap and interact as "interconnected institutional discourses, rationalities, and coordinative procedures" (McCoy, 2014, p. 246). The first section focuses historically on how and when a policy of additional fees for international graduate students was first implemented at Canadian University. A second section builds on that historic record to explore how and where the differential fees for those applying as international graduate students to this particular university are currently established. This historic record provides ethnographic insight into the prevailing discourses and tensions found in the local institutional setting.

Section three and four focus on how particular texts work discursively to frame and organize international graduate students in the local setting. Part one of section three explores unique local texts *for* international graduate students including the International Student Handbook (2012), the Faculty of Graduate Studies website, and the Canadian University website. Part two explores texts *about* international graduate students in the professional genre of the university setting. These include a Canadian University Plan for International Engagement (2007-2011), an Academic Plan for the Canadian University (2007-2011), a Draft: International Resource Document for the Academic Plan (2011-2015), and the Comprehensive Institutional

Plan (2012). The fourth section explores how local texts work up toward the transnational discursive networks described in Chapter Three, and then down again into Canadian University and other post-secondary institutions. These texts include the Council of Ministers of Education website (www.cmec.ca/en/), and the Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada website (www.cic.gc.ca). Together, these integrated discursive frames form a network that is the textual base for the interviews, mapping and other analysis that take place in later chapters.

Section 1: Worth Report (1972)

The educational policy climate in which the decision to charge an additional fee for international graduate student tuition at Canadian University was grounded within *A Future of Choices, A Choice of Futures*: *Report of the Commission on Educational Planning* (1972)—the *Worth Report*. This was a provincial commission on educational planning established to examine social, technological and economic trends and make forward looking recommendations for the provincial educational system, including higher education. While today the use of the term *foreign* student has largely given way to the use of *international* student, the Worth Report uses foreign student once, and only then in the context of concern for others. "There is also a need for future federal concern in the fulfillment of our obligations to the developing world in the provision, for example, of certain skills and educational opportunities" (p. 149). And further, "in particular, the federal government should under-take full responsibility for providing financial assistance to foreign students from underdeveloped countries" (p. 149). Even with this concern for others being expressed as a problem to be addressed through resources provided by another level of government (federal), the relational understanding expressed in these short excerpts does not align easily with the establishment of a provincial policy where all international students, including those from developing countries, pay additional tuition or differential fees.

The phrase *international student* is also used only once in the Worth (1972) report, and that is in relation to federal grants where international students are lumped in with out-of-province students. Together, the international and out-of-province enrolment is expressed as a percentage (10.4%) in relation to all higher education students in the province. While observing local provincial institutions "are not over-populated with out-of-province students" (p. 288) in relation to Ontario (14.3%) and New Brunswick (26%) for example, the Worth Report indicates that increased federal grants would be welcomed to ease the perceived costs of interprovincial student mobility and the high cost of graduate education. This report also suggests, that in a "very commonsense [sic] way the advocates of accountability are simply asking that investments, efforts and results be reported in ways that are useful for policy making, resource allocation or cost accounting" (p. 211). And further, "certainly the dominant force in the history of educational planning has been an economic one" (p. 221). And finally for emphasis, "efficiency as an objective in educational planning has assumed dominance for a number of reasons, particularly escalating costs and competition from other social services" (p. 221). Between the assistance proposed for foreign students in the introductory paragraph, and the call for more visible forms of accountability above, we see early tensions forming between educational priorities and the fiscal rectitude swirling around differential fees.

Implementing Differential Fees

According to the student newspaper, the probationary introduction of specialized fees for international students at Canadian University in the fall term of 1977, played out in noisy public meetings, cancelled classes, radio interviews, student protests, numerous newspaper articles, and

at least one petition. The minutes of the Board of Governor meetings[7] for December 3, 1976, and February 4, 1977, and the related correspondence between the Board and the provincial Minister (AH) responsible provides clear insight into these events. This is not a comprehensive accounting of events, but represents an effort to surface the institutional origins of differential fees. It may not have been possible to scope out and trace these specific events in detail without the online archive of the student newspaper, and the provincial dailies reporting on these events as they happened.

The Minister (AH) responsible for higher education and labour in the province had been pressing Canadian University to implement differential fees for international graduate students, and two other major universities in the province had already agreed. After the Board of Governors meeting on December 3, 1976, the Secretary of the Board wrote to the Minister (AH) advising him of a Board decision indicating: "differential fees for foreign students be rejected" (December 6, 1976). This decision was the result of a motion by the university President serving on the Board, and the culmination of substantive stakeholder debate, spectacle, and controversy related to the public nature of this dispute between the provincial government and the university. The Chair of the Board received a letter in response from the Minister responsible on December 10, 1976, again asking the Board to recommend "fair and reasonable" differential fees. The matter went back and forth unresolved, but at the meeting of the Board of Governors on February 4, 1977, a board member moved to accept the recommendation on fees from the Minister, and institute an additional fee of $300 for foreign students entering the university for the first time in September, 1977. They had a roll call vote and the individual who introduced that motion was the first to vote against it. It was not a unanimous vote (as the decision to reject

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[7] Annual reports, minutes of the Board of Governors meetings, related correspondence between the Minister of higher education and labour and Canadian University, and other documentation were made available by the institutional archive of Canadian University.

differential fees had been on December 3, 1976), but the motion was defeated. In a conciliatory letter, the Chair advised the Minister on a Friday (February 4, 1977) the Board "resolved that there should be no additional fees charged to visa students admitted to the University for the first time in the Fall Session of 1977."

A press release by the Minister (AH) responsible for higher education and labour in the province was issued at 8:30 AM on Monday, February 7, 1977. It "announced details of a fee differential for foreign (visa) students entering the province's post-secondary institutions this fall" and this "announcement was made following the receipt of submissions from all university and college boards of governors." The press release stated that foreign students entering one of the province's three universities in the fall would pay "an additional fee of $300.00." In the rationale for implementation, the Minister noted Canadian students would be subsidized more than foreign students, and "on the average, the government subsidizes between 85 and 90 per cent of the costs of post-secondary education." The Minister went on to say in the press release, "keeping in mind that both pay only a fraction of the cost of post-secondary education, it is a reasonable and realistic step to take." In a letter to the Chair on February 10, 1977, the Minister acknowledged the Chair's letter of February 4, saying, "in the interest of maintaining consistency across the [Province/Ministry], I now request the cooperation of your Board in implementing the differential fee structure as outlined in my news release dated February 7, 1977."

A letter from the Chair to the Minister (AH) (May 10, 1977) acknowledged the Minister's letter of February 10,1977, and stated the Board "is satisfied that the proposal for an increase in foreign student fees is not an issue which brings the matter of University autonomy into question and is not to be considered as a precedent." The letter goes on to say the University is prepared to implement the $300 fee, providing (1) the matter will receive further study, (2) the

autonomy of the university will continue, and (3) the government requires the student fees be implemented. This letter also indicates "our Board continues to believe this proposal for a fee increase to be wrong and not in the best interests of the University nor, in the long run, the general public and we hope you will reconsider this proposal." The differential fees were implemented on a probationary basis in the fall term of 1977, and continue to be a part of the fee structure at Canadian University.

The international graduate student numbers during this period did not change substantially during the implementation of the new fees, although it is worth noting how they are reported in the Board of Governors annual reports (1976-77; 1977-78; 1978-79). These annual reports used *United States*, *Commonwealth Countries* and *Other Countries* as the categories which constituted foreign student enrolment. See *Table 5.1* for international graduate student enrolment as a percentage of all graduate students (below) at Canadian University. Where perhaps these categories originate in a worldview shaped by post-war geopolitics and alliances, the categorization of international graduate students is now often defined by relationship to market such as sender or receiving nation, or by market growth potential (DFAIT, 2009a; 2009b; DFAIT, 2012; OECD, 2014). The historic information on enrolment is included below.

Table 5.1

International Graduate Enrolment Levels (1976-1979)

	1976-77	1977-78	1978-79
United States	90	86	73
Commonwealth	149	166	170
Other Countries	160	133	114
Total	399	385	357
Percentage	19.29%	18.97%	18.39%

Changes in the level, priorities and structure of public support for education in Alberta were underway in the 1980's, but these changes were also part of a larger trend in Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States and many other countries (Decore & Pannu, 1989). Canadian University was influenced by demographic changes, low commodity prices, and a renewed emphasis on fiscal restraint, as these all contributed to less public spending on higher education in Alberta. At the same time, education in the province took on more instrumental, international, free market and industrial policy priorities. For example, on an experimental basis, public monies started to be diverted away from public schools and toward private schools, in part because they were understood to educate more cheaply on a per pupil basis. After a variety of substandard private offerings there was a reduced emphasis and enthusiasm for this policy direction, but nevertheless a popular view that markets had a role to play in educational offerings persisted and contributed directly and indirectly to policy formulation. These changes influenced and impacted the way Canadian University and other universities operated, and at the same time reduced the ability of these institutions to act with autonomy.

Reductions in public funding, and corresponding reductions in funding from departments and agencies of provincial governments, as well as reductions from granting councils, encouraged Canadian University to seek out relationships with business (Pocklington, 1999). The precedent setting patent of intellectual property to the University of Wisconsin in 1968, together with an anchoring of the generalized principle that universities could profit from intellectual property as specified in the Bayh-Dole Act (1980), provided for new relationships between university and industry in Canada, the United States and elsewhere. These events took place in the context of growing acceptance of the new right and new public management in Canadian society at large, and a fast-growing commercialization of the university and the

research to be funded there. In addition to funds moving away from pure research to *applied*

research that could be commercialized, there was a growth of commercialization infrastructure at

Canadian University within a newly established industry liaison office, and this proved a popular

trend at Canadian universities. From the implementation of differential fees in section one, to

changes in how differential fees are to be set for Canadian University in the section to follow,

these changes, funding reductions and new partnerships illuminate the landscape in which

differential fees take shape.

Section 2: Setting Differential Fees

Canadian University operates under the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (PSLA), a primary

"boss text" (DeVault, Venkatesh, & Ridzi, 2014, p. 177), but it is also hooked into a labyrinth of

other provincial and federal boss texts. At the provincial level, examples include the *Freedom of*

Information and Protection of Privacy Act, *Health Information Act*, *Personal Information*

Protection Act, and federal examples include the *Privacy Act* or the *Banking Act*, any of which

may govern over particular aspects of Canadian University's operations. The PSLA is the basis

upon which a vertical demand for accountability is made by the provincial government on the

university, and the basis upon which the Chair of the Board signed the *Accountability Statement*[8]

in the Comprehensive Institutional Plan (2012), introduced in the next section. Canadian

University is hooked into the provincial *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (2003), which reads in

part, "the Government of Alberta is committed to ensuring that Albertans have the opportunity to

enhance their social, cultural and economic well-being through participation in an accessible,

responsive and flexible post-secondary system" (Chapter P-19.5, p. 1). The term international

student does not appear in this Act, and "Foreign Student" (Chapter P-19.5, p. 76) appears only

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[8] The entire text of the accountability statement follows: "This Comprehensive Institutional Plan was prepared under
the Board's direction in accordance with legislation and associated ministerial guidelines, and in consideration of all
policy decisions and material, economic, or fiscal implications of which the Board is aware" (p. 13).

once, and that is to indicate where the authority to set tuition and related differential fees resides. Given the history and controversy which surrounded the original implementation of differential fees, it is worth pausing here for a moment to review certain texts within the Act.

The text specifying the authority for the Lieutenant Governor in Council to set tuition and differential fees is in section 124 of the Post-Secondary Learning Act (Chapter P-19.5, 2003), and entitled "Lieutenant Governor in Council regulations" (p. 76). It begins, "The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations" and then specifies in subsections a to q, in what matters, issues or circumstances the Lieutenant Governor in Council may exercise its authorities. From British parliamentary tradition, Lieutenant Governor in Council refers to the Executive Council, or Cabinet, of the elected provincial government. The subsection respecting tuition fees are primarily (b) and (c), and under (b), items i to iii, provide the Executive Council with powers related to the publication of information, consultations in relation to the setting of tuition fees, and setting of tuition fees for foreign students. Item iv, provides for powers "respecting the requirements that must be adhered to when setting tuition fees" (p. 76). In my reading, these are the provisions that provide the Executive Council with the authority to set differential fees for international students.

This power of the Executive Council to set tuition and differential fees (rather than having them set on the floor of the legislature), is relatively new and it results from the passing of Bill 40, the Post-Secondary Learning Amendment Act (2006) given Royal Assent on May 24, 2006. From First Reading on May 8 (2006) to Royal Assent sixteen days later, Bill 40 was introduced by the Minister (DH) responsible for higher education as necessary to "repeal clauses in the Post-secondary Learning Act that set out the principles that guide tuition increases by public postsecondary institutions as reflected by the current tuition fee policy" (Alberta Hansard,

May 8, 2006, p. 1489). Section 61 (2)(b) was repealed, and section 124 (b)(i) and (ii) repealed and substituted with enhanced authorities now found in legislation under "Lieutenant Governor in Council regulations" (PSLA Chapter P-19.5, 2003, p. 76). The net effect of Bill 40 as described by an opposition member was to ask "the Legislature to sign off its authority to have a say in making that [tuition] policy and give it to the minister and the council of ministers, Executive Council" (Alberta Hansard/Pannu, May 15, 2006, p. 1579). The case made by the government in support of the legislation was tepid, with a recently former Minister of higher education saying, "it may surprise members of the House. I don't particularly like this bill. I wish we didn't have this bill in the House" (Alberta Hansard/Hancock, May 15, 2006, p. 1579). This amendment transferred tuition policy from the noisy and contested public and democratic domain of the legislature into the unitary realm of Executive Council.

The rationales for this legislation are worth considering because, like the events of February 1977 discussed earlier, they displace educational aims and democratic process with other provincial government priorities. In the First Reading of Bill 40, the new Minister (DH) of higher education and labour introduced the legislation saying, "the proposed amendment will allow for revisions to the current tuition fee regulation so that new guidelines can be implemented for tuition fee increases among all postsecondary institutions governed by the policy in time for the fall of 2007" (Alberta Hansard, May 8, 2006, p. 1351). In brief comments prior to the Second Reading, the Minister urged legislators to "support this legislation as it paves the way for a new tuition fee policy for students, something which should not be delayed" (Alberta Hansard, May 10, 2006, p. 1490). On third reading, the Minister responsible opened with very brief remarks, saying "after all is said and done, I think that, essentially, what this will do is create an opportunity for continuous improvement with respect to tuition policy, and I urge

all members to vote in favour" (Alberta Hansard, May 17, 2006, p. 1661). After the legislation had become law, the Minister said, "the fact is, Mr. Speaker, that when you have tuition policy in regulation, you have the opportunity to have continuous improvement instead of enshrining something in legislation that doesn't change for 10 or 12 years" (Alberta Hansard, August 29, 2006, p. 1767). The Minister then added, "tomorrow I'll be meeting with the council of presidents and chairs to make sure that everybody is on board with respect to tuition policy…. I will challenge them to become more efficient and create more spaces with the physical infrastructure that they have now" (p. 1767).

Opposition to the legislation centered on the fiscal appetite of the provincial government, and loss of educational input and democratic participation in tuition fee policy. Describing how post-secondary student contributions were capped at 12 percent of institutional net operating expenditures until 1991, at 20 percent until 1995, and at 30 percent until 2003, an opposition member observed that in 2003, "the cap became more of a guideline, sort of like EPA ratings on gas mileage: your mileage may vary, kind of thing" (Alberta Hansard/Taylor, May 15, 2006, p. 1577). The other primary concern raised was that it "seems to me that this government would like to do all of its business behind closed doors and perhaps reduce the Legislature to nothing more than a ceremonial centre, a ceremonial moment" (Alberta Hansard/Taft, May 15, 2006, p. 1578). Another member of the opposition observed, "democracy was never meant to be quick and efficient" (Alberta Hansard/Hinman, May 15, 2006, p. 1581). And finally for emphasis, with "the odious Bill 40 becoming law, we've moved tuition fee policy into regulation, out of public scrutiny, and behind the closed doors of the secret deliberations of cabinet room" (Alberta Hansard/Pannu, August 29, 2006, p. 1767).

The movement of tuition policy from the floor of the legislature to the Executive Council, or Cabinet, is where we leave the historic record, but not without first briefly reviewing the tuition or differential fees for international graduate students. In Figure 5.1, on the next page, a graph illustrating the average annual tuition paid by international graduate students in the province of Alberta is indicated. It depicts the top 19 reporting faculties for each year, and it is weighted on full-time enrollments only. The information provided is qualified in that in certain years, advanced professional certification for certain programs (i.e., dentistry, medicine) has been excluded. Data for 2015-2016 was provided on a preliminary basis only. In the pages to follow, I explore the texts framing and constructing the activities of those applying to post-secondary institutions in the province and in particular, Canadian University.

Figure 5.1: International Graduate Student Fees for Alberta (Custom CANSIM Table 477-0024)
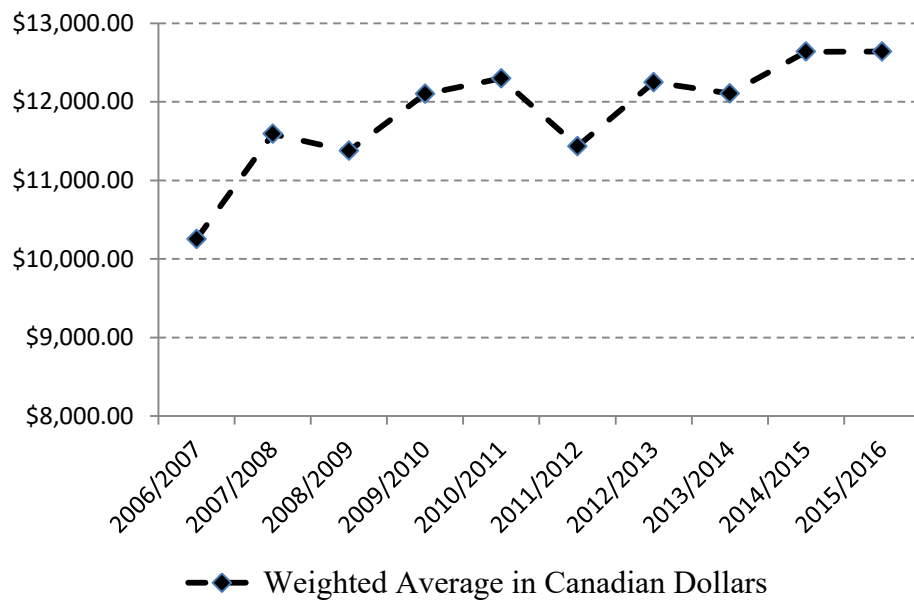
Section 3: Self-Serve Citizenry

This section includes texts that talk *to* international graduate students, and where they are on the frontline; there are few references *about* international graduate students. For example, the

messages and images in the International Student Handbook talk to an international graduate student that is active and self-directed, suggesting, "your contribution to university life is valued in both classrooms and extracurricular activities" (p. 7). After the initial welcome section, there is a larger section entitled "Interpreting the Regulations" (p. 25), where detailed academic, immigration, employment and tax information is available. In a section entitled *Employment*, international graduate students are advised: "Know the conditions under which you and/or your spouse are entitled to work.... Build a workplace readiness action plan.… If required, apply for a work permit.… Find a job.… ensure you are eligible to accept the job.… Apply for your Social Insurance Number" (p. 25). There are a great many additional resources available within the text, but the text requires the international graduate student to work. The work is that of finding, reading and coming to understand a new system, and then doing the work of finding a job—in a new locale. Those who are operating in English as an additional language may find the handbook accessible, but understanding the regulatory language of immigration or employment websites they are referred to in this text is an additional form of work. Within this particular form of support and assistance, each international graduate student does the work of finding and using the information necessary to adapt to their new roles (e.g., student, employee, citizen) in Canada.

The international graduate studies website at Canadian University asks those applying to (1) identify a program, (2) review application requirements, and (3) apply online in a process that is estimated to take 30–40 minutes. Canadian University has 16 options under the selection of faculty menu, and using the Faculty of Education as an example, six departmental program choices branch out from the faculty. Choosing Education Psychology as one of the six departmental program branches leads to five possible specializations, and four separate types of degree programs. After program selection, those applying need to know the application

requirements of the program. This includes the admission requirements, application deadlines, procedures for applying as developed or specified in consultation with the department, and they must submit a curriculum vitae with references. Application deadlines are often different for various programs offered within departments, and there are also exceptions depending on the country students are applying from, for example China and Nigeria have different deadlines than other countries. Those applying from certain countries[9] are not required to pay the application fee. In a process of applying that requires both domestic and international graduate students to choose their institution, faculty, department, and degree program) as consumers, prospective students become accountable for the choices they make.

The graduate studies website adopts knowledge economy language to suggest why international graduate students might choose to study at this institution rather than others they may be considering. For example, the first sentence on the web page for prospective international graduate students currently says, "[Name of University] is not merely a place to study or where finding the perfect job is the singular focus of post-secondary institutional learning." A few clicks away, this web page also features a short video (*Study in Canada: A World for You Here at Canadian University*) consisting of enthusiastic testimonials from confident international students (Egypt, India, Peru and the United States), as well as Canadian students. Prospective learners are advised they can learn, have fun and meet new people, but work and social life balance is important. This echoes the International Student Handbook, which includes a warm message of welcome; the President writes "we offer you world-class educational opportunities" (p. 6) and "a top-100 global university, Canadian University can connect you to the world" (p. 6). *Finding the perfect job* and *a world for you here* or *global university* are variations on the

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[9]At Canadian University, those applying as citizens from countries on the United Nations Least Developed Countries list are exempted from paying the application fee of $100.

message to applicants that they must first take individual responsibility for their own economic, social and academic circumstance in a competitive world.

Educational Aims?

Texts talk *about* international graduate students so they may be objectified and compared to one another in the institutional process of sorting and selecting applicants. In the *Canadian University Plan for International Engagement* (2007-2011), international students are mentioned four times. First, they make the learning environment for others better, as "international students enrich the learning experience and campus life by sharing their knowledge and experiences" (p. 1). Second, they appear as aims to be achieved: "in priority countries and regions [the aim is] to increase enrolment of international students by 2012 to 15% of the undergraduate student population and 30% of the graduate student population, reflecting the diversity of the peoples of the world" (p. 5). Third, the plan seeks to "enable faculty members to develop course content and teaching/learning processes that are relevant for international students on campus" (p. 7). Fourth, in a section entitled, *how will we know when we're there*, the document indicates that "scholarships have been enriched to support outstanding international students coming to the University" (p. 12). This document introduces us to hierarchies, where there are priority countries and regions and *outstanding* international students. It is also possible to see conflicting discourses of market and diversity work with one another to achieve operational dominance. Attracting full-paying market targets is grafted into a collectivist notion of *reflecting the diversity of the peoples of the world*, without acknowledging the incommensurable principles that are operating beneath the surface.

In the *Academic Plan for the Canadian University* (2011-2015), international students are mentioned sparingly, but when they are it is either in relation to easing transitions and supporting

their success, or increasing numbers and retention. There is a potential contradiction between easing transitions and supporting their success on the one hand, and increasing numbers and retention on the other. In this text, there is a textual and conceptual distance between those who may require transitional support and increasing international graduate student targets. This academic plan has four break-out boxes emphasizing different aspects of the plan, and each box is entitled, *how will we know when we are making progress?* The boxes are not interchangeable, but all four indicate "a mix of qualitative and quantifiable metrics" (p. 5) that will measure progress toward stated goals. Regarding international graduate students, the metric provided was, "the numbers of incoming international students and outbound education abroad students are increased" (p. 10). Abstracting these learners is a way of separating them from their histories and unique needs as learners, and this makes them cogs in an educational wheel, not learners with diverse needs that require individual attention. Within these isolating metrics, unproblematic growth may be assumed because learner needs will be increasingly seen as inefficiencies, and sacrificed to numeric goals. The growing emphasis on counting and measuring in the governance of Canadian University organizes our starting assumptions to abstract the learner in a metaphor of the level playing field, and this fits the market oriented discourse that permeates the resource document which accompanies the academic plan.

A *Draft: International Resource Document for the Academic Plan* (2011-2015), is intended to provide "a comprehensive concept for the [Name of University]'s internationalisation agenda" (p. 1). In the *Canadian University Plan for International Engagement* (2007-2011) discussed earlier, internationalization is mentioned only once, stating rather tentatively, "in the area of internationalization, the [Name of University] continues to evolve" (p. 2). In this *Draft: International Resource Document for the Academic Plan* (2011-

2015), Arthur Levine, current reform minded President of the Woodrow Wilson Foundation addressing the Association of International Education Administrators in Washington (February, 2010), is quoted in large font at the top of the front page saying, "the internationalisation of higher education is inevitable" (p. 1). He goes on to say that some universities will lead, and "others will hold onto the past and will be destined to fail" (p. 1). It has *DRAFT* stamped conspicuously across each page and the majority of the document is written in forward looking language. An important exception is the past tense used in categorizing countries into three tiers of market importance or priority. However, the document adds, "from a central institutional point of view, the priority country approach does not entail that efforts and resources are dedicated exclusively to priority countries" (p. 5). For example, international graduate recruitment is specifically exempted from this geographic narrowing of priorities. This creation of a hierarchy of priorities on the one hand, while remaining open to all those willing to pay differential fees on the other, is central to this comprehensive approach and it is offered "to achieve better efficiency and improved effectiveness" (p. 3). This is the institutional "passive voice that highlights organizational processes and omits the agents who enact those processes" (Grace, 2014, p. 258). Use of the passive institutional voice and past tense together is a discursively artful way of making the decision process assigning market importance or priority to countries—inaccessible.

The Comprehensive Institutional Plan (2012) is much different than the documents discussed earlier in this section, in part because it is prepared for the Minister allocating funding to Canadian University—rather than for stakeholders. The language and symbols related to the collective benefits of education are gone, and quantifications used to measure, compare and rank

human capital within a knowledge economy discourse are dominant[10]. In contrast with its historical striving for autonomy as a public institution evident in the controversy surrounding the implementation of differential fees nearly 40 years earlier, this university now suggests it is "strategically positioned to be a key partner with the province in achieving its goal of developing the 'next generation economy'" (p. 21). Central to achieving this vision for the workforce is increasing "international student enrolment to 15 percent of the student population for undergraduates, and 30 percent of the student population for graduate students, a ratio that would position the university as one of the top two universities in Canada" (p. 21). This vision, and an important part of the university's role in meeting this challenge is "to increase the number of graduate students to globally competitive levels" (p. 21). This document reveals a reorganization of international graduate student recruitment outside of educational aims, and toward fitting the work of applying into provincial priorities related to workforce capacity, the economy, attraction of capital and national economic competitiveness.

Section 4: Government Priorities and Institutional Responsibilities

This section follows the discourses found in local settings into the provincial, national and *globally competitive* realm of interconnecting discourses referred to earlier. To start, the Study in Alberta website (www.studyinalberta.ca) makes the case for the province and Canada as a place for international graduate students. Campus Alberta Quality Council was created by the Minister responsible for higher education. This website indicates, "the Campus Alberta Quality Council is an arms-length quality assurance agency that makes recommendations to the Minister of Alberta Advanced Education and Technology on applications from post-secondary institutions wishing to offer new degree programs" (http://eae.alberta.ca/ministry/). This is one part of a

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[10] Under *Tracking Our Performance*, a comprehensive list of indicators and measures used throughout the Comprehensive Institutional Plan (2012) are itemized on page 12. These indicators open directly across from the Accountability Statement signed by the Chair of the Board of Governors on page 13.

wider provincial structure entitled, *Campus Alberta*. Its purpose is described on the provincial higher education website as "to formalize and encourage such collaboration and cooperation between the province's 26 publicly-funded post-secondary institutions" (http://eae.province.ca/ministry/). This webpage also says, "even before the Campus Alberta concept was established, Alberta's institutions had been sharing best practices and working together to make Alberta's post-secondary system a leader" (http://eae.province.ca/ministry/). Given the Campus Alberta structure was implemented to formalize sharing that was already taking place, it is worth noting the Campus Alberta mechanism and associated Campus Alberta Quality Council are key points of additional coordination, organization and communication between the province, the ministry and Canadian University. Through these and other means, the provincial government is able to monitor compliance with their *Roles and Mandates Policy Framework for Alberta's Publicly Funded Advanced Education System* (Government of Alberta, 2007). This is a provincial institutional differentiation strategy "in recognition that the *system* will need to respond to" [italics added] (p. 11) international changes and opportunities.

The Council of Ministers of Education (CMEC) website (www.cmec.ca/en/) is an intergovernmental body established in 1967, consisting of ministers of education from the 13 provinces and territories of Canada. It "provides leadership in education at the pan-Canadian and international levels." While the primary responsibility for education was accorded to the provinces in the *British North America Act* of 1867, now called the *Constitution Act* (1982), provinces took on post-secondary learning commitments and obligations frequently assumed by a national government. In addition to interconnecting the provincial and territorial governments to federal networks including trade resources, official-languages program, as well as quality assurance and occupational qualifications, it represents education in Canada to other nations and

international bodies. For example, CMEC coordinates Canada's participation in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) education indicators projects (i.e., Education at a Glance). It also produces a national version of OECD style statistics about Canadian education in conjunction with the Canadian Education Statistics Council (CESC), a partnership between CMEC and Statistics Canada. The CMEC website describes international education as "a social and economic win for Canada." This group also represents Canadian education in UNESCO and Commonwealth organizations, as well as maintaining associations with an assortment of economic cooperation groups. As CMEC makes small and what may seem incidental decisions within its mandate to service Canada's participation in the OECD, it is committing entire provincial and territorial systems to specific data collections, and as seen in Kerr's (2014) study of the OnSIS system, these coordinate the work of educators in the classroom.

The Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) website (www.cic.gc.ca) has a critically important role for the vast majority of international graduate students applying to Canadian University. A letter of acceptance[11] is one of five primary eligibility criteria to be met when applying for a study permit, while others include proof of adequate financial resources, security or police certificate, a satisfactory medical report, and the ability to "satisfy an immigration officer that you will leave Canada at the end of your authorized stay." Each of these criteria has formal specifications or conditions under which they will be recognized by the IRCC. However, it is also worth noting the IRCC organizes how these criteria may or may not be met, and in doing so they create a frontline service environment that transforms the work of those applying into the work of a consumer, as the following example will illustrate.

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[11] In certain cases, a letter of special circumstance may be acceptable. Also, although these are the primary criteria listed, there are additional requirements (e.g., proof of identity, letter of explanation) that can be assumed, but may not be listed with the primary criteria.

Obtaining a medical report under the conditions required for a study permit requires the work of assessment, preparation and the mobilizing of resources (e.g., time, money, travel) in a transactional format. A medical report must be provided by a *panel physician* who is designated by the embassy or high commission, and "medical reports and x-rays for the medical exam become the property of CIC and cannot be returned to you" (http://www.cic.gc.ca). You "must bring" proper identification, corrective eyewear if you wear it, and any medical reports you may have for existing medical conditions, as well as a medical report form (IMM 1017E) under certain circumstances. It is also made clear the panel physician does not make the final decision about the medical exam, and "if there is a problem with your medical exam, the visa office will contact you in writing." This specification of the conditions under which the medical report is produced differs substantially from the way it actually happens. The date, time, location or preference of which panel physician is not specified, as long as it is from an authorized list. For those who seek a medical report that will satisfy the conditions of the study permit, there will be work to assess and compare variables about which panel physician to select, and these might include location, reputation, hours of availability, and language or specializations. Preparations might include organizing time away from other commitments, finding or producing medical documentation for existing conditions, as well as arranging for the directions and transport to the location where the medical exam is to be conducted.

The IRCC (www.cic.gc.ca) has a role not just in organizing the work (i.e., medical report, police certificate) international graduate students do to apply for a study permit, but also a role in organizing the post-secondary institutions to which those prospective learners are applying. Two examples will be used to illustrate how this happens. The first is a standardized letter of acceptance, where completing a "letter of acceptance correctly will facilitate the initial

processing of the student's application at missions abroad and ports of entry as well as future applications for extensions of study permits in Canada." There are guidelines available to provide additional detail about how to do this, but as of June (2014), only designated learning institutions (DLI) may issue letters of acceptance that will be recognizable to the IRCC. The requirement that Canadian University and other post-secondary institutions across Canada must become a DLI if letters of acceptance are to be recognized places IRCC in a position of authority. It provides the IRCC with a power to organize and assign expectations to those DLIs that wish to continue admitting international graduate students in a way that may result in the successful issuing of a study permit. This leads to the second example of how the IRCC is able to organize the post-secondary institutions that increasingly rely upon the differential fees paid by international graduate students.

Designated learning institution (DLI) status (www.cic.gc.ca) is conferred to post-secondary institutions that receive international graduate students as identified by provincial or territorial learning authorities under the authority of the IRCC. Those institutions so accredited are able to access *best practices* as a DLI (e.g., fraud prevention, letters of acceptance template, updated IRCC policies) and they are able to receive instructions on how they are to "complete regular reports on the academic enrolment status of their international students and to submit these reports to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)." Compliance reporting began in April of 2015, and a guide is available on how to complete each reporting request, normally twice a year in April and November. The information collected "will allow CIC to assess whether study permit holders in Canada continue to meet their study permit conditions, including whether they are actively pursuing their course or program of study at a DLI." DLIs are required by the IRCC to complete compliance reporting requests within 60 days of receiving them.

Within this brief example of reporting accountability it is possible to see how the IRCC is able to use Canadian University and post-secondary institutions across Canada to do the work of compliance reporting. By completing and submitting compliance reports, DLIs are doing the work of the IRCC—quite unrelated to educational aims and priorities.

Summary

The historical perspective on the implementation of differential fees for international graduate students in 1977, help us to see competing educational and economic interests striving for dominance. Although controversy had been swirling long before and since, tuition and differential fee policy became a focus of contestation in the provincial legislature again during May, 2006. With the swift passing of Bill 40, the Post-Secondary Learning Amendment Act (2006) became law, and tuition and differential fee policy was removed from the transparency of the legislature. It is now under the purview of Executive Council, where although consultation may take place, decisions are no longer subject to direct public scrutiny. Educational aims were displaced by provincial government budgetary concerns and the stated aim of the Minister responsible for higher education and labour to show "continuous improvement with respect to tuition policy" (Alberta Hansard, May 17, 2006, p. 1661). The historical lens illustrates the deep political contestation over financial control relating to these fees, and suggests the current organization of differential fees at Canadian University is deliberate and purposeful, and not a happenstance of history.

The echo from the *Worth Report* (1972), and its call for educational "investments, efforts and results" (p. 211) to be reported in a quantifiable way could be heard and seen working throughout all of these events, and most recently within the *Academic Plan for Canadian University* (2011-2015), and *The Comprehensive Institutional Plan* (2012). As noted earlier, in

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May of 2006, the Minister responsible felt the need to challenge certain educational leaders in relation to their "efficiency" (Alberta Hansard, August 29, 2006, p. 1767), and this concern with efficiency was clearly evident in the *[Canadian University Plan] for International Engagement* (2007-2011). This is an intensification of measurement, ostensibly measurement of performance, but it is a mindset and rationale that discursively produces institutional frames that produce international graduate students as a market share. Within the professional genre of university recruitment and as described within *The Comprehensive Institutional Plan* (2012), recruiting from priority countries may lead to becoming one of "the top two universities in Canada" (p. 21). These are market principles applied in a quasi-market setting, and they are legitimated and made dominant by their prominent use within formal university reporting and stakeholder documents.

At the local level, the work of choosing and informed choice result from the discursive institutional frames that construct international graduate students as active and self-directed. A frontline of expectation is created and co-constructed by the International Student Handbook (2012), the Faculty of Graduate Studies website, the Canadian University website, together with the Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada website. The choice of programs and options on these websites normalizes the role of the prospective learner as a consumer entering into a transaction, with Executive Council setting the prices in the form of tuition and differential fees. This is a quasi-market, and while those applying may have sources of information in addition to those web pages listed above, they rely upon and choose between those universities and post-secondary institutions promoting their wares. As Marginson (2011) noted, these are producer-dominated markets where prospective learners "cannot know what the teaching and learning are like until halfway through the programme" (p. 25). With the work of informed choice and program selection, a *buyer beware* onus of individual responsibility follows those applying and

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fits together with human capital theory, and "broader neoliberal discourses of personal responsibility, which have strong currency in Alberta" (McCoy, 2014, p. 238). This self-serve frontline work required of international graduate students who are applying to Canadian University is a textually mediated discursive role that is central, and not incidental to, the work of applying.

Chapter 6: Mapping the Work of Applying

This chapter maps a text-work-text sequence, introduces the application form, and maps the institutional process of applying. I begin in the everyday of individuals who applied as international graduate students, observe how these actions are taken-up by Canadian University, and note disjuncture between applicant expectation and experience. While starting in the everyday of individuals is the ethnographic basis of enquiry, keeping the institution in view is central to warranting claims about the university that will be made in subsequent chapters (DeVault & McCoy, 2006). The disjuncture that is experienced by international graduate students is included to surface a lack of fit between discursive institutional frames and the experience of international graduate students (Kerr, 2014). These three sections bring forward data from the research methods described in Chapter Four. Extricating the work of applying from the undefined complex of relations they tie into are "an ordinary problem for the ethnographer" (Smith & Turner, 2014, p. 306). Taken together, the texts, mapping, observations and interviews included here are the empirical base for this study.

The first section draws on interviews with international graduate students who are experts on the application process (https://www.[Canadian University].ca). Three illustrations are used to map this work of applying. The first illustrates (Figure 6.1) the text-work-text sequence leading up to the informants' identification of target universities. The second illustration (Figure 6.2) introduces a partial and modified image of the application form, a text that is coordinating the actions and consciousness of those applying. The third maps (Figure 6.3) the text of the application form as an institutional circuit prescribing a sequence of actions and coordinating the consciousness of those applying. A brief section introducing the study permit is also included. Only after understanding how applying happens in multiple sites of practice (e.g., China, India,

Russia), is it possible to focus attention on the technologies used to convert the disparate actions taken in various locales into the language, logic and aims of the university in Canada.

The second section of this chapter draws on interviews with key informants who represent the university in converting the work of applying into the professional genres of the institution (Darville, 2014; G Smith, 2014; Smith & Turner, 2014). These practitioners are followed into the institution so that we might see how the disparate practices and work of applying is transformed to the aims of the institution. Beginning with a partial illustration of the application (Figure 6.2), key informants introduced in this section gives voice to the "interpretive authority" (Smith, 2014, p. 244) and order of discourse that guides the work of this university. As a bead on the abacus, the individual applying is caught up in "textual technologies" (Griffith & Smith, 2014, p. 16). These textual technologies are hooked into structures of relevance or discursive frames that intend a university "driven by reduced operating grants and shaped by government policies designed to expose the delivery of public services to the discipline of the market" (McCoy, 2014, p. 97).

The third and final section focuses on those moments of disjuncture when expectations originating in the local work of applying collide with the realities of the institution. Student informants were already in Canada when they were interviewed, and so they had taken-up study. Each offered experiences of discontinuity freely, and I have included selected instances here to illustrate the complex, decentralized and at times fragmented work of this contemporary Canadian university. In the following three sections, I draw from my own observations and sources that include informants, key informants, and institutional texts. Next, informants describe how texts operating in their own locales led them to take-up the work of applying.

Section One: "Building My Life…"

This section introduces international graduate students who listened, saw and otherwise interacted with economic news items related to mega-projects and job announcements in popular media (i.e., television, radio, newspaper, Internet). This discursive messaging was understood in ways that encouraged the individuals I spoke with to do the work of applying. These texts do not operate in isolation within the local setting. Instead they are heard, understood, and re-deployed in myriad conversations among and between parents and children, siblings, friends, partners, neighbours and social networks. "Texts are material objects that carry messages" (Smith & Turner, 2014, p. 5). They are interpreted locally and find meaning in the realities where people live. For example, Saanvi comments that bright employment prospects in Canada were reported on television and in newspapers, while in India, "young people don't have good jobs." In this context, the message *bright employment prospects* takes on new meaning as it is heard, repeated and performed by others. Saanvi adds, "my parents are even talking" and "that is why most of the people coming here [Canada] for engineering degrees, have the hope that they will be able to find a job." This discursive environment is the initial text coordinating the text-work-text sequence as illustrated below.

Figure 6.1: Text-Work-Text Sequence: Assessment of Possibilities

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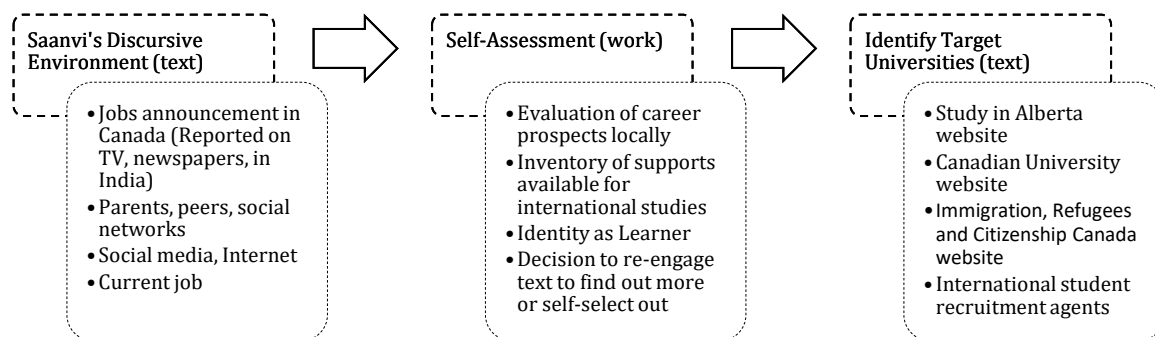
Informants often went to the Internet to consider whether this discursive environment was relevant to their own life prospects and possibilities. They gathered information from the array of sources available, including popular media, institutional websites, social media or e-communities including message boards, file sharing sites, and chat rooms. These were the first and most prominent sources of information identified by informants when gathering preliminary information about cross-border study. Thinking about the resources available to her for applying from Russia, Sasha went "to sharing sites like *RapidShare*" to try and find English language study resources, observing, "now you have *Torrents* and you can find it, and the ESL [English as a Second Language] books there." She interacted with others from outside of Russia, "you have the forms and discussion board, in China, Malaysia, and India, and elsewhere." Applying from Turkey, Azra also wanted to know more about language proficiency testing, and she told me "when I searched the Internet, I saw that language is the biggest barrier." In an effort to gather information from outside of their own local texts, these informants were interacting with others in unique discursive environments.

When identifying target universities, the discourse of markets, consumerism and the entrepreneurial learner becomes dominant. Mary shared with me her focus on value. "I viewed Canadian universities as much higher-quality than what I would have access to in the United States. Obviously I wasn't going to go to Harvard or Stanford or anything like that." She went on to say, "I believe it is quite exceptional. I really appreciate that, and price is a huge consideration. It is only about $4000 per semester as a student [in Canada], and by comparison that is nothing." Xiling applied from The People's Republic of China and also told me about the importance of *value*, saying "international students are not trusted if they graduated from Australia, New Zealand and certainly UK, because they just go there and spend money and come back with

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nothing." She spoke in the language of return on investment in alignment with human capital theory, where the cost of education was the investment and the return took the form of job prospects and good salary. She spoke of a peer who sought input from a Chinese community website about whether to pursue a doctorate at Canadian University and was told, "you are making a mistake. The advice from the community was don't do this, it is just a waste of your time!" The role of consumer seemed to be welcomed as an empowerment among those applying, even while accompanied by a knowledge economy discourse insisting upon individual responsibility for economic outcomes.

The identification of target universities was also affected by geo-political histories, alliances and reciprocal relations operating between nations (e.g., communications, consular services). Sanaz talked about how economic sanctions had affected Iranian universities, and the "fever of applying for 'abroad' universities and finding new universities—back in Iran." She added, "I'm not sure about this university, but I know for example, Iranian students cannot study petroleum, oil and gas engineering or biology related things in the United States universities because of the sanctions." Jamila told me about the logistical challenges she faced applying from Tanzania, and how she had to depend upon a co-worker for help with her study permit, saying that without that help, "I'm not very sure whether I could have managed it or not." She also said the assumption of easy Internet access by those developing the system of applying did not fit well within the Tanzanian context. She asked me to consider how difficult this was for her: "imagine you are in Tanzania and you are just somewhere in an isolated and remote location, sitting there and thinking about applying to a Canadian university?" Her question surfaces the vast array of variables that shape the identification of target universities by those applying. It also

underlines the assumption by universities in Canada that everyone who is applying will have access to Internet and related technologies.

For those contemplating both the costs (e.g., tuition, living costs, travel) and social risks (e.g., shame, loss of status) of failure involved in pursuing a graduate degree abroad, applying is a high stakes proposition. Sasha told me she worked for about one year preparing to apply, "you need to understand that I also thought about being an academic here, you know—building my life here [in Canada]." For Sanaz from Iran, the strangeness of the form was a barrier and she sought assistance in completing it because, "I was afraid that I would make a mistake in filling out the form, and that would lead to something bad in the future—for admissions." Saanvi told me about the familial pressures she had to overcome, saying "it was all on my own initiative, my parents did not want me to go abroad and study. It was all the result of my work for three years in India in a good job." Azra faced another type of social pressure, saying "also, I am married, in Turkey it is not common that, especially the woman, go outside to do their masters while they are married." For those identifying target universities and informally surveying local social networks (family, work, community) about the implications of applying, the obvious costs (e.g., tuition, living costs, travel) are not the only risk they take.

Applying: An Institutional Circuit

The application form used by international graduate students to apply to Canadian University is a virtual text that is available to all those who have access to the Internet. There was a fee of $100 for applying, but no cost if you choose not to formally submit an application. It is an "exogenous" (Luken & Vaughan, 2014, p. 258) system or technology operating in China, India and Iran, and anywhere it may organize human activity using institutional discourses for the purpose of applying to a Canadian university. However, while the "relationship between the

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discourse and local practice is not determinant in this process, the relevancies of those authoring the texts transcend the local historical setting and often become points of reference for people in their everyday worlds" (p. 259). These are the mediating texts of the institution and in the following section I offer examples of how this work of applying is coordinated into standard forms. It is also worth noting at the outset however, that Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has an effective veto on any application to any university in Canada that may be exercised simply by rejecting an individual application for a study permit. While a letter of acceptance written in the prescribed format by a federally recognized post-secondary institution is a pre-condition of obtaining a study permit, other conditions must also be met. Both a partial representation of the application form (Figure 6.2) and the institutional circuit (Figure 6.3) of applying are introduced next.

An early task in the work of applying is identifying target universities, and distinguishing between prospective universities. Canadian University has a longstanding University Visual Identity Policy (Board of Governors: updated December 10, 2010) that among other purposes, maintains, protects, and stipulates how the university coat of arms, seal, trademark, and combined or partial elements (name, logo, colors) may be legally used in representing the university. This policy states "the appropriate and consistent use of these elements enhances the University's reputation by demonstrating a unified organizational purpose and vision to its diverse stakeholders." For those doing the work of applying, the distinctive images, fonts, colors and use of stylized logos on the website and relevant forms contained there distinguish it from other universities. It is a messaging via text and image, and with meticulous placement, consistent and organized use, it is a legitimating entrance into the webpage and application form.

The website for Canadian University contains a substantial quantity of organized and useful information, which helps international graduate students to access centralized (faculty of graduate studies) requirements and departmental contacts. There are costs associated with every application submitted, and informants were greatly concerned with adhering to formal processes, but as Sasha suggests "in many cases, it is not clear from the webpage." She talked to me about her research proposal or statement of interest, which is a required part of the application, "if you want a research proposal, is it binding? Do you really expect me to write it and do it?" The text of the application form enters to organize and coordinate the readers' work. The application consisted of eight separate screens where those applying enter data, and there is a navigation bar at left and university cresting on each page. The second screen is displayed below. It has been modified to make the identity of Canadian University anonymous.

Figure 6.2: Application Form (Modified)

The reader will notice the prominent placement of country of birth, country of citizenship and citizenship status within Canada. National identity appears very early in the sequence of required information, even prior to personal contact information. This topic of citizenship status or permanent residence status was a topic of some sensitivity with informants. Sanaz from Iran talked about her frustration in finding work, and the number of times she heard back "sorry your application was very strong, but the priority will be given to permanent residents or citizens and those with Canadian experience." When asked about whether she might consider applying for Permanent Resident status in Canada, Jamila spoke about eligibility for scholarships, saying "if you are not a permanent resident you are excluded from that process." Saanvi from India said, "I haven't talked to anyone… I talked to a few people and they all suggest that it is worth having a PR here so that if you do face any problems in India—you can anytime come here and stay." Sasha from Russia talked about why she chose to study in Canada over the European Union, saying "there is no back-up plan, there is no blue card or whatever they have now, there was no clear path to permanent residency except like the one that Canada offers." The growing role of Canadian universities in immigration was a recurring theme in the interviews.

The format of the application is an institutional circuit that requires accountability circuits as described by Griffith and Smith (2014), "making performance or outcomes produced at the frontline accountable in terms of managerial categories and objectives" (p. 340). Language proficiency and other academic testing are examples of accountability circuits required of the application as exhibited in Figure 6.3 (next page). This illustration invites some orientating comments, particularly since what might appear as an independent process of *Applying to a Canadian University* in the left hand column is a pre-requisite for *Applying to IRCC for a Study Permit,* featured in the middle column. It is only after both the application to the Canadian

university and IRCC are complete, and IRCC chooses to issue a study permit, that it is possible

to prepare travel and accommodation for study in Canada. This is the effective veto of the federal

authority noted earlier, and the active step of issuing the study permit is required for the

acceptance of the student by the Canadian university to be enacted. In this way, Figure 6.3

illustrates how Canadian University is subject to the decision making authority and priorities of

IRCC.

Figure 6.3: Applying to Canadian University (Institutional)

Applying to a Canadian University	Applying to IRCC for a Study Permit	Study Permit Application Complete
Minimum FGS Degree Requirements	Letter of Acceptance: Designated Learning Institution	Reject Application for Study Permit
Language Proficiency Test (e.g., IELTS, TOEFL)	Proof of Financial Means	Accept Application for Study Permit
Other Academic Tests (e.g. GMAT, GRE)	Proof of Security Check	Issue Study Permit
Official Transcripts	Proof of Satisfactory Health	Prepare Travel and Accommodation for Canada
References, CV, Statement of Intent	Satisfy IRCC You Will Depart at End of Authorized Stay	
Additional Departmental Requirements		

The six boxes in the left hand column constitute an institutional circuit, and this section will explore a sampling of these, beginning with official transcripts from diverse educational systems. Hector from Mexico told me, "I had to translate my transcripts—officially translate them—I had to actually hire a translation firm!" He also spoke of the Canadian university's insistence on receiving an original transcript—even after he was accepted. He said, "once I got accepted, they gave me six months to present my final degree paper. They had to see the original one!" Xiling from China told me that all of her "transcripts were originally issued in the Chinese language" and she translated them, but they were not in the same format as would be expected in North America. For example, they did not have course numbers. She said, in "China when you get a scholarship, you get a small certificate type of thing—it doesn't show on your transcript." Mary from the United States told me, "my records were really hard to get because the school I had gone to burned down. This was before any kind of scanning or electronic records were kept." Sasha commented on the strangeness of having your university send transcripts out on your behalf, saying, "in mine, there is no such idea as a transcript, you just get a certificate. Your marks are printed on the back. *That is your only copy ever.*" In these comments, we have learned about the difficulties involved in translating transcripts into English to achieve an approximation of consistency, language and format.

Other difficulties arose for Jamila from Tanzania as she explained some considerable time had passed since she was an undergraduate, and this made it more difficult for her to obtain transcripts and reference letters. She said if the professor remembers you, and is willing to provide a reference, "you find that you may go there, and many people want letters or transcripts, you may not get the letter on the same day." If you are fortunate enough to be in the same city she explained, one or more visits to a university would normally be required before a letter of

reference could be obtained. After all, "the professors could also be working or traveling, they are very busy, busy, people. It is really, really hard." Still, she worked with faculty at her Tanzanian university to produce the documents required for her international application. The majority of applicants interviewed gathered these documents (i.e., transcripts, references) as fully and completely as they were able, had them translated and notarized as necessary, and then submitted them by courier.

There was a diversity of grading philosophies, conversion systems and grading scales at work among the informants interviewed in this study. For example, Sasha from Russia was philosophically opposed to the grade point average (GPA) system, saying "this idea of GPA is not how you measure your success." She added, "you use a norm-reference or bell curve, and you compare people to each other… These ideas are not common in Europe. In my country, you take the written or oral exam and you are given a grade based on certain assessment criteria that you have to fulfill." Sanaz told me, "at the University of Stanford, I found a system for converting 20-point grade point average to the 4.0 system." This work of conversion and reconstructing documents was often done with individuals working within those home institutions. Representative comments about what they did to convert transcript scores included, "I had to convince them to endorse me" or "I verified it with the Dean of my department." Kaswir from Indonesia obtained a graduate degree at a non-conventional institution in the United States and said "the grading system—it is different. There is no A, B, C, or D grade. It is a pass/fail system. That was what was in my transcript." These few examples make clear that a grade point average is not easily compared across diverse educational settings, systems and philosophies.

Language proficiency testing is another good example of an accountability circuit, as it requires "specified and measurable performances or outcomes to meet the mandate of the regulatory frames" (Grace, 2014, p. 255). The institution prescribes the range of acceptable and measurable scores without stipulating the particular type of private sector testing service (e.g., TOEFL, IELTS), location or timing of the test. Informants described language testing as an expensive, inaccurate and stressful part of the application[12], where success was partly tied to resources (e.g., financial, travel, multiple sittings). For example, Azra from Turkey said, "I took a TOEFL preparation course in Boston—just to get a very high score." Sasha described her preparation, "I think it took me about five months of two hours by two times a week during a preparation course, where they were basically teaching to the test." She counted herself fortunate to be able to pay for the course and a tutor, saying "many people will not be able to afford that, or they were trying to do it on their own." Xiling described the cost of taking an English proficiency exam as equivalent to about a month of wages in China, and Saanvi said in her home neighbourhood, a family of four could live for a month on the amount it cost to take the test in India. These examples illustrate the varied individual circumstance and context in which language proficiency exams are taken. The next section examines how the institution is able to coordinate and convert these actualities into the institution.

Study Permit

Given the time required to meet study permit requirements (e.g. financial, medical, police checks), international graduate students are well-advised not to wait until they have been accepted by the university to begin the process of applying. Still, even after the study permit includes the necessary letter of acceptance, it takes some time before the study permit required

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[12] For a more complete discussion on the politics of English language primacy and the difficulties associated with language pedagogy and measurement in Canadian higher education, see Fredeen (2013), *Discourses of Im/possibility: International Students at a Canadian University*.

can be issued. Sasha from Russia described the time pressures she was under to coordinate her letter of acceptance into the study permit application this way, "I didn't have a choice, technically… I just fired back, and said, yes, I'm accepting. Please let me know if I will be awarded any funding because I need it for the visa." In another example, Jamila from Tanzania was advised by an immigration officer, "you've got the admission but perhaps you should postpone up until January." This postponement added substantively to work, familial and other transition pressures. She told me, "it creates a tension for quite a long time, you know!" Kaswir from Indonesia explained there was insufficient infrastructure for his study permit to arrive back to his remote location in time for travel. He told me, "I went to Jakarta and I spent a lot of time to wait, and of course because it [Canadian Embassy] is in a nice part of the capital—it is very expensive to stay there." The requirements for obtaining the study permit add additional pressures onto those international graduate students who do the work of applying, and increasingly, they turn to a private sector service industry to assist them.

Applicants from several countries (e.g., India, Indonesia, Mexico) told me they consulted with commercial services to help them obtain study permits. Hector from Mexico explained it to me this way, "a consul gets thousands of applications, right, so I'm guessing they get tired. That is why you go to these guys, and these guys—they are a second set of eyes." Hector is going through the study permit application process for the first time, "if, for example, you forget a document, well then, they will just reject you." Kaswir explained that in Indonesia, private services are necessary because those applying may, "call to an embassy and nobody picks up the phone." He said it is possible to "go directly to the embassy, it is at a very certain time and you have to make an appointment—it is difficult to get through. It is easier to go to the private company." However, Saanvi did not feel the service provider she consulted in India offered her

anything that was not already available on the Internet. She suggested, "they have a contract of some kind with universities here. So they send an international student, they get a commission." Therefore, among the informants I spoke with, the experience of using educational or study permit service providers to assist in applying was mixed.

Section Two: "Can They Afford Us?"

This section describes how this work described above is converted into the professional language genres and aims of the institution. I move from those who did the work of applying to key informants who do the work of the institution. This is a work of inscription, "used here to point out the practices involved in producing an event or an object in documentary form as a 'fact' about the world" (G. Smith, 2014, p. 28). As representatives of Canadian University, key informants use *facts* as they operate within and perform the discursive frames of the institution. As we will see, the discursive frames of the institution can be uneven and at times inconsistent, yet taken together under contemporary branding practices discussed earlier they demonstrate a unified organizational purpose and vision.

A. Departments

At Canadian University, the department is a key point of contact for international graduate students seeking admission. After selecting a program, applicants are advised to visit the department's website and contact the department to ask questions, since it is a recommendation from the department or departmental committee to the faculty of graduate studies that may lead to a letter of acceptance. A graduate administrator was interviewed who is on the frontline of service provision, and provides advice to those applying make their "actualities institutionally actionable" (Griffith & Smith, 2014, p. 340). These actualities often carry the non-standard or idiosyncratic characteristics of international transcripts, test scores, and

references, but it takes work for them to be inscribed into an institutionally recognizable or actionable format. Following the graduate administrator into the institution allows us to observe how she does this work.

The graduate administrator in this study was the outward face of the university to all those applying as an international graduate student to her particular department. Shyla used the phone, email, links to webpages and other electronic resources to interact with, and provide support or advice to those doing the work of applying. She was highly experienced and had an extensive knowledge of departmental histories, committee structures, administrative processes and informal workings. She described her work as everything from clarifying and explaining terms or specializations within the department, to providing links and resources, and organizing or filing documents in electronic and paper format as they came into the department. Those applying routinely came to her with issues that arose in their work of applying, such as the conversion of grade point averages or non-standard transcripts discussed earlier. While it was clear she had a strong and professional *client* orientation, she also said "handholding does not help" applicants. Shyla's work required her to have one foot inside and one foot outside of the department.

Shyla discussed the tools she used to make the actualities of individuals applying recognizable and comparable to the departmental committee charged with making acceptance recommendations to the faculty of graduate studies. For non-standard transcripts, a guide from the faculty of graduate studies helped her to interpret and explain certain types of international grades and grade scales. When comparing jurisdictions that shared a grade point average scale, she consulted a separate spreadsheet that helped her to ascertain what a certain grade meant in a particular jurisdiction. For example, certain jurisdictions (e.g., provinces, states, countries) might

routinely inflate grades, while others may be thrifty in awarding grades, and the purpose of this spreadsheet was to provide a standard weighting to academic averages to achieve comparability. Despite the varied circumstances in which they take place, and regardless of the private sector service provider that organizes them, language proficiency scores are reported in a numerical form. Shyla told me that as an institutional representative, she may verify the language testing results submitted to her by phone. She receives notices and updates from the faculty of graduate studies on document falsification or scams related to the application process[13]. She described her work this way: the department has two open spaces in the doctoral program, there are 30 applicants for the committee to consider for those two places, of which 25 are well qualified. In this scenario they may recommend two of those applying be accepted, but there is "never a guarantee" those places will be filled because those particular candidates may choose to accept offers they have received from other universities.

B. International Reputation

Interviews held with key informants from a variety of locations and functions within the institution, including the registrar's office and international projects and services also shed light on the application process. Jane is a representative of the registrar's office, and she comments on how international graduate students are recruited to the institution, suggesting "ethically it would be incorrect if they are not ready for this institution." This after all, "is an institution for people who are prepared to succeed." She says it is a mutual effort of both student and institution, but "we need to know these students." Despite international competition, she says international graduate students will continue to be attracted to the institution by academic freedom and the opportunity for research and discovery that is available here. The role of the registrar's office

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[13] While the faculty of graduate studies distributed the notices to Shyla, she understood these to be obtained from a commercial subscription service. As with the other instruments used to aid in assessing submitted documents, she declined to show or allow me to see these notices.

was to ensure "every applicant receives the same level of fair and transparent service." Jane is extending an even playing field metaphor as a statement of institutional mission, but I think her more relevant insight for this study is that international graduate students can feel anonymous within the institution. She observes that people will be attracted to the institution by the platform for success it provides, but they may not stay long unless they are able to make some sort of authentic connection.

Martin, an administrator in a faculty that has a rich variety of international projects, suggested that some international graduate students, as well as students from culturally or geographically isolated regions of Canada, may experience problems of transition, including isolation and financial struggle. He sees smaller classes and greater awareness of culturally-based learning styles among faculty members as important. He suggests the international reputation and project experience of faculty members attract international graduate students. Martin adds that English speaking and writing abilities hold back students from transitioning into industry. Further from the frontline than Shyla, but closer to it than Jane, Martin brings an entrepreneurial zest to his work that can be seen in a variety of glossy promotional materials promoting the faculty, and international projects within the faculty. Martin's contribution is recognizing that Canadian University is almost completely dependent upon highly capable and talented faculty members. In the neoliberal discourse, NPM and corporatist management practices, there is little time or space for human connectivity, in part because it is not easily measured as an achievement, but also because it organizes individuals to compete against one another. Martin's self-interested enlightenment comes from the realization that without a well-respected, happy and self-motivated faculty, both he and Canadian University will have nothing to sell.

Andrew is a highly experienced representative of an organization that provides services to international graduate students, and I asked him to comment on a situation in which Kaswir from Indonesia was overbooked by the Canadian University housing department. Kaswir sent the housing application fee of around $175, together with the first month of rent in April from Indonesia, and they said they would let him know by June or July. When he showed-up with his spouse in August, "they said the place will only be available around September or October… even though it was supposed to be this month [September 1]." He tried, but was unable to get a commitment, and finally the housing office told him they "can only provide accommodation by December." Kaswir then described a series of exceptional steps he was taking to have his initial payment of rent refunded, as he needed it to pay rent somewhere else. After describing the situation to Andrew, he responded by pointing out "housing is an ancillary service" and within the current fiscal crunch on campus, they "cannot take the chance of having a vacancy!" He explained that the repercussions of not achieving the revenue expected from full occupancy would be much more severe than the consequences of dealing with someone who had been overbooked and had to look elsewhere for accommodation. I accepted Andrew's explanation as reflecting the institutional perspective on Kaswir's situation, but I suggest Canadian University's emphasis on fiscal rectitude in this situation is short-sighted and self-defeating. Whatever small victory may have occurred for the accounting logic at work in housing, it is easily swept away by the creation of an individual narrative that will haunt Canadian University's reputation in Canada, Indonesia and beyond. The dominance of fiscal priorities over and above Kaswir's housing needs undercuts the President's welcoming message, introduced in Chapter Five, proposing *a world for you here*.

C. Recruitment

Canadian University recruits international graduate students in both central and faculty or departmental locations. Steve is a recruiter from central administration, and describes his work as taking place within "a very competitive marketplace for students." Steve is knowledgeable, highly experienced and he takes the work of recruitment seriously. He describes international undergraduates and graduate students as separate markets, where graduates "are more concerned with who can they work with, how much research spending will they get, lab facilities, library holdings, and in general how is Canadian University connected." In my understanding, Steve is talking about the ranking and reputation of the university when he uses the word *connected*. For Steve, both recruitment and retention of international graduate students are important, even though, as he explains, it is hard to define retention. He explains that a student may come "in with just above our English minimums and they struggle, so it's that… If they're not retainable in the first place, should we factor them into our retention rates?" Steve suggests an international graduate student might be required to withdraw, or they might be offered a great job and decide not to continue their degree. He asks, "is that their problem or our problem or our fault or their fault or a mix?" In Steve's comments we see how the institution, or at least Steve's central recruiting business unit, is averse to accepting accountability for rates of retention at Canadian University. This particular aversion for accountability appears to be inconsistent with the rigidity of accountabilities in the competitive marketplace discourse Steve has described above, and continues below.

When asked about the biggest obstacle in trying to recruit international graduate students, Steve's response was *budget*. "Whereas the USA comes out with USA federally led department of education with big marketing campaigns, because they've got the budget, right? Australia,

twice as big. UK. Ireland's beating us, New Zealand's beating us." He shares his concern that Canada does not have a federal authority to market what are fundamentally provincial institutions. Steve also told me how the de-centralized departmental application process for international graduate students works against centralized efforts, noting a prevailing tension or cross-purposing that happens between the two. He acknowledges that departments may be under-staffed or have their own recruitment priorities. However, the end result is now "eight weeks has gone by and by then they've been admitted to University of Oregon." Steve works within a de-centralized system, and acknowledges, "my office doesn't control admissions, nor should it, to keep us honest." This discussion leads with Steve's view of Canadian University competing in a Darwinian market for students, but segues over to recognition that departments may have their own recruitment priorities, and the recognition that his work is to organize a pool of prospective learners. Others will decide on who will be admitted, and this too appears at odds with the application of market principles in this educational setting. The point is not that a variety of approaches to recruitment are represented within a complex organization, because that is to be expected, it is that Steve is not in sales (i.e., commodified transactions), but something more akin to being a promoter, broker and go-between.

A variety of information sources are used when recruiting international graduate students, including demographics, immigration and visa application rates. I asked Steve if there was an ideal type or profile of international student, and while he emphasized there was no single factor, "you have to start with basic demographics, and can they afford us? Is their English level high enough? Are they coming out of a curriculum that will help them be successful here?" Steve also looks at "the immigration, the annual, by country visa application rates and visa approval rates. So if those are going up, that means there's a growing interest in Canada." He also looks on the

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websites of transnational organizations for economic data, such as a "rise in GDP, that's on a variety of websites, UNESCO or… there's another one. It's not World Bank. But there is a variety of groups that monitor the financial status of other countries." Working from within the fiscal accountabilities and associated discourses in central recruitment, Steve aims at prospective learners that are defined primarily through transnational governance and multilateral organizations. After financial and language status, he is interested in immigration and visa approval rates. These are filters that align with federal priorities related to immigration, labour force and economic development, and it appears to me that Steve and Canadian University are doing the recruitment and settlement work of IRCC.

Elaine has a deep knowledge of her faculty and experience recruiting both international undergraduate and graduate students to it. She believes that cross-border learners enrich the learning environment for Canadian students, as well as bringing in revenues that support and maintain internationally respected professors. With de-centralized recruitment at the faculty level, she says there is an opportunity for more interactional or deliberate program match-making with prospective international graduate students. For her, there is a strong connection between the international work that the faculty does, and the prospects of bringing in graduate students from the geographic regions where faculty are active. Elaine works to attract international graduate students using the reputation of—and in cooperation with—faculty who are travelling. She describes this as a "good-fit" approach and it avoids loss of the detailed knowledge that happens with mass recruitment efforts. Elaine sees building program reputation, word of mouth and connecting people as key parts of her role in recruitment at the faculty level. This de-centralized approach to recruiting attaches priority to educational knowledge and values, and although it may not align with federal priorities in the same way as Steve's approach, I suggest

the deeper connection that Elaine works toward will produce higher educational outcomes, including rates of retention among learners.

Section Three: Moments of Disjuncture

My interviews with international graduate students occurred after they were accepted and studying at Canadian University. Because of this timing, differences between their expectations and the reality they experienced provided examples of disjuncture. A prominent theme of disjuncture in the conversations I had with international graduate students concerned their inability to obtain meaningful work within the knowledge economy. A second but related disjuncture was the various forms of social exclusion they experienced in the context of what they understood to be a country that was in need of a youthful citizenry able to contribute to the future prosperity of the country, a "war for talent" (Brown & Tannock, 2009) discourse. A third disjuncture was the disappearance of individual identity (e.g., history, politics) into a generalizing category of *generic* international student within the institution. Examples of each type of disjuncture follow.

First, while a variety of factors contribute to the decision to study in Canada, finding work was an important and persistent focus for a majority of these international graduate students. Given these conversations were taking place after many of the informants had been in Canada for a period of one or more years, the majority of informants expressed frustration at being unable to find work, or disappointment with the type of work (e.g., nanny, table server) they were able to obtain. Sasha from Russia told me the classification of work she was able to find did not fit occupational categories recognized by IRCC. This means it does not help toward permanent residence status. "So if you are waiting tables at night, in addition to TA [being a teaching assistant], as I did, then waiting tables doesn't count." The culmination of financial,

academic and work schedule stress exacerbated an existing health issue and prolonged her period

of study. A lack of "Canadian experience" was the phrase informants reported hearing most

often as reasons why their applications had not been successful on or off campus. Xiling from

China summed-up this collective sentiment as being "a *catch-22*, you don't have the experience

so you can't get a job. You don't have a job so you can't get the experience." This inability to

find work was a frequent topic of comment offered by informants, as was social exclusion.

Given the welcoming messages and the dependence of the Canadian economy on

attracting international graduate students (DFAIT, 2012), the social exclusion these international

graduate students experienced was a surprising contrast of discourse and experience. Offering

her observations about the work of trying to be included and accepted within Canadian society,

Jamila said it was like "inclusion for exclusion." Sanaz from Iran told me, "I found it very

difficult to get into communities that people are—I don't want to say this but let's say—are

white. Or you know, or, I don't know, but, but what I found is that international students always

hang out with other international students." This social exclusion is not entirely different from

the exclusion from work opportunities described above, and part of the resulting alienation can

be seen in an open letter (December 13, 2013) to the Board of Governors regarding differential

fees from 12 of the larger and better organized international student associations on campus.

Xiling from China had advice for the university, "I would say, stop treating international students

like cash cows." This exclusion and the resulting alienation that surfaces around differential fees

is a disjuncture, an experience inconsistent with its textual representation in the website and

promotional materials of the Canadian university.

A disjuncture occurred for some of those applying when their individual identity, and the

history, politics and struggle which contain it disappeared. This is "an essential characteristic of

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text/technological-mediated relations… …they mediate what becomes visible and known" (Corman & Melon, 2014, p. 169). I draw upon the experience of Saanvi from India and her discovery that the institution she graduated from was not on the list of institutions exempted from language testing. She told me, "I felt really stupid, because I never spoke one word of my mother tongue in my college." In her educational psychology program, she has reflected critically upon her past experience as a learner in a former colony of Britain. Her further observation, "now I think that the University is acting stupid", because now she knows how "things work and how the Western world takes advantage of developing nations." She anchors this observation with "now," separating her levels of consciousness then and now. She adds without prompting, "Now I know, I have no problem, it is the world that has the problem." Within the numeric value that will represent Saanvi's language test score, her colonial struggle and identity is lost. As Kerr (2014) observes, "reconstituted in prescriptive data sets as objectified reified statistics, the complexities, uncertainties and particularities of frontline work disappear from view" (p. 113).

Summary

The international graduate students I spoke with sought the most attractive site of study that was available to them, providing there was a reasonable expectation that admission requirements and the cost of study could somehow be met. This chapter began by reviewing the initial text-work-text sequence (Figure 6.1) that led into the work of applying. While radio, television and newspaper contributed to the discursive environments in the countries from which these individuals applied, the Internet was an increasingly dominant source of information about why, where and how to apply. Those doing the work of applying welcomed their empowerment as consumers, but this empowerment also necessitated making informed decisions, and this was

an important and growing part of the work of applying. This *buyer-beware* codicil supported and maintained the projection of individuated responsibility for those choices within a discursively produced knowledge economy. The application form and the work of applying were introduced as an institutional circuit using information from interviews provided by the international graduate students who applied.

The second section followed that work into the institution, where it was converted and taken-up by the institution in clusters centering on the frontline of service provision, including departments, international reputation of the university and recruitment. Shyla was the graduate administrator who had the most direct role in converting the messy work of applying into standardized form so it will be actionable within the professional genres of the university. Regarding the international reputation of the university, we met Jane from the Registrar's office who understood and articulated the anonymity felt by some international graduate students when observing *we need to know* these students. Martin was the entrepreneurial administrator who recognized that despite all of the rhetoric about fiscal rectitude and efficiencies, Canadian University was dependent upon faculty who transcended their increasingly less-esteemed role, and worked to inspire, attract and motivate a new generation of scholars. The response from Andrew about Kaswir's housing predicament illustrated that by using accounting logic together with inclusive discourse, Canadian University undercuts its own purpose and message. What emerges in these examples is a battle to increase the numbers of abstracted and anonymous learners using accounting logic on one hand, and the ability to know these learners through an inspired faculty in academic community on the other. While not mutually exclusive visions, these differences emerge clearly in the differing approaches to recruitment at Canadian University.

Again in the second section, Steve in central recruiting and Elaine in faculty or departmental recruiting epitomize the differences in NPM and educational approaches, and the hierarchy of knowledge that is produced and reinforced by competing institutional discourse. My understanding of Steve's role is that while he sees himself and Canadian University competing in highly competitive markets, he is not responsible for admissions or retention. The discursive order characteristic of NPM and accounting logic might make him feel accountable for *sales*, but his work is not that of conventional sales where a commodity is exchanged in transaction. Yet, market discourse and the competition state organize his thinking, as he observes that "Ireland's beating us, New Zealand's beating us." The accounting logic, rankings, and other clearly measurable indices flow through the transnational and multilateral data sources used by Steve to aim his recruiting efforts in a way that are consistent with federal and certain provincial priorities related to immigration, labour force and economic development. In contrast, Elaine uses an approach that relies on educational knowledge to serve educational priorities. She is not organizing a pool of prospective citizenry for the federal government: Elaine is focused on brokering educational interests in conjunction with faculty members that shine on the international stage.

Section three consisted of moments of disjuncture, those times when there was a discontinuity between the experience of international graduate students in Canada and the discursive representation of that experience. In sum, this was the difficulty of finding work within the discursively produced knowledge economy, and the social exclusion that surfaced in relation to differential fees. Saanvi's unique history and politics were made invisible as her alma mater was excluded from the language exemption list at Canadian University. Consumer choice is welcomed, but in an institution that is conflicted by market and educational discourse, there is

a disjuncture between what might reasonably be expected and the experience of cross-border learners. Beginning with the messages they see at home on popular media, through recruitment techniques and the work of applying, one result of institutional objectification is alienation from individual identity, academic community and Canadian University. As the specific and measurable objectives of Canadian University accounting logic advance to make-up budget shortfalls, educational knowledge and priorities subside. In the next chapter, I examine these and other findings in an analysis of the work of applying as an international graduate student at Canadian University.

Chapter 7: Self-Serve University

A central feature of this study is a focus on how the mediating text of the application structures the work of applying so that some of it is visible and knowable to the institution, while other work is not. At the same time, this chapter examines how the application process has been structured at Canadian University. The following pages revisit the work of applying using what is visible and knowable to both the international graduate students who are applying and Canadian University, building on work presented in earlier chapters. Although they originated from nine different countries, interview participants shared an inter-related series of text-work-text sequences that comprise the institutional circuit and accountability circuit of applying. This chapter also continues to explore how new public management (NPM), and associated measures shape internationalization efforts at Canadian University.

Working from the mediating text of the application, this study offers insight into how the frontline of Canadian University is operational in countries from which students apply. The graduate programs to which international students apply are not the only way Canadian University is active internationally, but this aspect of internationalization is very important in terms of revenues, international status and profile, program enrichment and future citizenry, (AUCC, 2014; CBIE, 2014; DFAIT, 2009a; 2009b; 2012; DFATD, 2014). By examining the work of applying in the context of differential fee implementation and tuition fee setting, as well as the labour force, immigration and trade priorities of the federal government, specific claims about internationalization at Canadian University are warranted.

This chapter is organized into four sections. The first section introduces figure 7.1, which illustrates how the work of applying is divided into work visible to the institution, as well as invisible work. In keeping with my commitment to the standpoint of international graduate

students, I also discuss what is visible and known to those applying in each stage of the work of applying. The second section addresses the research questions introduced in Chapter One and offers observations about internationalization at Canadian University. The third section briefly summarizes the first two, and introduces the final chapter.

Section One: Work Visibility and Knowledge

The actualities of the application process have an indexical character (Smith, 2005) outside of the textually mediated discourses and regulatory frames of institutional discourse. The standpoint of international graduate students is indicated by my previous analysis of the work of applying as the institution comes into view. For example, it is clear from my interviews with international graduate students that their work of applying began much earlier than an institutional timeline would indicate. The work required of the visible and known institutional process is a subset of the actualities of applying, much of which is invisible to the institution. For example, the preparation and pre-planning done by those applying required the everyday practicalities of negotiating with family, employers, and other social networks; in the everyday work of applicants, these are substantive hurdles to be cleared.

The work of applying from the standpoint of international graduate students, illustrated in Figure 7.1 on the next page, shows a pattern of work that is enumerated in seven stages that are listed in the central column of the table. To the left is visible and known work, and on the right is work that is both necessary to submit a successful application, and not visible or knowable to Canadian University. The work of applying has been separated and numbered into seven distinct stages based upon the information provided to me by international graduate students during our conversations. It is worth noting that for the purposes of analysis, the stages appear as being distinct, but in practice there may be considerable overlap, particularly for instance in an ongoing

assessment of possibilities (stage one), preparation and pre-planning (stage two), and country selection (stage three). While the numbers attached to these stages are useful for ease of reference, they also do not represent a rigid sequential order, as, for instance, work on obtaining a student visa (stage five) may begin prior to the work of application (stage four) being completed.

Figure 7.1: Work of Applying to Canadian University (International Graduate Student)

Visible and Known to Canadian University	Work of Applying as an International Graduate Student	Invisible and Unknown to Canadian University
	1. Assessment of Possibilities	1.1 Institutional Websites 1.2 Social Media 1.3 Popular Media (Discourse)
	2. Preparation & Pre-planning	2.1 Consult Informal Networks 2.2 Spouse, Family, Employer 2.3 Popular Media (Discourse)
	3. Country Selection	3.1 Immigration Website 3.2 Relative or Family Friend 3.3 Earning Potential (Discourse)
4.1 Choosing a Program 4.2 Admission Requirements 4.3 Application Deadline Plan 4.4 Gathering (e.g. Transcripts) 4.5 Submit Application + Fee 4.6 If Acceptance Letter Issued	4. Application	
	5. Student Visa	5.1 Letter of Acceptance 5.2 Proof of Financial Means 5.3 Proof of Security Check 5.4 Proof of Satisfactory Health 5.5 Satisfy IRCC Depart Canada
	6. Acceptance/Rejection Offer	6.1 Funding, Scholarship Support 6.2 Reputation & Ranking 6.3 Personal Attachment/Contact
	7. Travel (e.g., flight, housing)	7.1 Country of Origin 7.2 Travel 7.3 Canada

Post-secondary institutions in Canada that issue letters of acceptance to prospective learners are required to participate in the IRCC's designated learning institution program. For a DLI such as Canadian University to issue a letter of acceptance to a prospective international

graduate student, it must be prepared according to the stipulations and parameters set out by

Immigration, Refugee, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). In Figure 7.1, the letter of acceptance

crosses from what is visible and known to Canadian University in the application (stage four), to

what is invisible and unknown to the university: international student visa (stage five). In travel

(section seven), two arrows separate out the work that is done in the country of origin, and that

which takes place in Canada. I now begin to explore the assessment of possibilities (stage one).

1. Assessment of Possibilities: The Educational Imaginary

What is knowable and visible to international graduate students in the assessment of

possibilities stage is information gleaned from institutional websites, social media or e-

communities including message boards, file sharing sites, and chat rooms. As introduced in

Chapter Five, the government, university and faculty of graduate studies websites provide upbeat

messaging about *finding the perfect job*, depict *a world for you here* or suggest there are

important connections to be made in a *global university*. These are easy websites to find through

common search engines (e.g., Google, Baidu, Yahoo!) and they contain well organized and up to

date information. For example, information on the cost of study and associated living costs at

universities in Canada was perceived as freely available, although two informants also identified

differing regional costs as something they were only able to ascertain through contact and

discussion with other students. The Immigration, Refugee, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)

website was described as "clear" by several informants. However, misunderstandings related to

the IRCC website were also cited by informants, and these were primarily about the categories

and quantification of Canadian work experience within a point system used by IRCC to

adjudicate applications for permanent resident status. While clearly a great many assessments

delay, defer or stop entirely at this stage, those who do apply tend to first see a web based

representation of the university they apply to during latter stages.

What is knowable and visible to Canadian University in the assessment of possibilities

stage is extremely limited, so energy and effort is spent on mass marketing through self-

representation and messaging that will attract those predisposed to apply. What administrators at

Canadian University know at this stage is based upon historic patterns of enrolment, which may

include long-standing feeder or other institutional relationships, and regional affinities, which

may include states and countries that have previously sent international graduate students. Steve,

who was the central recruiter we met in Chapter Six, accessed freely available transnational

economic statistics and demographics such as those that might be found on the OECD website to

segment markets and determine where to allocate scarce marketing resources. From previous

experience, Steve and his colleagues have an understanding of how Canadian University

compares in relation to cost, reputation and services when compared to other post-secondary

institutions in the province, nation, and peer countries which also receive large numbers of

international graduate students. At this early stage, Canadian University focuses on self-

representation, exploration and discovery narratives of faculty, and celebrating noted alumni

within prominent economic, social and political circles. Although only indirect information was

available about these services through informants, Canadian University may also make

commercial arrangements with educational consultants and marketing agencies in other countries

to promote them. Universities and governments in large receiving countries like Canada share

common interest in promoting knowledge economy (Drucker, 2008; Tannock, 2009), lifelong

learning (Coffield, 1999; Kreber & Mhina, 2005), and prior learning and recognition (Wihak,

2007) discourses to attract prospective international and domestic learners through newspaper, radio and television coverage.

2. Preparations and Pre-Planning: Is it Possible for Me?

As international graduate students begin to see what is involved in applying, they take steps to gather information and consult with those most directly affected. This may include finding out about required language proficiency scores, costs or the time commitment required to do a graduate degree, or talking with an employer about what support, if any, may be available. The first assessment of possibilities stage now moves to a stage of establishing parameters around what is possible. This is a process of discernment that supports the individual in developing one or more viable target universities, or rejecting the graduate studies for the time being. Whether through the institutional self-representations described earlier, collective post-secondary marketing programs or promotional trips organized by provincial or federal governments, graduate student fairs, media coverage, alumni or family friends, the prospective international graduate student in the preparations and pre-planning stage will see one or more universities where they may fit. S/he must find out what grade point average or graduate admission test scores may be required for entry into their chosen program, and then identify the costs, preparation and time away from other commitments (e.g., work, family) that will be required to develop an application. Unless the individual is fortunate enough to have a contact, family friend or another connection with the target university, they continue to rely on institutional websites, popular media, and other more or less official sources of information. Even with the possibility of good informal sources of information through bulletin boards, special interest groups or chat rooms on the Internet, it is not possible to see or know what Canadian University is really like, and this may not happen until on-campus study.

Individuals in the preparation and pre-planning stage first consulted their own personal networks, but were also creative and resourceful in gathering information related to application procedures. In one example, an informant found a recently published article by a person of the same ethnicity who was affiliated with the university that she wished to attend. She emailed that person with questions and explained what she planned to do. Although prior to writing, the informant had no prior contact with the author, the individual responded by providing both supportive information (e.g., website links, electronic resources) and encouragement to complete the application. Pre-existing social contacts or networks were influential at this stage. Xiling from China put it this way, "I have several friends who graduated from this university, so at least they were my models." Another described her consultation process prior to attending Canadian University, "these are my colleagues, my friends who graduated from this university. They are very good." Where a practice of international student mobility and exchange already existed, informants sought information and opinions from contacts so they would know what to expect. One informant observed about his preliminary contacts with Canadian University, "if you actually explain your situation, and you explain what's going on, then, they change—they actually listen to you. That's pretty good." A recurring theme in these interviews was that applicants appreciated email exchanges with frontline administrative personnel most when they were timely, unique, informative and understanding of the applicant's particular circumstance. However, it should also be noted that personalized attention of this sort may have been particularly appreciated because it was so rare, and atypical of what to expect when engaging with large post-secondary education institutions in North America.

What is visible and knowable to Canadian University is still extremely limited, although there may be one or two exceptions. For example, if a prospective international graduate student

made a preliminary contact, and that contact had been captured on the proprietary client relationship management software used by Steve in central recruiting, then collectively these enquiries may be interpreted as early indicators of interest from a given geographic location. The faculty-based (decentralized) recruiter who worked with faculty members to promote and match-make graduate programs, Elaine, may also have early indications of interest given her one-on-one work with prospective cross-border learners. A faculty administrator, such as Martin (also introduced in Chapter Six), will probably be able to secure initial information on prospective graduate students if they come with funding. However, these state-sponsored graduate students from locations such as Saudi Arabia or Kuwait may not constitute large numbers, and there may be other challenges associated with academic calendars, or other work commitments. In contrast to the recruitment ambiguities during these early stages, there are decentralized departmental and faculty pockets within Canadian University that have their own specific recruitment priorities. They know what international masters and doctoral student spaces they may wish to fill, but may or may not have a direct role in recruitment activities. As a broad indicator, centralized recruiters may use demographic projections to identify regions or countries without sufficient capacity within university systems to meet demand, and may allocate marketing resources to those locations. However, recruiting for an under-supply identified centrally may not match with faculty and departmental priorities.

3. Country Selection: The Canadian Dream

Through the Internet, newspaper articles, radio interviews and television broadcasts in their country of origin, the international graduate students I spoke with knew something of jobs, immigration prospects, and economic opportunity in Canada. More specifically, they heard project announcements that included job prospects, or reports indicating an aging workforce in

Canada would require younger workers. For example, Tannock (2011) recounts a federal immigration minister announcing to popular media in India that their best and brightest people are needed for the Canadian economy. In another example, and even while realising its fictional character, one international graduate student offered the television program *Little Mosque on the Prairie* as one of the reasons he and his spouse came to Canada instead of New Zealand. He said, "it is the TV portrayal of an idyllic lifestyle. It is an ideal place for Muslims… Come on… come on… there is no such place!!!" Then, "you know it is an ideal place… It is more than an ideal place when you're wearing the hijab and all the people respect different backgrounds." Not counting their own country of origin, no informant I spoke with had applied to universities in more than two countries. They cited the cost and time associated with obtaining a study permit, as well as the time spent to research immigration prospects as reasons for this. A majority of the participants talked about the decision to study abroad as an important or pivotal life choice.

One international graduate student made a comment representative of a more general sentiment among informants when he emphasized the importance of finding employment, saying, "by having jobs, we want to be contributor citizens." These and other comments suggest that obtaining work may have been an integral part of both a sense of belonging within society and financing a graduate degree. In another example, Azra from Turkey spoke of how popular Canadian education was in her country and stated early in our conversation that pursuing this degree was the chance "to make my dream real" and with enthusiasm, "I came here to see and look at what's going on here in Canada." She explained that after being accepted at two universities in Canada, choosing which university to attend was relatively easy, "because for my objective—it is the same for me. So I just looked at how the universities were ranked." Another informant was accepted at three Canadian universities, but explained, "I have a friend who

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immigrated here many years ago…. It is a very important reason why I chose to come here." She

spoke of herself and other students as "customers." Yet, another informant said after getting to

work with her academic supervisor, economic opportunities were her next most important reason

for choosing Canada. "I just like Canada" was a representative comment expressed by one

informant, and I understood this as a relational attachment to what Trilokekar (2010) called

Canada's soft power[14].

What is knowable and visible to Canadian University in the country selection stage is still

extremely limited, and consists primarily of a historic track record of student enrolment from

particular countries, and new economic data and demographic projections about future enrolment

demand. To these, there would also be pre-existing institutional linkages, special relationships

and research agreements that would be a small, but reliable stream of international graduate

students. Canadian University does not see or know who the prospective international graduate

students will be, and so institutional neutrality is presumed where each individual applying may

be treated in the same way. Jane, a senior representative of the registrar's office introduced

earlier in Chapter Six confirms this, telling me that she sees her mission as ensuring "every

client" is to receive "fair and transparent service." Still, Canadian University operates in a

complex world, and both the registrar's office and the faculty of graduate studies builds up

knowledge about the characteristics of applications from certain countries.

In the public sphere, these take the form of language or application fee exemption lists,

and in the case of China and Nigeria, different application deadlines. The Canadian public tends

to trust that a university will make good and public-minded decisions, and generally operate in

accordance with the values on which it was first constituted. The graduate administrator (Shyla),

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[14] Trilokekar used this phrase to describe an affinity towards Canada stemming from a deeply rooted ethical engagement with the international community. These historic and intersecting policy roots originate in official development assistance, immigration, defence, diplomacy and higher education policies.

introduced in Chapter Six, confirmed that she receives a spreadsheet from central administration that calibrates marks from various regions and countries for the purpose of assessing them. The distinction here is that while the work of those applying as international graduate students is still invisible and unknown to Canadian University, there exists an institutional memory or knowledge in the form of country relationships that justifies a differentiated treatment of applications. My point is not to take issue with the merits of particular institutional exceptions at this time, but instead to underline that equal does not mean equitable. To best serve principles of equity on which Canadian University is founded, there are circumstances under which it treats certain applications (e.g., First Nations, Metis, and Inuit) unequally at home. It follows that given Canadian University's need to differentiate between applications domestically, it will need to differentiate between applications when it is active internationally. The willingness of stakeholders to entrust decisions such as these to Canadian University is a measure of its legitimacy as an institution. A key legitimating factor for these institutional decisions is the democratic and relatively transparent governance model upon which it is based.

4. Application: Proxy & Recognition

While important personal interactions may occur with faculty or a departmental contact via email, phone or by skype, the primary institutional interaction in the application stage is with a software based series of text-work-text sequences that together constitute a specialized form of institutional circuit, referred to here as an "accountability circuit" (Griffith & Smith, 2014, p. 340). For thesis-based programs, international graduate students may be required to provide the name of a faculty member who has agreed to be their academic supervisor, and requires individuals to become familiar with the work of faculty members and compare it to their own interests, and enter into email contact and exchange with them. The social location of those applying, and the work knowledge that each has when applying, suggests international graduate

students are able to act upon their own domestic institutions because they have both limited agency within the relatively prestigious Canadian university as an applicant, and agentic standing within their own domestic institution as an alumnae.

What is knowable and visible to those applying is a detailed knowledge of the post-secondary system that prepared them, on the one hand, and the application requirements of the Canadian University, on the other. Within these two horizons, the applicant becomes a proxy for the text of the application in the text-reader conversation. As graduate administrator, Shyla worked with a high client-service orientation, but while willing to provide information and advice, noted the work of application had to be driven by the person applying, and "handholding does not help." The workload is organized so those applying must transform documents from the post-secondary system they are coming from, to the format and content of those that are required (e.g., transcripts, reference letters), while being recognizable by Canadian University. The cultural resourcefulness and structuring of this unique work insists the success or failure of each application must be experienced as an individual outcome.

International graduate students worked to convince professors and administrators in their home institutions to produce transcripts and references that conformed to the requirements of Canadian University's application process. If they were applying from another country and were not able to do this in-person, applicants worked to (1) advocate, (2) translate (3) notarize, and (4) move documents in such a way they would be recognizable to the Canadian university. For example, a student from Iran introduced in Chapter Six, Sanaz, found a paper written by a student from Stanford University on how to convert results from her 20-point scale to the four point scale used at Canadian University. Her work of translating, converting, reconstructing and notarizing documents was done primarily by working on her own academic record with

individuals she knew from her home post-secondary institution. As with other applicants who are applying from a myriad of other locales, Canadian University has been successful in replicating relations among people in local sites through the text of the application. In conversations with international graduate students overall, I observed concerted acts by applicants on representatives working within their domestic institutions that resulted in the creation of documents, the production and notarization of translations, and the movement of official documents from one location to another.

Understandings related to reference letters, transcripts, grades, statement of intent, curriculum vitae, and academic supervisor-graduate student relationships were cited by international graduate students as areas of high potential for misunderstanding or miscommunication. For clarity, this work of adaptation and bridging is not simply the work of navigating between two systems—although that too is important. It is instead, for each application, the work of navigating between two systems to produce a text-based artifact (i.e., transcript, reference letter, curriculum vitae) of sufficient facticity to be recognized by the Canadian institution. The problem is exacerbated when translation across languages, grading scales and documentary formats, and/or documents from more than one referring institution are required. A doctoral student described how she needed to provide documents from two different institutions, saying, "in China, different universities have different formats and transcripts." Once achieved however, a full and complete application has the agency and status of artefact bestowed by the Canadian university. Each of the informants described unique hurdles they overcame to meet formal institutional admission requirements, and at times there was real ambiguity about how to proceed. An informant put it this way, "I just asked if this updated

information was necessary, they just said to me—if it is written in the website—whatever's in the website is true."

English language testing invites further comment here as it illustrates how the text of the application is able to organize relations among people (e.g., capitalist, peer competition, ranking), wherever the service is offered. Although it is up to each applicant to determine whether they are required to take the test, and if so, when and where the examination will be undertaken, the social organization under which it occurs are faithfully reproduced. By noting how the circumstances (e.g., time allotments, completion practices, conditions for test-takers) of the test and the proctoring of specific tests (e.g., TOEFL, IELTS) are reproduced in countless sites, we see how the text of the application has organized those applying as groups, and the coordination and concerting effects of the institution are surfaced. This illustrates IE's distinctive and ethnographic approach to text, with "focus upon the coordination of subjectivities, consciousness, activities, and relations among people" (Smith & Turner, 2014, p. 7). The majority of these informants prepared for this exam with study, paying to take preparatory classes, sharing preparation materials, and arranging for dedicated exam preparation time. Recall the CBIE (2014) survey with 3,095 respondents, approximately 40% of which were graduate students, and 50% of those respondents indicated their intention to apply for permanent resident status. The importance of *official* language acquisition as an organizer of relations among people becomes clearer when thinking about how common language and related language policy are a critical conduit for the coordination of subjectivities and consciousness in relation to the development of citizenry for the Canadian state. In the context of immigration and labour force development priorities, Canadian University's interest in acquisition of official languages aligns with those of federal and provincial governments as they champion the competition state.

What is visible and known to the institution during the application stage is only a very narrow band of the work of applicants. Still, distilling applications into a qualified pool prior to their assessment as applicants is an important part of the work design required by the university. By requiring a self-serve approach, Canadian University off-loads the work of organizing. By structuring the application process as an accountability circuit, Canadian University first separates those who complete the accountability circuit of applying from those who do not. Next, an online software system coordinating with commercial examination service providers (e.g., GMAT, MCAT, TOEFL), and with assistance from departmental graduate administrators such as Shyla, Canadian University organizes a pool of candidates for over 500 graduate programs. They can be compared with one another because the messy, chaotic and incongruous details in which these applications have been produced outside of the university, have been transformed into the ideological schemata and tidy professional genres of what constitutes an application within Canadian University. Lost in the name of efficiency and expediency are other important aspects of these learners,

The self-serve system at Canadian University guides blame for problems of incompatibility, incompletion and rejection back onto those applying in the great majority of cases, preserving the university's image and ability to self-represent as a neutral arbiter of ability or talent. Consider a scenario in which two friends from Indonesia apply to a graduate program at Canadian University, both are somehow able to complete the accountability circuit of applying, and while one is accepted, the other is rejected. The friend who was rejected may blame Canadian University for the decision. However, interviews suggest a more likely scenario is that the unsuccessful applicant will examine their own academic record and qualifications for shortcomings and turn blame inward. It is a more forceful point when considered in the context

of the accountability circuit of applying, where Canadian University is spared the work of rejecting applicants simply because they are unable or may choose not to complete a certain text-work-text sequence of the accountability circuit. When Saanvi from India determined her institution was not on the language exemption list, she turned this incongruity into self-blame, saying she felt "stupid." The number of individuals who apply and face this incongruity or one like it, and then choose not to apply is not easy to know, although indicators such as international graduate application starts might be compared with numbers submitted, and more interviews such as those completed in the CBIE (2014) survey would be a start. Canadian University relies upon acquiescence to the system of applying, so later decisions about who is accepted are legitimated. This too, is how Canadian University organizes relations among people.

5. Study Permit: Two Tier Ethics

International Graduate Students need to meet a variety of important conditions prior to traveling to Canada, and because this study permit process is administered through IRCC, these requirements tend not to be associated with university admittance. For example, Hector introduced in Chapter Six as being from Mexico emphasized how Canadian University was supplying him with funds, and the "real people" requiring proof of financial means were in the Canadian consular offices. International graduate students are normally not granted a permit to study in Canada by the IRCC unless they have a letter of acceptance from a designated learning institution (DLI). But, given the time required to meet the study permit prerequisites (e.g. financial, medical, police checks), they are well-advised not to wait until they have a letter from a DLI in hand to begin the process of applying for a study permit. For a variety of practical reasons, applicants begin the process of applying for a study permit prior to knowing the disposition of their application, and this means they may incur the direct and indirect costs of

certifying financial, health, security, and other criteria before they know the disposition of their application. It also means they will have done much of the work of applying to Canadian University by this stage, and it is important to briefly review the work knowledge of those applying at this critical juncture.

International graduate students are keenly aware of the limited window they have to make their aspirations of cross-border study a reality. They are nearing a crossroads at the end of an extended level of increased effort, time and resource allocation that are well beyond routine daily commitments. There are additional social pressures or expectations that arise from having consulted networks of former professors or administrators, family members, friends, colleagues and employers, as each applicant considers what is to be lost or gained in undertaking this program of study (Cross, 1981). Add to this momentum-building social pressure, few international graduate students have direct personal sources of information about their prospective or new location(s), but most will have an informed view of what their life possibilities will be if they choose to stay. The pressures of rising social expectation mix together with the ongoing discourses of knowledge economy and human capital theory found in popular media, intensify pressure on the individual within this decision-making window. For some, self-determination seemed to be in tension with parental expectations (e.g., Saanvi from India), or culturally prescribed gender roles (e.g., Azra from Turkey) weighed on the individual. Others, including Jamila from Tanzania or Sasha from Russia, appeared to be pressured to expand life possibilities that added to the weight of carrying this work knowledge. While the particular aspects of individual situations were unique, they were similar in that each was a product of how Canadian University (in conjunction with IRCC) coordinated and concerted relations among people. The net effect of these additional pressures are discussed further in the next section, but

for now it is worth noting the heightened level of social pressure acting upon those who have shared the aspiration of cross-border learning within their respective social networks.

It is not what is known and visible to the institution during the student visa stage, but rather what is not known and not visible that is important. More particularly, given that Canadian University is able to rely upon IRCC to establish proof of financial resources, security and health checks, it need not concern itself with issues of access. By access, I refer to those social, economic or political constraints that may prevent laudable candidates from being able to gain access to the institution. I noted earlier in the section on country selection that Canadian University waives the application fee for certain countries. This fee exemption list is comprised of countries currently on the United Nations Least Developed Countries list, and presumably that opens the door a crack to an exceptional candidate. However, equality of access does not mean equitable access, and a great many of the barriers that prevent a fuller consideration of the available international applicants is a presumably efficient, but highly constraining self-service system of applying. The coordinating and concerting impact of not knowing and not seeing the economic background of those applying means not having to consider the capable applicants who self-select out of the process because of life circumstance. This coordination has the effect of creating two levels of ethics within the institutional arrangements between Canadian University and IRCC, one tier for Canadians where equity and diversity issues strive to maintain or advance, and another lesser tier for everyone else. I suggest this too is a coordinating and concerting effect of Canadian University in service to the competition state.

6. Acceptance or Rejection of Offer: The Crossing

From what the international graduate student is able to see and know, there may be a sweet moment when Canadian University or other universities where they have been working to win acceptance, writes with an offer of admittance. For these informants, the first notification

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they receive is an email from a departmental administrator indicating their application has been cleared for acceptance at the departmental level, and their application is now being recommended to the faculty of graduate studies for acceptance. This is intended as a courtesy by the institution providing advance notice to applicants that they will almost certainly be accepted, and so they are able to make decisions related to the offer of admission, travel, accommodation and other arrangements. However, the meaning of this correspondence was sometimes unclear, for example Azra from Turkey asked, "I could not understand why this was sent to me if the acceptance was not final, why would they send this letter to me?" Far from the rationalist language and metaphor of the market, informants told me personal stories of feeling a sense of personal acceptance, vindication and connection at the prospect of what was to come. It was for some, a sweet and pivotal moment of respite between the long campaign of winning one or more admissions, and the intense time pressures surrounding the logistical arrangements necessary to pick-up one's life and set-up in a new locale. Although there was a formal mechanism for accepting the university's offer of acceptance on the online system, when talking with me, informants referred to the email they received from the departmental or graduate administrator they corresponded with as the moment of acceptance after an intensive application process.

After they had been offered an admission at one or more universities, international graduate students tended to select a school based on such factors as individual attention in the form of scholarship or other financial support, academic supervisor preference, and informal email with departmental representatives. One informant added institutional diligence, responsiveness and decision-making in the assessment of his qualifications. Five days after submitting his application to the department, Hector from Mexico received specific questions back about his personal background and previous learning by email. He had been accepted at

other schools, but he said these questions established the department or program as being of "high quality" and "serious." He shared a proud moment, "I got accepted, and then my supervisor called me!" Hector went on to say, "he actually called me, I got accepted at another two universities in the United States, but… …I want to go to a place like that." Again, the informants I spoke with cited personal contact prior to acceptance, or a high quality of email interaction during the application process as having a favourable impact on which school they chose to attend.

Several international graduate students offered the observation that Canadian universities represented a high value proposition. Informants offered comments such as, the "two big reasons I came here were quality and price." Informants' comments about differential and market-modifier fees covered a wide range of perspectives, but it is worth noting the cost of attending universities in Canada was seen to represent a bargain when compared to alternatives. One informant suggested she would pay less as an international student in Canada for her graduate degree than as a resident in her own country of origin. Mary from the United States said, "I think Canada should really market that." However, this is in sharp contrast to another informant who had been in Canada for more than two years, and when asked if she had any advice for Canadian University in the way it worked with international graduate students, Xiling offered, "I would say, stop treating international students like cash cows." Several other informants suggested that differential fees were unfair and two informants suggested the charging of interest on unpaid tuition fees was punitive. While on the topic of differential fees, when the topic was raised in discussion with institutional insiders, the general sentiment was that in the context of diminishing budgets for Canadian universities, differential fees will probably continue to grow during the next decade.

These informants indicated they did not know what level of funding support they might reasonably expect in their graduate programs when they accepted an offer of admission. Indicative comments included, "so the department guaranteed some funding, but they didn't say how much," and another informant was told "you might have funding." One informant summed it up by saying, "I just accepted it anyway, and said, we'll see." Another informant was aware of rates for graduate research assistantships posted on the university website, but surprised by the level of competition for available work. The pressure to make a decision described in earlier stages continued unabated. Azra from Turkey described it this way, "I had very limited time, because my school wanted me to know if I could not get acceptance, then they would be trying to put my name on next year's organizational charts." Another informant suggested the stress of not knowing was affecting other aspects of her life, saying, "I was like a crazy person." This informant was able to recall the precise setting in which she received her email of notification, after "checking every day, like three times a day before that." In two other cases, a person who applied for entry into a doctoral program, received an offer of admissions at the Masters level instead, but still decided to accept it. In these conversations, there was often a notable optimism and courage to be found in the decision of these individuals to pursue international graduate studies given the limited information available to them when making the decision.

What is visible and knowable to Canadian University in the acceptance or rejection of offer stage is extremely limited, and until the student visa is obtained and the individual is able to reserve accommodation and travel to Canada the acceptance is not a certainty. As the graduate administrator acknowledged, there is "never a guarantee" the space that is reserved for an individual who accepts an offer of admission will be filled. The recruiter from central administration, Steve, would like to see Canadian University establish an enrolment manager to

ensure all of the spaces that the university has on offer are filled. But those with a faculty-based or departmental role to play in recruiting such as Elaine felt a centralized enrolment approach would create problems related to customization, and fit between the learner and the space to be filled. In addition, there is a need for more attention to housing and other settlement issues which make taking-up the offer of admissions difficult, as a key informant involved with the provision of services (Andrew) suggested. Such institutional supports tend to be challenged given lean institutional budgets and focus on the financial bottom line.

In sum, the work of applying is complex and involves much work invisible to the institution; the next section, returns to my research questions to discuss the broader implications of findings from this study.

Section Two: Introducing Competition University

This section articulates what the work of applying and its patterns of visibility suggest about internationalization at Canadian University and beyond. This study does not aim for the certitude sought in the scientific method but instead acknowledges the predispositions and commitments of the IE researcher taking up the standpoint of international graduate students to study the work of applying. Focusing on the mediating text of the application uncovers the work of applying, and examines how that work is structured. In this way, it is possible to see how Canadian University is able to coordinate and concert relations among people. In the previous section, examples of how relations among people were replicated by Canadian University in other locales included English language testing, individuation of application results, and the dislocation of educational priorities in favour of efficiencies achieved within an online application system. This exploration of how applying works sees Canadian University increasingly committed to federal aims and priorities that are found within the competition state,

and through programs such as DLI, increasingly beholden to it. In the previous section, I described how the work of applying was structured, and what the patterns of visibility meant to both institution and applicant. In this section my aim is to uncover what can then be said about applying, and what this particular organization tells us about internationalization at Canadian University. This section sequences the claims of this study as they correspond to the research questions outlined in Chapter One. A brief discussion section follows.

Research Question One: Revenue

1)   What relations of ruling exist in trans-local sites of practice related to the international student application for graduate studies at Canadian University? How do the textually mediated processes of completing the application form activate and coordinate the work required of international graduate students to make application?

In addition to higher education aims, universities are revenue-generating instruments for Canada (Table 3.1 *University Revenue Sources: Percentage of Annual Budget*), and Alberta (Table 5.1 *International Graduate Student Fees for Alberta*). They pursue federal and provincial government priorities related to trade, immigration, labour force and general economic development. In the dispute between the Minster responsible for higher education and the Board of Governors of Canadian University that culminated in early 1977, there was a clear dislocation of educational knowledge in favour of fiscal priorities as illustrated in the implementation of differential fees. As indicated by a pattern of shrinking government support, and the emphasis on fiscal rectitude to be found within *Canada's International Education Strategy: Harnessing our Knowledge Advantage to Drive Innovation and Prosperity* (DFATD, 2014), the emphasis on revenue generation at Canadian University will increase. If the swift passing of Bill 40 (2006), which took the task of setting tuition fees out of the legislature and into provincial Cabinet is a

solid indicator—as I propose it is—the tradition of democratic education at Canadian University falls to a clear second behind the fiscal priorities of the provincial legislature.

The fiscal priorities and accounting knowledge reflected within new public management (NPM) and advanced by the OECD, WB and multilateral lending agencies will continue to thrive if their Canadian contract awards continue in the 2011 range of $146,512,425 million (USD). Despite their recent currency, the move to quantification and "explicit and measurable" (Griffith & Smith, 2014, p. 7) indicators of progress in NPM frontline organizations is likely to overlook the nuances of cross-border learning. Specifically, the rational choice theory presumed in much of the knowledge economy and human capital theory literature may facilitate the collection, quantification and comparison of data suitable for analyses of broad national trends. The same quantifying methods however, may not be appropriate if the unit of analysis or comparison is the individual activity of cross-border learners.

As discussed earlier, responses to the CBIE (2014) survey indicate high levels of social inclusion and satisfaction with the Canadian experience of international graduate students. The CBIE (2014) interview data differed markedly, with low levels of social inclusion, and 56% of those interviewed reporting no Canadian friends. My own data supported the CBIE interview data, but was at odds with high levels of satisfaction indicated in survey results. Although more research is required to further explore these results, there are additional and related issues in recruitment philosophies. Mass recruitment methods as championed by Steve in central recruiting were intended to *hit numbers* in a very competitive marketplace, while Elaine working at the faculty level argued for more interactive and deliberate matches. This same CBIE (2014) survey indicated a jaw-dropping 22% of the 3,095 respondents had attended another post-secondary institution in Canada prior to the one in which they were currently enrolled. Although

more study is needed, explicit and measurable research instruments such as the CBIE (2014) survey did not accurately reflect the social isolation and alienation that emerged in interviews with survey participants. The interviews I conducted with international graduate students at Canadian University indicated a high level of social isolation and alienation. Yet, it is clear from two key federal policy documents (DFAIT, 2012; DFATD, 2014), that dramatically increasing the number of international students to 450,000 in 2022, is not only unproblematic, but a central goal of Canada's recent international education strategy.

Research Question Two: Recognition

2)   How do text-based interrogative devices and sequential processes (i.e., application and required documentation) coordinate local sites of practice?

The documentation required to apply acts to homogenize the post-secondary institutions, institutional outputs, and collectively the post-secondary systems of other countries into a model favoured by Canadian University. Quotations from international graduate students presented in Chapter Six and earlier in this chapter describe how transcripts, reference letters, and other documents were reformulated, translated, notarized and delivered from the sender system to Canadian University. The language translation, coordinating of grading scales, or addition of detail and content to transcripts are examples of the creative work needed to make documents recognizable to Canadian University. The work of transforming these documents is done by those applying through work on and with individuals in positions of responsibility (e.g., faculty, administrators) who represent the post-secondary institutions from which they have graduated. When the original documents are transformed and recognized within the professional genres of Canadian University, their diverse origins are lost. This is an objectification that transforms the individual applying into an application, and it is a homogenization that is legitimized by

increasingly ubiquitous ranking systems (e.g., Times Higher Education World University Rankings, QS World University Rankings). As illustrated earlier in *Figure 7.1*, much of the work of applying is not visible to Canadian University, and that means those applying who have the economic resources to do this work have an advantage over those who do not. It also means Canadian University legitimates and exacerbates global inequalities when claiming to be a meritocratic institution while structuring the process of applying in such a way that economic advantage is not visible.

Research Question Three: Proxy

3)   How do text-reader conversations of these same texts activate and coordinate work knowledge(s) in local sites of practice?

The regulating text (e.g., application form) is activated in local sites of practice through the text-reader conversation—the text is enacted by the applicant. While recognizing the text (i.e., application form) exerts significant control, "it is the reader who activates the text… …she or he takes on the role of the text's agent, taking up in the social act of the conversation" (Smith, 2005, p. 108). Those applying become the proxy or agents of the application texts, and the work knowledge they require is of the post-secondary institution from which they have graduated. For emphasis then, the individual who is applying is an alumni of the sender system but has a limited agentic status at Canadian University, and together this makes the individual applying an agent of the text. This is important because approximately eight billion dollars was received by Canadian post-secondary institutions, and more generally, the Canadian economy in 2010 (AUCC, 2014) through in-flows of international students. The impact on the post-secondary education systems that are sending individuals to receiving nations is somehow lost in the discussion, as a discursive sleight of hand distracts attention from national transfers with

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discourses of individual choice, human capital theory, knowledge economy, commodification and economic rationalism within education. Given the individual who is activating the text is also the one to transfer resources out of the home post-secondary system, the issue of brain drain recedes as individual choice and human capital theory occupy center stage in the knowledge economy of a competition state.

Discussion

The following is a brief discussion of how the specialized language of institutional ethnography is applied within this study and the formulation of my response to research questions. I examined how the local learning environment came to be divided into domestic and international graduate students at Canadian University. By making this my problematic, I adopted a stance of enquiry that actively questioned a commonly understood social and discursive organization that largely defined international graduate students as economic objects or entities. I sought to illuminate that cluster of power relations (e.g., capitalism, nationalism, competitive ranking) working through the institution that produce learners in my local setting as different based upon their categorization as domestic or international graduate student.

I adopted the standpoint of international graduate students (IGS), and this was a deliberate choice to begin outside of a dominant discourse that depicts IGS as economic objects to be discussed in the context of international trade. Instead of beginning in established discourse, I began from their combined location and interviewed IGS on the work of applying at Canadian University. Location in this context does not refer to the unique contexts in which each application was enacted, but instead the commonalities of work required of applicants in aggregate form and as depicted earlier in Figure 7.1. This is not offered as a sociology in which IGS become an object to be studied, but is instead intended as enquiry *for* those applying.

This study focused on the text of the application at Canadian University because it is in the public domain and on the frontline of the organization – and thus eligible for scrutiny, whereas much of the internal institutional workings of the institution are not. Canadian University illustrates characteristics of a frontline organization within new public management as described by Griffith and Smith (2014), and it is the work of applying that takes place on the frontline that illuminates the ideology operating through the text of the application.

Discourse

Within institutional ethnography (IE) and this study of the application, text and the replicable and distributive qualities of text are present within the myriad self-representations (e.g., webpage, international student handbook) of Canadian University. The texts, images, and visual identity practices that are active in constructing Canadian University to prospective applicants, also perform and mutually construct or reinforce other institutions. Key texts (e.g. PSLA, CMEC, Study Permit) and related discourse outside of the universities interconnect Canadian University to other universities across Canada. These universities are institutions, and through institutional complexes these universities are tied into provincial and federal legislation or boss texts, reporting requirements and audited practices that constitute and charter Canada as a nation state. Texts such as the application form are a conduit for ruling relations (e.g., capitalism, nationalism) that are mediated within institutions such as Canadian University so they may organize the social relations in local settings in ways that appear normal, common sense and perhaps inevitable.

Discourses such as knowledge economy or human capital theory operate together within a broader range of skill development and competition state text and images to help discursively construct the international graduate student. These discourses are not deterministic but this study

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illustrates how the focus on IGS as an ideological code works to organize our thinking in ways that focus on individual choice rather than for example, transfers that have consequences for the higher education systems of sender nations. The benefits that flow through to receiving nations such as Canada are rationalized and fit snugly into *adjustment* and *deficit* discourses related to IGS, skill development and the competition state, and these are further legitimated within university ranking schemes that favour Canadian and other OECD member universities. Insight into the ideology working through Canadian University's international application was surfaced by examining which parts of the application process were visible or not visible to the institution.

Ideological codes such as the *international graduate student* (IGS) organize our perception of a social identity that might be described as technically savvy, affluent and socially connected within the learning community. The IGS as ideological code fits into knowledge economy or human capital theory vertically, and competitive admissions policy or university ranking schemes horizontally. It has the ability to organize thinking when it operates as a standard by which international graduate students hold themselves accountable. This same ideological code also operates to construct and reinforce a self-serve social identity that is intended or prescribed with the international student handbook at Canadian University. While the assertion of an ideological code such as IGS extends a dominant discursive order, this study notes an important operating procedure of the ideological code is found not in its assertion, but instead in its ability to suppress alternate and competing discursive frames.

Objectification

A key strength of Canadian University is its ability to transform the diverse, distinctive and messy characteristics of individual applicants into applications. To understand how this happens, this study began with the text of the application as enacted within the text-reader

conversation. While the subjective component of the text-reader conversation exists within the everyday of each enactment, the regulatory component coordinates across local sites (translocal) wherever the application is enacted. This text-reader conversation makes the applicant into an agent who is required to use work knowledge from an alma mater to prepare recognizable documents for an application to Canadian University. The regulatory component of the text-reader conversation requires the uniquely individual subjective component to be loaded into discursive shells, categories and other encapsulating technologies (e.g., numeric test scores). Successful applicants fit the underlying ideological schemata of the application form at Canadian University, while those that are incomplete, unrecognizable or idiosyncratic are turned away.

This separation of experience from social identity is an objectification of the applicant that facilitates the organization of comparison and disposition of many applicants within the professional genre of Canadian University. In this study there were text-work-text sequences that were both visible and invisible to the institution. Institutional circuit is a term used to describe those text-work-text sequences that make the work of applying activities visible or representable to the institution. For example, there is a great deal of work to be done in learning another language and preparing to take a language proficiency examination. However, taking the test within the regulatory conditions prescribed by the university are what makes it recognizable and *actionable* within the institution.

Ruling Relations

Ruling relations act through the application form as an objectified form of consciousness organized externally to individuals such as IGS applying to Canadian University. The application subsumes the experience of IGS, objectifies that experience in discourses of deficit to the ideological schemata of the international application, coordinates the subjects (IGS) through

Canadian University, and obscures the economic advantage of certain applicants when compared to others. In a discursively integrated network, Canadian University and other institutions (e.g., universities, hospitals, banking) reinforce one another by co-constructing one another, and asserting the legitimacy of common institutional infrastructure such as the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Together these institutions are a ruling apparatus that mediates the aims and purposes of multilateral organizations such as the OECD, World Economic Forum, and the World Bank into local settings. Ruling relations and the ideology that operates through the text and discourse of Canadian University's application form operate in multiple local sites at the same time and so may be said to be translocal. This ability to follow ruling relations operating through Canadian University and into the work of application done by applicants in nine countries was a key benefit of using institutional ethnography in this study.

The implementation of differential fees was an illustration of how financial knowledge won out over educational knowledge at Canadian University in 1977, and it surfaces the extension of a discursive hierarchy of knowledge valuing financial knowledge over educational knowledge and democratic tradition. The location of IGS within the almost exclusively economic discursive frame of international trade, rather than self-formation, is an example of how financial discourse and auditing knowledge displays operational dominance in Canada. In the same way, the fiscal knowledge associated with the practice of setting tuition and differential fees in Cabinet in 2006, rather than on the floor of the legislature, displaces democratic knowledge and tradition at Canadian University.

Summary Observation

A focus on text and discourse, adoption of IGS standpoint within institutional ethnography, and careful study of Canadian University through the text of the application were

important in this study because these were elements of the institution that could be made subject to scrutiny. IE is a flexible and adaptive stance of enquiry, and my aim has been to operate with transparency when applying these IE terms and concepts so they cohere and warrant the claims made in this study. In each case, their use in this study is intended to provide the reader with sufficient methodological information to support an ongoing assessment of the trustworthiness of this study.

Summary

The work of applying at Canadian University is deliberately and carefully designed to attract those willing to leave their current and familiar surroundings, and venture into a new graduate program in Canada. A knowledge economy discourse supplemented by human capital theory, the status of innovation and technology faculties in higher education, and the talent war described by Tannock (2009) all contribute to defining Canadian University within the competition state. In addition, federal government priorities (DFAIT, 2012; DFATD, 2014) related to immigration, labour force and economic development make it is hard to imagine room for leadership at the helm of Canadian University. Yet, that is just what is needed. Perhaps in contrast to ranking systems that homogenize Canadian University and feeder system post-secondary institutions, international graduate students leave their familiar surroundings to become newcomers, and this takes real confidence, optimism, and courage. By defining the process of applying very narrowly and using a self-serve design, Canadian University is able to operate internationally with few clear problems.

There are problems however, and the first of these results from the ethics of the two-tier system that Canadian University adopts when active outside of Canada. The deeper problem is the lack of funding that is feeding a hunger for differential fees, and a cordial relationship with

new public management that sees ever-increasing numbers of international graduate students as a way out. This is a path that has been followed before in Australia, where a growing dependence on differential fees caused harm to the international reputation of their higher education system (Marginson, 1993; 2011). It is imperative that Canada learn from that mistake, to avoid the same long term negative impacts on its post-secondary system. One of the benefits of keeping the institution in view is the finding that Canadian University lacks indicators of how international graduate students are doing on a day-to-day basis, and may also lack forums for direct feedback on issues that are important to cross-border learners. The CBIE (2014) study is deeply concerning, but so too is Canadian University's reliance on enrolment numbers to assess its progress in relation to international graduate students. In the next chapter, I explore these issues further, and offer policy proposals that will address claims made in this study.

Chapter 8: New Horizons for Canadian Higher Education

This study used institutional ethnography (IE) and the standpoint of international graduate students to make visible how Canadian University coordinates relations among people on their international frontline. By focusing on the mediating text of the application, it has been possible to ascertain that most of the work of applying is not visible to Canadian University, and like other universities in Canada and elsewhere, this organization offloads the work of coordinating a pool of comparable applicants and prospective citizenry onto those applying. By offering a self-serve, individuated and textually mediated accountability circuit, Canadian University reduces the effort of interacting with, organizing and assessing those applying. This has the important effect of redirecting blame for incompatibility, incompletion and rejection back onto those applying. In this arrangement, Canadian University preserves the ability to self-represent as a neutral arbiter of ability or talent, and performs the work necessary to screen, organize and make comparable a future citizenry for Canadian society. By requiring Canadian University to be a designated learning institution (DLI) in order to prepare a letter of acceptance necessary to obtain a student visa, the institution is beholden to the federal government. The integrated process of obtaining a study permit through IRCC when applying to Canadian University ensures this pool of prospective citizenry is relatively affluent, healthy and law abiding. An important effect of this social arrangement is that Canadian University does not expend effort and resources justifying the disposition of individual applications. However, as seen in this study, a systemic advantage for economically enabled international graduate students exists in the work of applying.

Canadian University emerges from this study as an institution, like many others, that is deeply concerned with diminishing government funding and a growing need to generate

revenues through differential fees for international graduate students. It has been a democratic institution with a long history and established infrastructure of self-governance through a board of governors and student government. However, the way differential fees were implemented back in 1977, and the transfer of authority for tuition fee setting from the floor of the provincial legislature to Cabinet in 2006, suggests the democratic propensities of the institution are subordinate to the fiscal rectitude of new public management (NPM), and associated claims of efficiency and continuous improvement. One result that emerges at Canadian University is that by requiring students applying to submit recognizable documents of sufficient facticity, sender post-secondary systems and institutions are pulled into the ranking systems that reward Canadian University and other research intensive institutions. Given that Canadian University does not operate autonomously, there are limited policy alternatives available to it.

One limitation of this study may be seen in the small number of interviews with university personnel about the process to uncover the interpretive procedures and decision-making at work in Canadian University. Perhaps with the researcher observing and sitting in on admission committee meetings in departments, access to and tracing the flow of documents (e.g., transcripts, reference letters) provided by those applying, a more detailed mapping of these internal workings may have been possible. However, like many other institutions, universities work to protect their internal workings from public scrutiny. Since direct access to sensitive internal processes was not available, I used the research methods and data sources (e.g., text, mapping, interviews) that were to study it indirectly using IE. The publicly accessible frontline of Canadian University was open to public scrutiny, but insiders to the internationalization process no doubt perceived some degree of risk in choosing to participate, even though no private or confidential information was ever requested or provided.

This brief summary chapter begins with NPM, and the limits of specific measures in illuminating human dynamics among cross-border learners specifically, and internationalization more generally. The second section consists of policy recommendations that originate from this study. A third briefly outlines future projects and a short conclusion follows.

Measuring Progress?

Education, and the teaching and learning that may constitute it, are intensely human activities that are frequently represented in specific, measurable and comparable indicators. The limitations of such an approach are not as widely reported and easily understood as the numbers they produce, and so methodologies of enquiry may be applied to achieve political aims. This is both important and little discussed, even while it is a practice that pre-dates Confederation (Curtis, 1988; 1992; 2002), a time when Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada, Egerton Ryerson used educational statistics to advance the political aims of our newborn nation-state. Quantifying mechanisms and discourses (total quality management, continuous improvement) are used today to govern complex human activity through NPM, but are also part of the reason why so little is known or written about international graduate students. Darville's (2014) study on literacy (introduced earlier) showed how the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) transformed individual literacy acquisition into a measure of national competitiveness within the OECD. The displacement of educational judgement by the OnSIS system could be traced from the provincial ministry in Ontario to a pan-national statistical project (PCEIP) that, in turn, fed into Canadian participation in the OECD's annual transnational *Education at a Glance* project (Kerr, 2014). Our fascination and confidence in measurement has made it a knowledge production panacea, where frameworks of comparison or ordinal rankings often escape critical review and reflection. Today, the prestige and status associated with economic

and international trade discourse displaces educational knowledge and the most authoritative guidance available in the literature on internationalization in Canadian post-secondary education is from a thinly spread trade service, in what is now Global Affairs Canada.

The use of trade statistics to talk about cross-border learners is a type of shorthand that brings socially complex phenomena into discursive order within the competition state. This can be seen in the two key documents providing guidance to Canadian University and universities across Canada, *International Education: A Key Driver of Canada's Future Prosperity* (DFAIT, 2012), and *Canada's International Education Strategy: Harnessing our Knowledge Advantage to Drive Innovation and Prosperity* (DFATD, 2014). That discursive voice is advocating for dramatic growth in the number of international students by 2022 (DFAIT, 2012; DFATD, 2014). The effect of this goal is to unify and mobilize the fiscal, immigration, labour force and economic development priorities of the competition state, without cluttering the discursive landscape with the comparatively messy issues of integrating cross-border learners in academic community and Canadian society.

The discursive subordination of higher learning issues operates through NPM through the DLI program of the federal government and the Campus Alberta Quality Council program of the provincial government. But there is also a counter-discourse of education as a "public good," found within the CBIE's (2014) *Internationalization Statement of Principles for Canadian Educational Institutions*, or the International Association of Universities' *Affirming Academic Values in Internationalization of Higher Education: A Call for Action*. Counter-discourse also includes statements from the Association of Canadian Deans of Education (2014) *Accord on the Internationalization of Education*, and Shultz's (2013) entreaty to integrate Canadian Council for International Cooperation principles within university partnerships. But despite these clear

voices, the discourse of international trade subordinates Canadian University and universities across Canada to the role of manufacturers to be admonished about the dangers of making faulty parts.

When outlining the fiscal and economic case for increasing the number of cross-border learners in Canada, the DFAIT (2012) document suggests that Canadian universities deliver "our promise… [of] providing a quality education experience and adequate support services. In an era of social media, there is a strong risk that any negative experience will be shared with a broader audience" (p. 3). This blue ribbon panel of educators subordinates the educational project by advancing the market metaphor of cross-border learner as consumers who, when dissatisfied, can hurt market share. Post-secondary institutions that do not comply with DFAIT run the risk of having their DLI status suspended or revoked, and with it the opportunity to charge differential fees to cross-border learners. The pure market path described above is similar to that taken by Australia, and with just a bit of care and self-awareness, Canadian University and other universities in Canada may avoid the worst of these problems.

Moving beyond my analysis, I would argue that universities across Canada should reject a pure market path and a thin consumer role for cross-border learners, in favour of higher learning that builds with authenticity and confidence on Canadian values and Canada's unique place in the world. This will not happen without a conscious and deliberate policy effort. I build on the ideas of Marginson (2014), Trilokekar (2010) and Fredeen (2013) to make the case for policy characterised by mutuality, and a commitment to the ethics and values of public education in Canada. To begin however, it is necessary to disabuse ourselves of some of the unhelpful *starting assumptions* (Marginson, 2014) that shape current approaches in Canada and elsewhere. Canada needs cross-border learners for a variety of good reasons, but unless the presumptive

adjustment or deficit frame that begins in the process of applying can change, we are unlikely to be able to lay the solid foundations necessary for this future citizenry to thrive in the Canadian dream. The deficit frame is a part of the discursive order that relegates all achievements of those applying that are not recognized by Canadian University as outside of the relevant discursive order, and so "they can be visible as deficient English users rather than as expert bilingual or multilingual users of language" (Fredeen, 2013, p. 161). In the metaphor of the pure market, the deficit view of the cross-border learner legitimates charging them much higher fees. The metaphor also implies that cross-border learners will come to Canadian University because it is ranked highly, and I believe we can do better than myopic leadership through comparative ranking. A series of policy formulations, related pedagogy and future research directions are offered below as a way Canadian University might reach out in alignment with Trilokekar's (2010) notion of *soft power* for Canada.

Policy Recommendations

This section builds upon the key findings of this study, and offers proposals that begin to address and reconfigure the learning space needed for Canadian universities to develop a more sustainable relationship with cross-border learners. First, and above the others, establishing and structuring better rapport with these stakeholders through a fund for services related to the integration and settlement of international graduate students on campus, and made up from a percentage of differential fees, is a worthy aim. As a single action, it may be the most direct way of addressing the discontinuities and disjuncture found in this study, while maintaining the discursive order of markets and the presumptive reasoning of the competition state that may be well beyond the reach of Canadian University. After establishing a fund, first is a proposal to recognize international graduate students as being involved in self-formation of the type

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proposed by Marginson (2014), and to adopt revised policies that attend to the self-direction of international graduate students as cross-border learners. Second are proposals that adjust teaching and learning methods to support the trajectory of cross-border learners who are self-directed and internally motivated. Third, a Statement of Rights and Responsibilities for International Students in Canada is offered based upon that proposed by Marginson (2011) in the Australian context. Fourth, more detail on the dashboard fund follows. The goal of these proposals is not a reconfiguration of internationalization at Canadian University, but rather a gentle re-orientation around the legitimacy of self-direction or self-formation aims, and the imperative of accommodating these aims by supporting and nurturing agency to achieve a sustainable model of hosting international graduate students.

Learner-Trajectories

Recognition of self-formation as a primary motivation among cross-border learners is an essential first-step for Canadian University to reach out and beyond the conventional, and what is comfortably recognizable in the process of applying (Marginson, 2011; 2014). Marginson's (2014) "summative theorization" (p. 8) holds open the possibility of a deeper and more holistic engagement between international graduate students and universities in Canada. The current short-term institutional view of cross-border learners as investors engaged in human capital efforts to go up-market when purchasing a commoditized degree from a high ranking university (DFAIT, 2009a; 2009b; 2012; DFATD, 2014), has been discredited in Australia and elsewhere (Marginson, 1993; 2011; 2014). It also leaves Canadian universities vulnerable to unrealistic expectations, as private sector recruiters earn commissions by promising too much, and as the expectations of international students, who may or may not accept knowledge economy and human capital theory discourse to guide their decisions grow increasingly dissatisfied with the

disjuncture they experience at the gap between discursive rhetoric and their experience. A more information-based and candid approach that recognizes the work cross-border learners do when applying and taking-up an offer of admissions is needed to support informed decision-making by cross-border learners. Internet technology opens up possibilities between newcomers and prospective employers, and for example, Canadian University might offer career information and services to cross-border learners before they leave their country of origin. Transparent indicators about availability of work, pay scales and competition for this work might feed into a dashboard of indicators maintained by Canadian University to help gauge cross-border integration dynamics on campus.

Ethical engagement with the unique trajectories of cross-border learners is possible, if as Marginson (2014) suggests, "institutions and teachers can build conscious international student agency and work with it, rather than suborning or coercing it" (p. 19). The CBIE (2014) survey said that 22% of the 3,095 respondents had been registered in another post-secondary institution in Canada prior to the one in which they were currently enrolled. Currently, a conventional frame of *adjustment* is presumed where the cross-border learner is positioned within a deficit frame in relation to the new host culture. Instead, a pragmatic reformulation would recognize that the learning and work required to take-up an offer of admissions and immersion in a new culture requires support. Before reformulation, the claim was that international graduate students who wanted a high quality education as defined by current ranking schemes put up with the requirement for cultural adjustment in order to attain the performative degree. In a self-formation reformulation, the learner is perceived as motivated internally and not externally. The cross-border learner is guided by self-knowledge and notions of future self, which may require changing programs or institutions. For example, an informant occupied an ambiguous legal space

when changing out of the graduate program to which she had originally been accepted. Changing programs should not be a stark choice between medical coverage and legal status in Canada, and a statement of rights and responsibilities may serve as a guide in providing transitional or bridging status when program changes are made. In the new formulation, it is clear the cross-border learner is in charge of her or his own identity, although clearly not all of the circumstances in which it continues to be formed.

As Marginson (2011) notes, in spite of their self-representation as educational services responding to a need based upon market principles, universities in Canada do not operate in true markets. Canadian University for example, is participating as a market actor in producer-dominated markets, where there exists "an inevitable asymmetry between the producer and the consumer who cannot know what the teaching and learning are like until halfway through the programme" (p. 25). This suggests that Canada's approach to cross-border learners ought to be flexible enough to ensure they are able to move between institutions as changing circumstances may require. It also suggests settlement on university campuses in Canada may not be going as well as administrators imagine, and additional study regarding issues of settlement such as housing, should be the target of further study.

Teaching and Learning

Where possible, strategies for teaching and learning might work with self-formation and self-direction opportunities that may be available in self-study or community-service learning programs, where the individual engages in some type of community-service they identify as an extension of their self-formation. Such programming opportunities may already exist in formats that are commonly accessed by domestic students, but which may require a re-positioning within documents such as the international student handbook, faculty or departmental websites, and

orientation programs. The ideas of a self-directed course or a community-service learning course are raised here because although they may require substantive teaching support, they also carry with them the possibility of addressing the lack of social integration experienced by international graduate students in this research or the interview component of the CBIE (2014) study. Such courses may be an opportunity for the self-directed identification of a learning project that might extend self-formation into the community. This course might also feature some form of reversal, where the self-directed and autonomous learner designs and does something that makes the Canadian university recognizable to a community that is important to the learner. The creativity required to identify and instigate these community-service learning projects may well be the product of the individual aspirations of cross-border learners who will inspire other youth as peer exemplars and practitioners.

Statement of Rights and Responsibilities

Marginson (2011) has provided a draft *Compact In Relation To International Students Studying In Australia*, which outlines the rights and responsibilities of international students studying in the Australian context. As a first step, the Council of Ministers of Education Canada (CMEC) might adopt a proponent role and orientation to this statement or one like it to propose a framework for the social, political and economic rights and responsibilities of international graduate students. It ought to provide cross-border learners with a cosmopolitan framework of rights from which they may reasonably expect safety and security in Canada. In addition to an authentic extension of Canadian values, the first benefit to Canadians would be that it would provide a text-based conceptual frame in which problems that arise can be dealt within in a transparent and principled manner. Canadian universities may have the opportunity to re-discover their own commitment to democratic education, as issues can be surfaced and dealt

through institutional channels such as student associations, rather than having issues which will almost inevitably arise, fester or escalate into media conflicts[15] that detract from the building of rapport and development of academic community.

In addition, whether as new Canadians, ambassadors upon their return, or resident in yet another country altogether, there is a substantive self-interest in building toward positive learning experiences for those who travel to study and live in Canada. Our collective histories in Canada, as troubled and contested though they may be, now reflect cosmopolitan norms of hospitality including "universal principles of human rights that are in some sense said to precede and antedate the will of the sovereign and in accordance with which the sovereign undertakes to bind itself" (Benhabib, 2004, p. 32). In support and advocacy for the draft convention prepared by Marginson (2011), I attach a draft version with minor revisions to align with the language of political institutions in Canada as Appendix G. Marginson's (2011) convention has an enduring, replicable, and distributive quality that may help it become a rallying point beyond Canada. This document may also support those who come into contact with international graduate students infrequently, and through popular media help to profile exemplary projects, as well as open-up lines of communication related to these and other newcomers.

Dashboard Fund

Canadian University should establish a differential fee based dashboard fund that is reported and accounted for in a transparent way to the stakeholder community. This would be a chance to model and apply transparent reporting principles to differential fees, and in addition to reporting them separately, allocate a percentage of these monies to the fund to service equity and diversity commitments internationally, as well as to make campus settlement better for cross-

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[15] As an example, during this study, radio and newspaper coverage surrounded a fourth year international student at Canadian University who received poor treatment from housing and food services (City Newspaper, November 20, 2014). A senior representative of Canadian University later apologized over this incident.

border learners. An explicit goal of this fund would be to build-in a means by which the university can create some limited social space, where it is possible to take the temperature of and interact with international graduate students on issues that impact them. In addition to reporting to the community, there might be a location on the current Canadian University web page that brings together a basket of items that are of particular interest and concern to international students. These might include at-a-glance indicators of rental prices and availability, available jobs and rates of pay, or international student retention rates. It might include upcoming international student association meetings, minutes, special events, relevant motions before the board of governors, and news items of particular interest and meaning to this highly diverse group, organized around commonalities and interests. These few ideas are not intended to be prescriptive or comprehensive, it would be far better if a project like this could evolve in a semi-structured consultation process with international students, perhaps using focus groups and interviews to navigate contentious areas.

There is a need for Canadian University to stay in contact with this important stakeholder group beyond those issues and concerns that are typically accommodated in student services or international student services. There needs to be an interactive social forum where it is possible to check-in or interact with international graduate students that transcends student or international student services. This is more personal than software and surveys, and it seems clear that it needs to include qualitative methods on an ongoing basis. It may be that such a fund would be a source of friction at first, but once it was operating on an experimental basis, I think other universities in Canada would pick it up too. If it is a top-down program conceived by Canadian University administrators about what they think are issues of importance to international graduate students, it is unlikely to work. It needs a fresh and organic feel

accompanied by a sense of mission, where the growing agency of international students requires that those serving want to help other international students more than they want to be well-liked by administrators.

There are possibilities to be explored. One is a supported council of international student associations with representation from various international student associations that would also have a seat on the board of governors. Another is an association affiliated with Canadian University that does interviews in combination with surveys of international graduate students on issues of importance to them, so that a more useful pool of information can be developed and used for monitoring the social isolation and alienation of international graduate students. Yet another possibility is to develop community-service or other learning opportunities that structure a higher level of interaction between peer learners. This question of how to establish a dashboard fund clearly requires further thought and study. I imagine the highly capable international graduate students who participated in this study, and who were often only able to find table service or nanny jobs, would be able to help Canadian University visualize, develop and deliver on an institutional dashboard for the appropriate consultant's fee.

Future Projects

This study has illustrated that resilience is required on the part of those international graduate students who apply to Canadian University, if only to persevere through the self-serve application process. One focus of future research might include interviewing prospective international graduate students who applied, but who were either not accepted, or chose to accept an offer of admission from another university. For those applicants who were not accepted, I would be interested in knowing from their standpoint what barriers they faced in applying, which they were able to overcome and which were based exclusively upon assessment of their

applications. Here, the focus might eventually expand to include a research project combining both individuals who had been accepted, and those who had not. Comparative differences in perception of the application process between these two groups may illuminate or expand particular aspects of the stages of the application process identified here. For those applicants who chose another offer of acceptance, it would be interesting to know how they think about and describe that decision. Initially at least, I see possibilities for expanding on elements from the international graduate student interviews into new research projects.

A second source of inspiration for future research begins with Marginson's (2011) compact, and the need to mobilize it or something close to it across multiple jurisdictional platforms, venues and networks of supporters including potential funding organizations such as AUCC, CBIE, or HEQCO. This would require an action-research orientation that is more feasibility study, advocacy effort, and action plan than conventional theory. In sum, this research project would (1) identify potential alliance or network members, (2) develop a plan for consultation, (3) consult and consolidate findings, (4) develop a revision and adoption plan for the compact based on a consultation process, (5) report and distribute findings to stakeholders and prospective alliance members. This has all of the component parts to culminate in widespread adoption, and Canada may choose to exercise the soft power necessary to lead this charge, rather than stand on the sidelines and wait for others to proceed.

One reason for leading on this issue is that as vociferous proponents of the compact, Canadian universities and our post-secondary community may be forced to become exemplary practitioners, both open to new ideas and impatient with misconduct. There is a real confluence of interests here, as learners from other jurisdictional contexts experience the values of transparency within institutional governance. For some, experience within democratic culture

and institutional mechanisms may be part of their self-directed learning missions and a distinguishing feature of the Canadian landscape for cross-border learners. Canadian universities may also require help, perhaps through open lines of communication with international graduate students, to aid in keeping auxiliary services (i.e., housing, language testing) in broad alignment with the primary purposes (i.e., education, research, service) of the institution. There are experienced voices working within institutions and academic communities that are bringing issues of service into alignment with the specialized needs of international students (Everall, 2013). Done well, it is an ongoing consultation process that will recognize the voices of international students in policy formulation, which is precisely where Canadian universities need to be if they are to succeed in championing the messy—but authentic—issues of importance to international graduate students. A compact will help international graduate students set the agenda, and not leave Canadian universities lagging behind because they insisted on maintaining out-dated modes of institutional power.

A third source of inspiration for future research is the faculty at Canadian universities because they represent Canadian University to international graduate students through their personal commitment to scholarship, teaching and academic mentorship. Faculty members are fighting a loss of autonomy and academic freedom, but they are the people creating learning space within Canadian universities that challenge an encroaching Taylorism in academia (Giroux, 2008; 2014; Readings, 1996). Through creative learning spaces, learner-centered pedagogy, and a creative approach to assessment, faculty members are on the frontline of self-formation. Faculty members may be the first people in a position of authority within the university hierarchy to acknowledge, validate and act upon the self-directed or self-formation priorities of international graduate students.

A fourth source of inspiration for future research surfaced for me in a peripheral way. While reviewing internationalization documents at Canadian University, I was distracted by the array of short-term study exchanges, fee-exchange arrangements, and international study abroad opportunities available to undergraduate and graduate students. At first, I wanted to see if any of these might work for me, but then I also began to wonder why there is such a very low percentage of Canadian students choosing cross-border learning. I believe this area invites additional research, and may well inform a wide variety of post-secondary education policy in Canada.

Conclusion

"We take as our premise that the world is organized in understandable ways, prior to our entering it, and that our task as researchers is to explicate that organization on behalf of those whose lives are being affected" (Campbell & Manicom, 1995, p. 12). In this study, the considerable work of applying was found to be self-selecting as well as having a conforming effect on the post-secondary institutions and systems of sender nations. The individuating work of applying, and the knowledge economy and human capital theory discourse in which it takes place, also supports a displacement of educational knowledge within the competition state. The fiscal, immigration, labour force and economic development priorities of the competition state increasingly take precedence over educational decision-making, just as they did in early 1977 with the implementation of differential fees. Canadian University has a long tradition of democratic governance, but an increasing emphasis on fiscal rectitude and accountability prompted Bill 40 (2006) to transfer decision making about tuition fees from the floor of the provincial legislature into Cabinet, where it is no longer subject to the public scrutiny it once was. Add to this, a Campus Alberta Quality Council, a designated learning institution status

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program that requires learner-compliance reporting, and diminishing financial support (Chapter Three: Table 3.1) for Canadian University, and the institution is much less autonomous than it once was. Within the competition state, Canadian University is an instrument of multiple federal objectives, and that leaves less room for priorities related to research, teaching and service.

By organizing the frontline work of application in such a way that only a very narrow band of the work of applying is visible and known to the institution, Canadian University does not carry its commitment to equity and diversity with it outside of Canada. When Canadian University chooses not to see economic inequalities, but claims it is a merit based institution that is educating the best and brightest, it exacerbates and legitimizes global inequities. In addition, the transfer of post-secondary system resources from sender nations to Canada is not readily visible in the current arrangement because individual choice and human capital theory discursively order our thinking about how this happens. Ranking systems legitimize this transfer. The transfer of resources still takes place, but those applying become agents of the text. Imbued with work knowledge of their alma mater, along with subjective and regulatory readings of text enacted within the text-reader conversation, applicants work to make their domestic institutions conform to a model compatible with Canadian University. These social arrangements serve the interests of Canadian University, but they also serve national interests by covering budget shortfalls, populating immigrant pools, building-up the labour force and making the university an economic development hub in the knowledge economy (Tannock, 2009).

Internationalization policy is increasingly influenced by university rankings (Hazelkorn, 2008). These rankings pressure institutions in new ways, and some old ways, including new constitutionalism (Scherrer, 2007), and what Martens (2007) has called governance by comparison. This limits the ability of provincial and national governments to exercise control

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over educational services, which have until recently been within their exclusive realm of jurisdiction. Education is still deeply influenced by methodological statism (Roger & Robertson, 2009), but the state is a framework for the delivery of education that has not kept up with the technological innovations and cosmopolitanism of modern polities (Fraser, 2010). The World Bank (WB), and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) operate in a presumptive discursive order where socioeconomic status is the natural result of educational choices (Fredeen, 2013; Ocampo, 2009; Coffield, 1999). Discursively produced rationales (i.e., knowledge economy, human capital theory) transfer the onus of responsibility and cost of education from the state and private sector to individuals. Given the above, Canadian universities find themselves in the unenviable position of fighting for their economic survival at a time when cherished values such as academic freedom are increasingly under attack (Giroux, 2008; 2014). It is clear to me the humble confidence necessary to voluntarily take-on newcomer status that is required by those applying, differs substantially from the performative and quantifying culture which increasingly defines Canadian University, as it competes with other universities, and works as a semi-autonomous institution in service to state priorities.

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Appendix A

Informant Interview Procedure/Activity

The purpose of this interview was for the researcher to learn from the informant what work was involved in making an international graduate student application to Canadian University. The emphasis within institutional ethnography is on *how* the informant was able to submit the application. This purpose requires using an informal and semi-structured interview process, as the interviewer must work to have the informant share their expertise on how the application was submitted in a particular site of practice.

The meeting began with a welcome and review including (1) documentation and confirmation of informed consent, (2) volunteer capacity of the informant, (3) brief verbal review of research and access to transcripts, and (4) familiarization with recording device.

1) The informant would be asked if they had an opportunity to complete the Pre-interview activity (PIA). *If yes, this would allow the informant to lead the discussion.*

2) The informant would be asked to explain in as much detail as possible, how they were able to complete the application.

3) What steps were involved in completing the application?

4) What documentation (e. g., transcripts, travel documents, health, financial) were required for the application to be submitted?

5) How did you obtain this supplementary documentation?

6) What documentation was required if the application was accepted?

7) The informant would be asked to provide more detail, elaborate and explicate seemingly mundane or normalized aspects of completing the application form.

Each initial meeting would be scheduled for one hour, but may require only 45-50 minutes.

Appendix B

Pre-interview Activity

Prior to the interview, each purposefully selected international graduate student received by email a pdf file with a series of screen captures, like the samples included below, but full size and in color format as a pdf file. They represented the primary screen interfaces that form compulsory data requirements at Canadian. Each person was asked to review the screen captures before the interview and complete the following statement:

Applying to attend Canadian University was like

_____.

This activity may support the informant by stimulating memories of the application process and establishing their expert knowledge on *how* the application was completed in their local site.

Application Form Page 1	Application Form Page 2	Application Form Page 3
Application Form Page 4	Application Form Page 5	Application Form Page 6
Application Form Page 7	Application Form Page 8	Application Form Page 9

Appendix C

Key Informant Interview Activity

The purpose of the key informant interview activity was to center on *insiders* to the international student application process. For the sake of clarity, the primary interest of the researcher continues to be in the social organization and actualities communicated by international students. The key informants serve an important function in providing the researcher an experienced ear with which to check various hypotheses and understandings that may only partially present themselves in the data. Confidence in the anonymity of their information and observations will be essential if they are to support this research with the benefit of their knowledge and experience.

Key informants were interviewed last in the data gathering process as they served as a valuable sounding board to test the researcher's understandings and theories of *how* the application form is activated and coordinated in local sites of practice. It is hoped the key informants will represent differing perspectives from within the institution (i. e., registrar, faculty of graduate studies, departmental administrator, international student service provider).

Some of these interviews were not recorded because it would limit the possible topics of discussion and make these individuals less inclined to speak candidly about practices which they may feel strongly about. Notes were taken during conversations that were not recorded.

The onus was on the researcher to prepare for these interviews by assembling the discontinuities and gaps in understanding that presented themselves in the data provided by international graduate students. (For example, international graduate students have expert knowledge of what they did to make an application, but may not be able to comment knowledgeably about variances in the application process related to their country of origin (i. e., China, Nigeria). In these informal meetings, a sample question format was structured in the following way.

1. My understanding is that X, Y, and Z. Is that how you see it happening? What am I missing?

2. My data has said X, Y, and Z to me, but that does not seem a probable interpretation to me. What do you think?

3. My understanding of the application process for international graduate students is X, Y, and Z. If that is the case, how come ABC?
   Each initial meeting would be scheduled for one hour. A follow-up meeting may be conducted by telephone, if required.

Appendix D

Ethical Commitment (**Appendix D**) for Inviting (**Appendix E**) and Obtaining Informed Consent (**Appendix F**)

1. This is an outline of the ethics planning, preparation, implementation and disposition steps that I will take on this research.

    A. Explain (oral and written) purpose and nature of research to participants.
    B. Invite and obtain free and informed consent of research participants. (See Attached)
    C. Obtain, analyze and ethically dispose of any and all written records of this research.

2. The nature and purposes of the interview will be fully disclosed to the potential participant.

3. There are no circumstances or second relationships anticipated that would compromise the voluntary consent of participants (e.g. incentives, captive populations, second relationship).

4. I will describe fully the informant's right to opt out without penalty, harm or loss of promised benefit.

5. I will address any and all anonymity and confidentiality issues the prospective participant may have.

6. I will avoid/minimize threat or harm to participants or to others.

7. I will provide for security of data and dispose of data in an ethical manner.

8. I will comply with any and all ethical procedures, activities or standards that may be required by the Canadian University during an institutional/ethical review of this proposed research.

Appendix E

Invitation to Participate in Interview Activity

Date: Prior to Interview
Dear (Name of Invited Research Participant),

I am writing to ask whether you would be interested in participating in an interview with me on the topic of your experience as an international student at the Canadian University. I am currently working to complete the requirements of a doctoral degree in Educational Policy Studies in the Faculty of Education at the Canadian University. I would like to do this interview in support my research on the experience of international students at Canadian universities. I will protect your anonymity at all times. I will provide for the anonymity of data before reporting on it orally or in writing.

If you were interested in participating, our interview would have three parts. As part one, I would ask you to do a pre-interview activity in which you would make a diagram, time-line, or other visual representation about some of your experiences related to your experience as an international student. As part two, we would meet for approximately one hour to discuss the visual representation and to use some of my interview questions to invite your reflections and memories about the interview topic. The interview would be scheduled at a time and place of your convenience. As part three, after I had studied the audio recording of the interview, I might ask you to clarify one or two points from our discussion.

Your participation is voluntary. If you consent to be involved in this interview activity, your anonymity will be maintained. You will be free to withdraw at any time. If you decide to withdraw your participation after the interview, any data collected from you would be withdrawn from my interview activity assignment. An audio recorder will be used to record our interview and the tape will be transcribed. I will use a pseudonym to represent you in all work that is written about the interview and I will keep your interview tape, visual representation and transcripts locked in a secure place for a minimum of five years following completion of this research activity.

I do not foresee any harm resulting from this activity. Instead, people often find the opportunity to reflect on their experiences to be beneficial. I would share with you the notes I write to clarify themes or insights I develop in my analysis of the interview.

If you have any further questions about the interview, please feel free to contact me at 780 432 9403, my academic supervisor, Dr. Brenda Spencer at (780) 492 7623, or the Chair of the Department of Educational Policy Studies, Dr. Jennifer Kelly, at (780) 492-4229. Please complete the attached consent form to indicate your decision. If you are willing to participate, please return the consent form to me. Thank you for considering this request.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Corrigan
This study has been reviewed and approved by the Faculties of Education and Extension Research Ethics Board (EE REB) at the Canadian University. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Chair of the EE REB at (780) 492-3751.

Informed Consent Form

Project Title: Experience of International Students at Canadian Universities
Investigator: Joe Corrigan

_____   **No**, I do not choose to participate in the interview activity.

_____   **Yes**, I agree to participate in the interview activity.

I give my consent to be interviewed for this research course assignment. I understand an audio record of the interview will be made. I understand that only the investigator (Joe Corrigan) will have access to the audio record of the tape. I understand that the information I provide will be kept anonymous by not referring to me by my name or location, but by using a pseudonym. I understand that the information I provide may be used in oral or written reports on this research, but that my name will not be used. If I wish to see any speaking notes written from the findings of this study, I am free to contact Joe Corrigan at any time and copies will be provided.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, to refuse to answer specific questions, and/or to withdraw my participation at any time. I understand that participation in any aspects of the study is voluntary and that my interview activity has three parts: doing a diagram or drawing, an interview of one hour or less, and follow-up questions for approximately ten minutes. I understand that there will be no risks involved in this study. I may, in fact, benefit from reflecting upon my experience.

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by the Faculties of Education and Extension Research Ethics Board (EE REB) at the Canadian University. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Chair of the EE REB at (780) 492-3751.

Name of participant (Please print)   _____

Signature of participant   _____

Date   _____

Appendix G

The following is based upon an appendix included as part of an article written by Simon Marginson (2011) and entitled, *It's a Long Way Down: The Underlying Tensions in the Education Export Industry*. It appeared in the Australian Universities' Review, and it is included here with minor adaptations for the Canadian context.

Compact In Relation To International Students Studying In Canada [Draft Only]
Statement of Rights and Responsibilities Preamble

Canada is a signatory (May 19, 1976) to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) which states: "The States Parties to the present Covenant recognise the right of everyone to education. They agree that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. They further agree that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace". Canada is committed to the provision of non-discriminatory forms of education for all persons, and to the provision of the conditions and resources necessary to ensure the right to education as outlined in the ICESCR. International students are especially welcomed in Canada because of their financial, economic, social, cultural and moral contributions to Canada; and because of the benefits that their education brings to friendly relations between their home countries and Canada. Because of their many contributions, Canada has obligations to protect and uphold them, and government in Canada has responsibilities for ensuring that this obligation is met. Temporary migrants holding student visas shall be considered to be members of Canadian society for the duration of those visas. Government in Canada will undertake such actions and measures as are necessary to ensure the full inclusion of each international student as a valued member of the Canadian community, with all the rights and obligations that this implies, for the duration of the student visa.

Canada has a duty of care in relation to international students, many of whom stay on the soil of the nation for a period of several years duration. Government in Canada also recognises that international students are self-managing persons, with the right to make choices about their education and their lives, and the right to exercise their own values and beliefs, in a manner consistent with the laws of Canada and the obligations of those students to their home country governments. All members of Canada society, including temporary migrants holding student visas, have the right to social security and to the realisation, through national effort and in accordance with the organisation and resources of Canadian government, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for individual dignity and the free development of personality. International students studying in Canada shall be entitled to the same protections and benefits as citizens, except where specific provision is made to the contrary according to law. This statement shall not exclude international students from receiving protections and benefits specifically pertaining to their status as international students.

Government in Canada recognises that the inclusion of significant numbers of international students creates additional requirements in relation to social and economic

infrastructure and services in Canada. In addition, a large scale international education programme creates the need for specific services tailored specifically to the needs of international students. International students in Canada have both rights and responsibilities. While in Canada international students have obligations to conduct themselves according to the laws and relevant regulations of Canada and government in Canada, including the conditions governing their student visas.

Provisions 1. Equivalence with citizens. Consistent with this compact and the laws of Canada, international students shall enjoy rights equivalent to those of citizens, in general, and specifically in relation to the rights:

1. To access to justice. This includes recognition as a person before the law, equality before the law, equal protection of the law without any discrimination, freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention, the right to access legal services as appropriate.

2. To live in a safe environment, including protection from crime.

3. To own property alone as well as in association with others, without being arbitrarily deprived of that property.

4. To live in a non-discriminatory environment, to protection from any discrimination in violation of this Compact or in law, and to practise any language of choice.

5. To privacy and freedom from harassment by any party, including arbitrary interference with family, home or correspondence, or attacks on honour and reputation.

6. To freedom of movement and residence within the borders of Canada; to leave the country, and to return to it, subject to visa requirements.

7. To work, subject to visa requirements, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work, to decent work and the payment of minimum wages, and to other award conditions as appropriate, to equal pay for equal work, to form and join trade unions.

8. To equal access to health and welfare services, as appropriate.

9. To equal access to transport services.

10. To equal access to accommodation services.

11. To good quality education for self and for dependants.

12. Of freedom of religion.
13. Of freedom of civil and political association, including peaceful assembly.

14. Of freedom of opinion and expression; this includes freedom to hold opinions without interference, and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Provisions 2. Specific requirements as international students. In addition, the Government in Canada undertakes to ensure that international students will have access to such specific services, pertaining to their needs as international students, as they require for the duration of their stay.

Without exclusion this shall include:
1. The provision of specific information in relation to educational and other matters, as required, with attention to the needs of international students as new arrivals in Canada.
2. Access to safe accommodation.
3. Access to interpreter and translation services as required.
4. Access to assistance in matters of communication and the use of the English language, while studying.

Statement concerning implementation

The parties to this compact shall be the Canadian Government, and the home country government of any nation from which international students accepted to study in Canada have originated. All references to 'government in Canada' in this compact shall be held to apply jointly and severally to the Canadian Government (Government of Canada), the Governments of the provinces/territories, and municipal government. Responsibility for specific tasks shall be determined as appropriate on the basis of negotiation between the levels of government, the Canadian Constitution, and any prevailing legislation. All international students studying in Canadian institutions are entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. In the exercise of the rights and freedoms of international students, they shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society, or for the protection of national security, public order, public health or public morality.

All Canadian educational providers shall set aside one per cent of the revenues received for the education of each individual international student, for the promotion of the social inclusion of international students in Canada, consistent with this compact and any prevailing legislation.

After Note: This document is the work of Professor Simon Marginson, a Professor of Higher Education in the Centre for the Study of Higher Education (CSHE) at the University of Melbourne. Minor modifications have been made to this document to fit the Canadian context.