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*“Leading Internationalization in Canada: Policy,
University Intentions and Practice”*

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Research Study Overview

- Research Problem
- Research Questions
- Data sources
- Canadian Policy Context
- Job descriptions (position briefs)
- Interviews
- Conclusion



Research problem

- The role of the campus leader of internationalization (SIO) encompasses a range of rationales:
 - transforming the core education mandate of the campus (academic)
 - meeting the demands of cash-strapped universities (economic)
 - enhancing global profile (political)
 - supporting student experiences (socio-cultural)
- How do SIOs manage their work, in particular when purposes are conflictual and divergent?
- Scope: 2012-2017 Canadian university internationalization leadership role.

Research questions

- What is the federal policy environment that shapes IHE in Canada and has it changed over time?
- What do Canadian universities want from internationalization, when they seek a senior level administrator to coordinate IHE?
- How do SIOs in Canada experience in the role?

Data collection and analysis

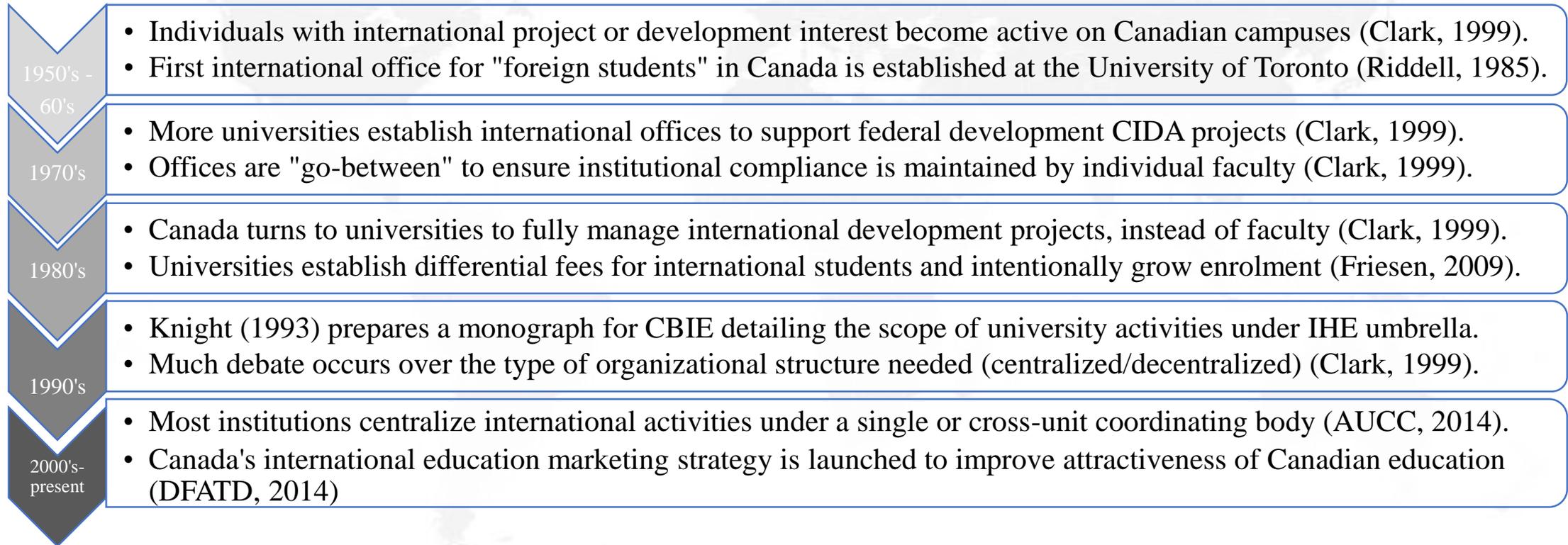
Divided into 3 phases:

- Chronological analysis of international education policy in Canada;
- Critical discourse analysis of the executive search position briefs for university SIO roles (n=12);
- Analysis of interviews with leaders who were successfully recruited into the university SIO positions (n=5).

Defining IHE leadership

Source	Definition
Aitches & Hoemeke, 1992	"...guide [for] the campus to make correct decisions and choices. " (p. 84)
Knight, 1994	"... catalyst for institutional change in favor of internationalization of the total institution...be[ing] extremely careful to provide leadership from the sidelines and not be seen as turf-seeking in any way" (p. 8)
The Advisory Board Company, 2007	"...A single person in charge of international activities, generically known as the senior international officer or SIO... the institutional champion for internationalization." (P. 5)
Heyl, 2007	"one person to lead the process of "internationalizing" the institution... to lead significant organization change. " (p. 2)
Lambert et al. 2007	"... an emerging profession ...that has a specific set of skill- and knowledge-sets...emphasiz[ing] close-in, personal interaction and collaboration to develop policies, plan programs and projects, and advocate for change. These sets, furthermore, are probably significantly different in many respects from those required of other university administrators ... [and] are unusual outside the university, as well." (p. 7)
Myles & Corrie, 2008	"Senior international educators are typically senior managers, directors, vice presidents, and presidents who are addressing the questions and challenges of internationalization." (p. 17)
Heyl & Tullbane, 2012	" SIOs are inevitably middle managers ...masters of the institutional culture and change agents". (p. 115) "...the SIO must be a multitasking professional, adapting to and shaping multiple environments." (p. 122)
Krane, 2015	"... campus-wide strategic [leader] of all programs designed to promote internationalization" (p. 122)
Merkx, 2015	"... a single person to oversee all the international activities on behalf of central administration" (p. 21)
Di Maria, 2019	"..oversight of more than one program or activity designed to advance internationalization ...(p. xvi)

Canadian Policy Context



Canadian IHE Policy Discourse Analysis

Dominant Discourses	Alternative discourses
The federal government has a prosperity agenda for IHE.	IHE contributes to global inequity.
Canadian universities help the world.	IHE helps Canada increase soft power in the world.
IHE addresses global disparities through knowledge sharing.	Canadian universities privilege their own knowledge.
IHE creates global citizens.	Canadian universities compete globally for students.

Position briefs of Canadian SIOs

- Developing the position brief for the “right fit” (*24/7 availability, extensive travel, entrepreneurial*)
- Organizational profiles - keeping it within the HE “family”. (*lack of “selling” the benefits of working for a public institution*)
- “By any other name”: the ideal Canadian SIO (*heavily weighted to “management”, little on “transformation”*)
 - Actions (what will the SIO do)
 - Attributes (what qualities will the SIO have)



Position briefs of Canadian SIOs

The “ideal” SIO	Explanations
1. Is a “fit” for a high level leadership role.	The position briefs set out to attract a high level leader to implement strategic plans and manage international operations.
1. Possesses marketing skills, business acumen.	The SIO role contributes to the fiscal sustainability of the organization and is entrepreneurial in attracting new opportunities for revenue.
1. Contributes to the institution in transformational, creative and innovative ways.	The SIO understands change management and is able to employ those skills to build institutional profile and negotiate difference.
1. Has passion for global citizenship (public good).	The SIO opens a world of opportunity and develops global citizens.

Position Brief Discourses

Discourse: The SIO manages the operations of internationalization.	Discourse: The SIO transforms the University through internationalization.	Alternative Discourses from IHE literature: The SIO plays a supportive, behind the scenes role.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensures adherence to the budgets throughout the year• Coordinates support services• Develops strategic partnerships internationally...• Directs the operational strategic planning process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advances a civil and sustainable society• Creates an energized university climate• Opens a world of opportunity• Leads through influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “...leadership from the side while providing an endless diversity of routine administrative services” (Harari, 1992, p. 71).• “SIOs are inevitably middle managers...” (Heyl & Tullbane, 2012, p 115)• “leadership from the sidelines and not be seen as turf-seeking in any way” (Knight, 1994, p. 8)



Interviews

Theme	Sample statement
Frustrations	"... [it] has been a struggle... you know there is, I will say, the position description and stuff seems to make it sound pretty easy..." (SIO3)
Global Learning	"Canadian universities...I think complacent is not the right word...[but we are] domestically focused" (SIO4)
Internationalization of Teaching and Learning	"we are not influencing the internationalization of curriculum, the faculty movement, that I find...quite challenging". (SIO1)
Revenue Generation and Enrollment Growth	"this particular position emphasizes the business side...global expansion, it is all recruitment, revenue generation". (SIO2)
National Level Obligations	"there is pressure to recruit international students given the demographic decline in the [region]." (SIO4)
Working with Faculty	"I experience most of the tension and when it comes to curriculum internationalization, faculty internationalization, and programming internationalization" (SIO2)
Managing international partnerships	"we are annoying partners in some markets, because we are not timely in getting back to them". (SIO3)
Direction and Supervision	"I have worked with [campus] stakeholders but that has been somewhat unguided, quite unguided". (SIO3)

Tensions in the role of Canadian SIOs

- SIOs were ambivalent about the recruitment mandate: “out of control”, “ethically problematic”, “we don’t have the know-how” and “we should focus on real internationalization”. The interviews surfaced clear distancing from **marketing** as a primary role of the SIO.
- The SIO role to ensure their institution is not “left behind” in the competition for **prestige** is a difficult balancing act because advancing internationalization strategies in order to improve the position of one’s country/institution exacerbates global inequity.



Tensions in the role of Canadian SIOs

- All SIOs spoke of consistently making efforts to engage the campus in comprehensive internationalization. They advocate for equitable and non-discriminatory policies & practices and employ concepts drawn from comprehensive internationalization to ensure IHE is contributing to **public good**.
- SIOs developed tactics to internationalize including: setting up faculty awards, finding pots of funding to encourage study abroad, providing intercultural workshops and consistent messaging to senior leadership about the meaning of international education – **none of which were explicitly mandated** but which they hope might influence change.



Conclusions

- SIOs experience consistent tension within the range of dominant discourses of internationalization of higher education – fiscal survival, nation-building, public good, transformational change: *“I cannot be as effective as I hoped...[in] influencing the University policy in respect [of internationalization], I find my impact is limited...I wish I had a bigger role and a bigger say in what I believe should be included in policy papers and plans”*
- SIOs resent the dominance of marketing role and find ways to implement “ethical” internationalization despite the ignorance, apathy or active resistance they face in the University community: *“We were given the mandate to recruit as many international students as we could for the university. Canada opened up the gate and international students are flooding into Canada, we can’t have the same MO anymore, [but] we are left alone to struggle and to try to carry out the mandate given to us.”*

Conclusions

- SIOs possessed the “professional capacity to make covert decisions about their work and how they wanted their work to be valued” (Turunen & Rafferty, 2013, p. 52). *“So how do I get faculty X to collaborate with me? ... I learn about them - I learn their value, their goals and I figure out how I can add value to what is important to them. I [do feel] I am coming from a deficit position and have to prove my value.”*
- SIO participants shared stories of resistance in order to protect the university from itself and in finding routes to internationalize despite resistance and the lack of an explicit mandate. *“If we were going to invite these international students to come here, it is our obligation to provide them with not just a good education but also a really good experience that supports their education”.*

Conclusions

SIOs want to support comprehensive internationalization but until provided the means (resources) and avenues (organizational set-up) to influence real change in the institution, the inherent tensions of the role will likely persist.

SIOs however are clearly resourceful and resilient – many described covert tactics to instill internationalization principles.

The SIO is not an independent actor, but is an employee tasked with carrying out the stated intentions of the institution for fulfilling the role.

The responsibility for empowering IHE leaders to play a transformational role lies primarily with the institution - how they conceptualize the leadership role – as management or as transformational change-maker – is key to Canada's future in IHE.

