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**International Education in a World of New Geopolitics:
A Comparative Study of US and Canada**

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines how international education (IE) as a tool of government foreign policy is challenged in an era of new geopolitics, where China's growing ambitions have increased rivalry with the West. It compares U.S. and Canada as cases first, by examining rationales and approaches to IE in both countries, second, IE relations with China before conflict and third, current controversies and government policy responses to IE relations with China. The paper concludes identifying contextual factors that shape each country's engagement with IE, but suggests that moving forward, the future of IE in a world of new geopolitics is likely to be far more complex and conflictual.

Keywords: International Education, foreign policy, new geopolitics, U.S.-China, U.S.-Canada

This is an era of new geopolitics; as Jones (2017) states, "the world is changing, and rapidly. We have entered a new phase in international affairs, leaving behind us the brief moment characterized by untrammelled American dominance" (para. 1). In this era, we find ourselves in a world that is increasingly multilateral, polyilateral, and de-westernized – defined by the preponderance of western powers and the transition of power from West to East (Hill & Beadle, 2014). Some describe it as an emergence of a new Cold War, a period of new "great game" (Jones, 2017, para. 3) competition between major powers, Russia, but also increasingly China.

In particular, China's growing assertiveness and geopolitical ambitions have increased bipolarity between China and the U.S. (Jones, 2017, para. 4) and a new geopolitical rivalry with the West. This paper is concerned with how international education (IE) as a tool of government foreign policy is challenged in this new era of geopolitics and focuses on U.S. and Canada as comparative cases, two western countries experiencing shifting discourses on IE as a result of political discords with China.

Both countries are federal states, where higher education responsibility lies with state/provincial level governments, and state/provincial level governments have also over time, taken greater interest in developing their international relations. State/provincial approaches are varied within each country. Given that the primary focus of this paper is each country's national foreign policy and its link to IE, it adopts a nation-state, specifically federal government centric framework. In both countries, national

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foreign policy is under the purview of the federal government. The paper seeks to examine the similarities and differences between the two countries by first comparing the context of the rationales and approaches to IE adopted by national/federal governments, next it outlines both countries IE relations with China, and, finally, discusses current controversies and government policy responses to IE relations with China. The paper concludes with a few observations on the future of IE in a world of new geopolitics.

RESEARCH CONTEXT

The U.S. and Canada offer interesting comparisons as the two countries that are close allies. While the two countries are substantially different in size, historical and political orientation and global positioning, they share a lot in common. Both are liberal democracies that share commonalities in educational governance. Neither country has a federal ministry of education leaving organization and most budgeting at the state or territorial level. The U.S. has a Department of Education (USDEd) but with limited powers. Hence, the federal role in higher education policy in both countries is highly circumscribed. In both jurisdictions, university-government relations are accepted as largely functioning on a high respect for principles of institutional autonomy and academic freedom.

Both countries initiated IE programs in the post-World War II era as components of their foreign policy priorities but did not create more formal IE policies that outlined overarching goals until relatively recently: the US in 2012 and Canada in 2014 and then 2019. While the US still retains the largest global market share of international students and is home to the largest highly ranked universities (McClory, 2017), Canada is considered a growing “popular destination” (Bhardwa, 2017) with its universities increasingly considered emergent “winners” attracting larger share of international students as compared to their competitors in the US, UK, and Australia (She & Wotherspoon 2013).

Over time, the two former allies have been moving in opposing ideological directions as a result of major shifts in their respective foreign policies. The baseline similarities between the two countries enable a meaningful comparative study, while the differences allow for a deeper contextual analysis of how different governments engage in IE in context of new geopolitics (Bray et al., 2007).

The simultaneous comparison of the two cases (Bray et al., 2007) was based on a thorough literature review including journal articles, newsletters, institutional and organizational public websites that reflected scholarly/academic, policy and practitioner resources on IE in both countries. In addition, targeted semi-structured interviews were conducted to verify analysis and understand the issues from a multi stakeholder perspective (Creswell, 2007).

Eighteen interviews were conducted with scholars in the public diplomacy field, IE policy makers and advocates in government and non-government organizations and journalists focused on IE coverage in both countries. Interviews typically lasted for 60 minutes, were conducted on zoom, recorded, and transcribed. To maintain strict confidentiality, the identities of the individuals interviewed and their affiliations are not revealed; IE involves a fairly small and discrete community and therefore anonymity in data reporting is of utmost importance. Interview data has been selectively incorporated to substantiate findings and analysis.

This paper provides a unidirectional perspective of U.S. and Canadian scholars, policy makers and practitioners. It does not provide a counter perspective from China on its relations with the two countries. Neither, does, it substantiate or qualify arguments made against China/the Chinese government as grounded in fact (or not). This could be considered an important limitation of this paper.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

1. Context: IE structure & rationale(s)

IE is defined as a wide range of “activities that link people, educational institutions [and academic/research programs] across national boundaries...” (Farquhar, 2001, p.1). It encompasses exchanges, research partnerships, study abroad programs, virtual exchanges, foreign campuses, and degree-seeking international students, among other forms of engagement.

In order to better understand current context, it is imperative to examine the origins, structure, and approaches to IE in both countries. While IE is not centralized as responsibility in any one government agency, largely speaking IE is associated with each country’s foreign policy. It is the Department of State (within it the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs) in the U.S. and Global Affairs Canada (within it the International Education Division) respectively that are recognized as having primary responsibility for IE at the federal level.

1.1. U.S.

The federal role in IE was initiated in 1945, largely in response to Senator, J. William Fulbright’s vision of educational exchanges producing cosmopolitan peacemakers (Snow, 2021). However, as Cull (2020) has poignantly observed, the U.S. has always approached investment in IE with dual objectives of promoting mutual understanding but also national security. The central objective of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' (ECA), established in 1960 within the Department of State (DOS) (Davis, 1970) is, “to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchange that assist in the development of peaceful relations” (<https://eca.state.gov/about-bureau>).

The National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958 established federal investment in Title VI and exchange programs, federal funding to U.S. universities to develop language and area studies centers, as well as graduate fellowships for advanced international knowledge and expertise (Ruther, 2002, p. 59). These IE programs are valued as national resources given their pragmatic and national defense rationales (Ruther, 2002, p. 124).

While these dual motives have supported federal investment in IE, the focus on one or the other rationale has shifted under different governments. In general, Republican presidents since Ronald Reagan have had less sympathy for investment in IE with the long-term soft-power goals of mutual understanding, while Democratic Presidents have generally supported the notion of investing in IE to meet America’s broader foreign policy objectives.

The Cold war provided an important national security rationale when international exchanges were seen as an explicit foreign policy tool to combat the influence of the “so called Evil empire” (Campbell, 2005, p 131). With the end of the Cold war, there was a vacuum in the national security rationale for IE (Campbell, 2005), however very quickly new IE programs as a tool to influence the newly independent countries of the Soviet Union/Eastern Europe were introduced. As well 9/11 provided another major incentive to invest in IE as a tool to ensure national security.

Initially 9/11, reframed IE in the U.S. as a risk to the nation’s security, resulting in a new Department of Homeland Security administering the controversial Student and Exchange Visitors Information System (SEVIS) to track international students (Campbell, 2005, p. 141). As Witt (2008) states, “the entire landscape of international education in the US shifted dramatically from a posture of recruitment to one

of determent, from receptive to suspicious, from hospitable to hostile” (p. 6). However, path dependency prevailed and “the global war on terrorism replaced the cold war as the national security meta narrative” (Campbell, 2005, p.139).

Capitalizing on the “why do they hate us?” sentiment (as cited in Campbell, 2005, p. 142), and pivoting from earlier Republican governments, the Cultural Bridges Act of 2002 authorized \$95 million/year from 2003-7 for new and expanded IE programs with the Islamic world, with investments in study abroad for American students (2005 Commission on Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program and the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act). Former U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice (2006) at a U.S. University Presidents Summit on International Higher Education proclaimed, “Every foreign student attending one of our universities represents an opportunity to enhance democracy in America and strengthen the cause of freedom abroad” (para 13). In his famous speech in Cairo (2009), U.S. President Barack Obama spoke of a new beginning in relations between the United States and Muslim-majority countries through U.S. cooperation in exchanges and science. New 1,000 strong programs in the late 2000s encouraged Americans to study in China, Latin America and the Caribbean (Fischer, 2019).

Since the Clinton administration in particular, scholars have pointed to the increasing economic impetus and commercialization of IE. IE became part of the government’s doctrine of “economic expansion and enlarging markets for US goods and services” (Snow, 2008, p. 216). This enhanced the growing economic rationale for IE and an interest in its “commercialization” (Fischer, 2019, p.26). With this shift, a new department, the U.S. Department of Commerce became increasingly interested in international students as ‘big business’. Embracing globalization and the rhetoric of global economic competitiveness, President Obama also introduced the notion of IE as a global talent acquisition strategy (Douglass and Edelstein, 2009). He expanded and extended the federal Optional Practical Training (OPT) program, which allows international students to work in the U.S. while studying. Attention was drawn increasingly to educating international students as the “kinds of immigrants we should encourage to stay in the US” (NAFSA as cited in Smith, 2014, para 5).

Scholars speak of ebbs and flows in the federal government’s investments and commitments to IE, including the range of rationales from political to economic. However, several scholars generally agree that for the U.S., IE serves as an important foreign policy asset. In the context of its foreign policy objectives, they point to shifting rationales between IE as a tool for mutual understanding at one end of the continuum and on the other, IE as a tool to enhance U.S. national security (Ruther, 2002; Cull, 2020; Snow, 2021). Reflecting the rationale for IE as a foreign policy tool, NAFSA, a non-profit advocacy IE association, states that “leaders understand that exchange relationships sustain political relationships; if one atrophies, sooner or later the other will too.

Having fewer future world leaders study in the United States will inevitably translate into a loss of U.S. international influence down the road” (NAFSA, 2006, p.2). This is perhaps why the U.S. Fulbright Program has successfully supported the exchange of 360,000 students/scholars (Lane, 2019), with more than 8000 annual grants, across 160 countries (Savin, 2018) and is well respected across the globe. An interviewee states that “. . . [IE in the U.S.] has no real enemies. And that is why its support has been pretty good independent of who's in the White House.”

However, the outlier in U.S IE history has been President Trump. Introducing an "America First" doctrine, he encouraged a populist-nationalist mindset and an isolationist doctrine (Fischer, 2019; McClory, 2017; Knowledge Network, 2018) that left little relevance for federal investment in IE. The ‘Trump effect’ was extremely powerful in reversing the earlier trend of international student flows to the U.S. and

significantly decreasing its attractiveness as a destination of study and stay (Fischer, 2017; Johnson, 2020; Simauchi, 2020).

1.2. Canada

Canada began its investment in IE almost a decade after the U.S. Unlike the U.S., however, Canada did not directly invest in IE as a tool linked to its foreign policy. Although a result of its foreign policy orientation, IE was supported in Canada indirectly and as part of its Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) programs with the developing world.

ODA engaged Canada's educational sector by deploying among the largest number of technical assistance personnel including faculty and students to developing countries and hosting students from developing countries on Canadian campuses (Bergfalk, n.d.; Bond & Lemasson, 1999). In the late 60's and early 70's, Canadian foreign policy began to be re-defined as the extension abroad of national policies and Canada's engagement with its international role declined and with it, so did its commitment to ODA. This was a time when Canada began investing in defining Canadian culture as distinct from American, which subsequently led to an investment in the Canadian Studies program (CSPA), referred to by Potter (2009) as the "crown jewel" (p. 129) of Canada's investments in IE.

CSPA through strategic government investment promoted an understanding of Canada and Canadian studies within academic institutions and through international scholars abroad. The program was valued as a useful and effective tool to project Canada's image abroad and raise its profile among international decision makers, and because it was perceived as a less direct and intrusive an approach, it challenged neither provincial jurisdictional authority nor institutional autonomy and academic freedom (DFAIT, 2006, Trilokekar, 2007).

However, this investment was short lived, with an increasing 'trade creep' in Canadian foreign policy. This was a time when Canada was critiqued for its "isolationist" approach (Cohen, 2003, p. 31) with scholars referencing how the shrinkage in exchange programs during this period caused embarrassment for Canada as other countries offered many more scholarships to Canadians than Canada could offer these same countries. This was a time when budgets for international academic exchanges were seen as increasingly "peripheral to Canadian foreign policy objectives" (Graham, 1999, p. 140).

In 1990's, two former independent departments were amalgamated to create a Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). This shift in foreign policy directly impacted IE as there was growing sentiment that Canada could no longer afford educating international students. The focus of IE became educational marketing of Canadian higher education as an export sector and investing in developing a Canadian educational brand (Trilokekar, 2007). In 2014, Canada announced its first IE policy that focused on the marketing of Canadian higher education and the recruitment and the retention of international students to ensure Canadian prosperity.

Encouraging international students to remain in Canada as future immigrants became the government's clear policy priority (FATDC 2014). Thus, IE in Canada witnessed a dramatic shift in ideology and rationale. No more linked with outward looking foreign policy objectives, it first lost all links with its ODA origins and investment in international students from developing countries. Next, it lost any connection with supporting Canadian studies programs abroad.

IE became the federal government's instrument to meet domestic labour market needs and enhance its educational trade portfolio. IE as an aspect of Canada's global engagement was further severed when in 2012 the Harper government attempted to cancel the Canadian Studies Program, the Commonwealth

Scholarships, and the Fulbright programs (Nimijean, 2013) as the last bastions of IE as an important foreign policy asset. In the words of an interviewee, “if I compare it to what we used to have we don’t leverage that toolkit in the way that we used to [referring to IE as a tool of foreign policy]. It has become narrower; it has become much more granular.”

2. IE with China

The current discord with China and the sudden pivot in IE relations is fairly recent, given the earlier history of strong promotion and support for close academic relations between both US-China and Canada-China. Thus, it becomes imperative to understand the context of these relationships before moving onto examining the controversies and the subsequent policy responses surrounding IE relations with China, in context of new geopolitics.

2.1. U.S.

Relations between the U.S and China were normalized in 1979 through an agreement signed between President Carter and Chairman Xiaoping. This agreement initiated larger-scale science-and-technology collaborations with academic partnerships serving as key tools of rapprochement and soft diplomacy (Bullock, 2017). At that time, Marginson (2019) suggests that both countries came to the table with differing intentions and beliefs. “China saw the US as holding superior technological capacity and was determined to learn in order to catch up. For its part, the United States was well aware of its technological edge but saw this as resting on a superiority that was intrinsic and timeless” (para 39). Ellis & Gluckman (2019) suggest that “For China, the benefit was clear: cooperation and exchange would help its scientists catch up to innovative Western practices and strengthen the country’s economic muscle. For the U.S., the arrangement meant new opportunities to recruit top students and scholars—and the immeasurable possibilities of scientific discovery in a new place” (para 18).

Douglass (2014) addresses the rising interests of institutions, in particular the University of California-Berkeley to expand its market base to Asia, the rationale being that the enrollment of international students and the promotion of scholarly research would hold numerous benefits, including extending California’s economic and political influence.

The agreement between the U.S. and China resulted in a dramatic rise in Chinese students and scholars over time. From 2000 Chinese students at the end of 1979, as more and more fee-paying students sought U.S. education, the numbers grew exponentially. According to the Open Doors 2021 Report, more than 317,000 Chinese students enrolled in U.S. institutions in 2020/21. These rising numbers were a welcome to U.S. institutions who were directly benefitting from this source of tuition revenue, at a time when state governments were severely reducing their financial commitments to higher education. The economic rationale worked in close tandem with the political climate of the time.

China remains the number one source of international students in the United States; the United States hosts the largest number of Chinese students studying outside of China. One of every three international students on an American campus is from China. It is also important to remember that during the Tiananmen Square tragedy, the U.S. government offered Chinese students protection. It allowed all Chinese citizens who had come before April 12, 1990, to obtain permanent residency, and more than 50,000 did so (Fish, 2020).

The U.S. academic research infrastructure has thus come to be highly reliant on Chinese students and scholars. In 2017, students from China earned 5,157 doctorates in science and engineering fields at

American universities, accounting for more than 12 percent of the 41,438 doctorates awarded in science and engineering fields in the U.S. (Redden, 2019, para 20).

Put differently, since 1980 more than 90,000 Chinese have received Ph.D. degrees in the United States, approximately 70 percent in the STEM fields, and approximately 80 percent have stayed in the United States, contributing significantly to U.S. human capital needs (Bullock, 2017, para 6). It is therefore not surprising that many in higher education argue that American universities' ability to continue to attract Chinese students and scholars is critical to the U.S. leadership in science and technology research. The economic rationale for IE is clearly evident in the attractiveness of Chinese students as future talent for the U.S. while also being self-funded students. Fee-paying Chinese students are estimated to have contributed \$9.8 billion to the American economy (Bullock, 2017).

As recently as 2010, the US and China signed an agreement to establish High-Level Consultation on People-to-People Exchange and to launch the '100,000 Strong' Initiative. The '100,000 Strong: US Students in China' Initiative promoted mutual understanding by aspiring to have 100,000 American students study in China over four years (Zha, 2017). For both countries, their institutional partnerships with each other greatly outnumber those with other countries. Hundreds of American universities have research and exchange programs with China. Several offer degree programs in China and more American students study in China than any other developing country. Most of the Ivy League schools host stand-alone research centers in China with few American universities having established joint venture/independent Chinese universities (Bullock, 2017, para 4).

Scientific collaboration has been foundational to U.S.-China academic relationship. "Measured by co-authored scientific research papers, U.S. collaboration [with China] now exceeds collaboration with traditional partners such as the United Kingdom, Germany, and Japan. China and the United States have become each other's main partner in scientific collaboration." (Bullock, 2017, para 6). There were new initiatives. The Chinese government-funded education agency, Hanban, funded approximately 100 Confucius Institutes in American universities. Tsinghua University, the University of Washington, and Microsoft announced the creation of a new research and education institution in Seattle, the first such bilateral venture in the United States (Bullock, 2017). All of these initiatives signaled a deep and multifaceted engagement between the two countries, while also signifying a shifting relationship with China increasingly investing as full partner on U.S. soil, a context that is increasingly challenged as will be discussed in the next section.

2.2. Canada

Canada was one of the first Western nations, ahead of the U.S., to recognize the People's Republic of China. Establishing diplomatic relations in 1970, scholarly cooperation was given priority as an aspect of this bilateral relationship (Zha, 2017). Initially, a small number of students and faculty were supported to spend periods of time either studying or doing research in the other country. Then a series of small-scale scientific and technical exchanges in specific fields were established, before a formal bilateral agreement on academic exchanges was signed. Soon a visiting-scholars program for mid-career Chinese academics in engineering and medicine to come to Canada was supported and new linkage agreements for the exchange of degree students and research scholars initiated (Evans, 2016).

The bulk of the relationship however, from the 1970s to 1990s, was established through the two-way flow of scholars funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Canada envisioned this investment as both an opportunity and a comparative advantage in assisting China's development and bringing China into the international system; an underlying assumption being that "opening China economically would eventually induce political liberalization" (Evans, 2016, p. 37). The programs were

also ultimately valuable to Canada's commercial interests, building a market economy in China would in the long run result in large-scale commercial contracts for Canada. Speaking of the more than 250 million Canadian dollars investment in Chinese higher education, Hayhoe (1996, as quoted in Zha, 2017) states, "indeed apart from the Soviet Union in the 1950s, it is hard to find any other country that has assisted development of China's higher education to a comparable level of generosity" (p. 101).

The importance of academic relations with China was evident as the Canadian Embassy created a sinologist-in-residence position for an academic seconded to assist with cultural and educational affairs. By 1989, there were more than 200 university linkages and hundreds of Canadian and Chinese students and academics visiting each other's countries for academic purposes. Several Canadian universities had bilateral exchanges with their Chinese counterparts, and four provinces established educational exchange arrangements with their Chinese counterparts.

As self-funded Chinese students sought study abroad, enrolments rose dramatically. Leudi (2020) states that "when it comes to courting Chinese students, Canada outperforms its larger neighbour to the south, as on a per capita basis Canada hosts eight times more Chinese students than the United States" (para 6). Currently, there are 95,160 Chinese students studying in Canada—second to India, Chinese students make up one-third of all international students in Canada and 10% of all Chinese students currently studying overseas. This makes Canada the fourth most desirable destination for Chinese students, after the USA (30%). It is estimated that Chinese students alone spend close to CAD 2.7 billion a year in Canada, contributing to nearly 18,000 jobs and generating CAD 97 million in government revenue (Liu, 2016).

The government and individual higher educational institutions, both independently and collaboratively, reinforce the economic rationale for IE. Educational services are now Canada's largest export to China, and Ottawa recognizes this benefit. Immigration Minister Ahmed Hussen is quoted as saying, "we'll do whatever we can" to increase the number of Chinese international students (Leudi, 2020, para 2). As in the U.S., the federal government adjusted immigration policy to give a fast path to citizenship for all Chinese students in Canada at the time of the Tiananmen event, about 10,000 in total (Evans, 2016).

Canada also witnessed a shift in its relationship with China. According to Evans (2016), "by the time that Prime Minister Paul Martin and Chinese President Hu Jintao announced the strategic partnership between the two countries in September 2005, the role of Ottawa as funder, cheerleader, and leader in shaping and promoting academic activities was diminishing" (p. 42). Instead, China was taking the lead with its investments in Canada. In 2017, there were 12 Confucius Institutes and 35 Confucius Classrooms. Also, Zha (2017) states that the Chinese government now supports twice as many Canadian scholars then there are Chinese scholars supported by the Canadian government. Similar to the U.S., this euphoria for China sponsored initiatives started shifting as will be described below.

3. Current controversies and government policy responses to IE relations with China

From an enthusiastic and engaged collaborative approach in IE with China, both the U.S. and Canada experienced a dramatic turn. In both countries there were growing concerns that IE exposes their universities as vulnerable knowledge producers, including espionage and theft (Lee, 2019). Rising concerns over national security started shifting government's perception of IE, specifically in their relations with China.

3.1. U.S.

The sudden pivot in IE relations with China is best captured by Millward, a China scholar at Georgetown University, who stated, "just as we had a get-on-the-China-bandwagon movement...now will we have a

rush to get off?" (Fischer, 2020, para 8). After 40 years of steady cooperation, President Trump declared China a threat to "American power, influence and interests" implicating universities as "vulnerable and viable targets for foreign espionage" (Lee, 2019, para 7). The 'China threat' led to a series of measures restricting U.S. China academic relations.

Trump limited Chinese students and scholars from coming to the U.S. (Fischer, 2019) by restraining the issuances and the length of their visas and requiring annual renewals, especially for those studying and conducting research in certain sensitive fields within STEM disciplines or with current or past connections to "an entity in the PRC that implements or supports the PRC's military-civil fusion strategy" (NAFSA, 2021, para 5). He went on to eliminate the Fulbright program in China and Hong Kong (Redden, 2020), in addition to closing several other academic exchanges (Williams, 2020).

To FBI officials, university laboratories were "battlegrounds" (Ellis & Gluckman, 2019, para 30) of conflicts with China as "they're where the tools that will control the future of medicine, warfare, and the economy are being developed" (Ellis & Gluckman, 2019, para 7). Wray, the director of the FBI, warned American universities of the threats posed by China, including its attempts to steal innovation via graduate students and researchers. He suggested that Chinese intelligence operatives were working at top universities as "professors, scientists [and] students" systematically "initiating ways to influence our research and frankly to take advantage of our research by stealing it" (Ellis & Gluckman, 2019, para 37). This theft, it was stated, "not only gave unfair benefit to a growing rival, but in the hands of an authoritarian regime, these tools can also be used for surveillance and suppression" (Ellis & Gluckman, 2019, para 7). China was working against American security and prosperity.

Universities were perceived as naïve actors, who made "no meaningful distinction between collaboration with the Chinese military and the rest of their collaboration with China" (Redden, 2019, para 27). Wray said, "the academic sector needs to be much more sophisticated and thoughtful about how others may exploit the very open collaborative research environment that we have in this country" (Ellis & Gluckman, 2019, para 48). According to government officials, universities needed to be suspicious of Chinese students and scholars, who were potential spies stealing U.S. intellectual property. Under pressure from Congress and in cooperation with the FBI, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the United States' largest research funder, urged more than 10,000 research institutions to report any international funding and not to share NIH grant application information to those outside the United States (Ellis & Gluckman, 2019).

A direct outcome of these fears was the announcement of the China Initiative, the nation's premier effort to "thwart and punish industrial and academic researchers who funneled economic and military research to China" (Greenfield, 2022, para 6). Eighteen months after the China Initiative began, some 5,000 agents were tasked with preventing China from stealing technologies that were vital to America's economic and military interests, with Wray proudly announcing how the bureau was "opening a China-related counterintelligence case every 10 hours" (Wray, 2020, para 8). With scientists and research collaborations being closely monitored by the government, the China Initiative created a chilling climate for Chinese scientists and US scientists of Chinese descent. There were several examples of scientists wrongly accused, some even losing their tenured positions, only to be cleared later, as charges got dropped.

An environment of anti-Asian sentiment, both on and off campuses, loomed large. Pew opinion polls revealed for example that Americans' favorable opinions of China were the lowest they have been in four decades, with several Americans favoring restrictions be placed on Chinese students (Long, 2021). Several reported incidences of anti-Asian hate crime led Presidents of leading research universities to openly denounce discrimination based on one's nation of origin, affirming their commitment to their institution's international community (Greenfield, 2022).

Several Universities signed an open letter condemning the China Initiative and a report titled *Racial Profiling Among Scientists of Chinese Descent and Consequences for the US Scientific Community* further detailed the fear and anxiety faced by scientists of Chinese descent. The report warned of how the chilling narrative for scientists and scholars was damaging the scientific enterprise in the U.S. (Greenfield, 2022). Perhaps it was the push back received from the scientific community and/or a fear of the return of McCarthyism that eventually led the Biden administration to recently announce the end of the China Initiative.

Yet, President Trump's initiated 'China threat' is not considered an anomaly. The suspicion of China, real and palpable, is considered to be one of those rare issues that receives bipartisan agreement and support in Washington. The Biden administration passed the China competition bill to monitor international research linkages. The bill lowered the threshold for reporting overseas gifts and contracts (from \$250,000 to \$50,000), prohibited participants in foreign talent programs sponsored by countries like China and Russia from receiving federal grants, and restricting universities with Confucius Institutes from getting National Science Foundation or Education Department funding (Fischer, 2021). As per Fischer (2021) it effectively gave the U.S. government veto power over international academic agreements, that would be detrimental to the safety or security of the United States. As an outcome of government policy, there was closure of over half of the existing 100 Confucius Institutes in the U.S.

The sudden pivot in relations with China resulted in a lot of confusion. The strong support for U.S. China relations had resulted in the large presence of Chinese students and scholars on U.S. campuses and dense research collaborations between U.S. and China. As stated by an interviewee:

The Chinese relationship was deeper and more multifaceted than the relationship that universities in most countries have had with any other...while there was exchange between the US the Soviet Union it wasn't you know you didn't have nearly 400,000 students in the US. So just the magnitude is huge. And everybody, every college, even ones who don't have any research capacity and barely no one knows its name, will have a relationship with China or an institution in China. So, it was just seen for a while as something that all institutions did. So ... there [has been large] . . . a pendulum swing.

On one hand, there was economic dependence that had built over time. U.S. universities derived a sizable chunk of their revenue from Chinese international students, with skeptics criticizing schools like UC Berkeley with a large population of Chinese students to be walking on "eggshells around China issues" (Fischer, 2021). As mentioned earlier, a high percentage of Chinese students remain in the U.S. after their doctorates. These graduates are perceived as a critical source of top scientists, researchers, and professors (Fischer, 2020, para 32). The 18% drop in Chinese applicants for fall 2021 is worrisome to the university sector (Lee, 2019) as there is concern of losing a generation of talent. "You don't want to send the message to arguably the largest talent pool in the world...that they are a despised class in America" (Ellis & Gluckman, 2019, para 62).

On the other hand, American researchers are worried about falling behind as China becomes world-renowned in many areas of research, especially in the sciences (Fischer, 2020). Thus the U.S. finds itself at a crossroads. Joanne Carney, the director of government relations at the American Association for the Advancement of Science states that "trying to balance our ability to be an innovative nation and protect our commercial interests is something that I think is a priority for the current administration. I think we're going to go through some growing pains of how do we balance our ability to be an open nation, the ability to collaborate with some of our international partners, while also balancing our commercial interests and national security interests. We're just going through a new phase" (Redden, 2019, para 19).

An attempt to balance these various interests is what is perhaps evident in the Biden administration's most recent joint statement titled, *Reengaging the World to Make the United States Stronger at Home*. A joint statement from the US Department of State and Department of Education, with the additional support of the Departments of Commerce and Homeland Security, it makes explicit links between IE and national security, the economy, and foreign policy. It speaks to IE as the link to "strengthen relationships between current and future leaders and contribute to global peace and security" while enhancing American prosperity and serving the interests of the American people. As an interviewee stated:

We have had a very ambivalent feeling for international education. This joint statement it is a real watershed... And we will also come out of it well because we will figure out how wide the door can be open. And what are the things that are absolutely off-limits. I think we'll see the government appreciate more and more what is outlined in that joint statement that there is real value to our security, our diplomacy, our economy by being quite serious about international education.

Yet, it is not clear how the government plans to reconcile these colliding objectives, of keeping IE as an imperative while monitoring international exchanges that are deemed detrimental to national security concerns.

3.2. Canada

It is important to note that Canada's relations with China soured largely as a result of Canada being caught in the middle of the U.S. and China feud. Canada arrested Meng Wanzhou, the chief financial officer of Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei Technologies, at the request of the United States (Trilokekar, et al, 2021). In retaliation, the Chinese government responded by detaining two Canadians in China and imposing trade restrictions on Canadian products. Having had previous experience when a diplomatic spat with Saudi Arabia resulted in 6,000 Saudi students being pulled out of "Canadian universities and colleges... [who as a result] lost \$140 million in revenues" (Usher, 2018, para. 1), there was immediate fear if tensions with China would result in the same fate. What might happen if China put a "halt to the exodus of hundreds of thousands of Chinese students abroad every year" (Usher, 2018, para. 8)?

In the days following the arrest of the Huawei executive, universities scrambled to assess the impact that rising Canada-China tensions could have on student enrolment, fundraising, and research. Internal records show concerns of potentially great "credit risks for Canadian universities" (University Affairs, 2019, para. 7). As the largest source of international students in Canada, there was fear that "some Chinese students may be deterred by the current crisis" since "Canada is...receiving bad publicity in the Chinese state media" (Bothwell, 2019, para. 13). This was of great concern since a relationship with China is crucial to the billion-dollar IE industry, university presidents were reported as having discussed the issue privately (Friesen, 2019). "I don't know that we have ever got over that just appetite or addiction to the commercial benefit that came from international students, especially Chinese," noted one interviewee.

There is clear recognition that "China remains important for Canada's universities," hence, "we've [Universities Canada] been in touch with Global Affairs just so they're aware how important the relationship is to us and to Canada's economy" (as quoted in Friesen, 2019, para. 7).

Concerned that more than half of the international students in Canada come from just two countries, China and India, the federal government pledged nearly \$30 million to diversify the source countries for recruitment. The second IE strategy forewarned of the economic vulnerability of Canadian universities as they become increasingly dependent on single markets like China and recommended securing this income stream by diversifying Canada's trade portfolio in education by entering new markets and diversifying its

source countries of international students (GOC, 2019, p.4). Similarly, China-specific programs offered in China by Canadian universities feared a loss in enrolment and revenue. The focus on how the lucrative IE business can face tremendous economic consequences as a result of diplomatic rifts seeped into issues of research funding.

Several of the premier research universities in Canada received substantial research funding, in millions of dollars, from Huawei. Huawei had also partnered with Canada's largest province, Ontario, by investing \$212 million for "the creation of 250 new research and engineering jobs" focused on 5G (Green, 2018, para. 25). But now, these relationships came under heightened scrutiny. In keeping with trends in the U.S. and its other western allies, the focus of the Canadian government also soon turned to issues of espionage (Leuprecht, 2018) and their impact on Canadian national and economic stability.

The government became increasingly concerned with Huawei's significant research investments in Canada's leading institutions (Green, 2018), with Canadian universities reported among the top 10 universities outside of China collaborating with the Chinese People's Liberation Army (Leuprecht, 2018). These investments were perceived to facilitate China's "capacity to conduct remote spying and modify or steal information or even shut down systems" (Silcoff, 2019, para 4), while gaining greater share of intellectual property and ultimately global political and economic influence (Green, 2018).

Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) conducted closed-door meetings with Canadian research universities regarding these rising security risks (see Berthiaume, 2019; Blackwell 2019c; Quan, 2019; Vanderklippe, 2018). It warned against Chinese faculty and researchers who according to the CSIS were coopted into furthering Chinese interests (Quan, 2019a). Chinese defence scientists were reported to be working with Canadian scholars using names of non-existent civilian institutions in China rather than citing their military credentials (Vanderklippe, 2018a). CSIS briefed Universities Canada about "potential threats to Canadian research" from "foreign agents in labs" (Friesen, 2021, para. 4) interested in artificial intelligence and quantum computing work that could have a military application.

Similar to the U.S. context, Canadian universities were viewed as naïve and "unwittingly" (Friesen, 2021, para. 21) becoming important tools in an emerging cold war. However, unlike the U.S., there is no open directive from the government in the form a China Initiative or a China Competition Bill. Universities were asked by the government to "develop risk guidelines for research partnerships" (Friesen, 2021, para. 24), at the same time that international collaborative projects funded by the Natural Sciences and Engineering research Council of Canada (NSERC) began to be closely scrutinized by CSIS for their national security implications. The *Building Security Awareness in the Academic Community* report published by Public Safety Canada (Public Safety Canada, 2020) warns universities of threats to the integrity of research that may compromise national security or undercut Canada's research or economic competitive advantage.

But, rather than prescribe measures it asks "academic communities to evaluate the security measures they have in place and, where necessary, take measures to strengthen weak access controls and reduce the potential for exploitation" (para 3). It outlines best practices, general indicators of concern and contacts for institutions to report incidences; China is not once mentioned specifically as the threat. Yet, as an interviewee confirmed, "while the legislation is not China specific, there is a perception that it is all about China."

In Canada, the federal government never moved towards a specific directive, yet it is interesting that the provincial Government of Alberta, a relatively conservative state, directed its four research universities to suspend "any new partnerships with people or organizations with links to the Chinese government or its ruling party" (Friesen, 2021, para. 3). The university community, just like in the U.S. spoke for openness

in academic and scientific collaboration. The U15, a consortium of Canada's research focused universities, put out a *Statement on Protecting Canadian Values and Canadian Research* in which they stated, "A defining characteristic of Canada's world-class university system is its openness to the world. Global engagement is indispensable to the success of our top research-intensive universities, their competitiveness on the world stage, and their ability to enhance the quality of life of Canadians ...Welcoming talent from around the world, regardless of country of origin, is an essential element of Canada's current and future success as an open, inclusive, and prosperous nation" (U 15, 2021, para 2).

Perhaps in response to this statement, and in recognition of the importance of institutional autonomy and academic freedom, the federal government's most recent budget announcement included funding towards *The Research Security Initiative*. The government is now effectively paying universities to set up the minimal amounts of security necessary to stop secrets being funneled abroad, and according to Usher (2022) "it is a definite sign of the lobbying power of universities: in none of the other Five Eyes countries [Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States], so far as we can establish, have governments ever paid universities to do what might be seen as basic due diligence in this area" (p.10).

DISCUSSION

Having outlined the federal government's approach to IE in context of foreign policy in both countries, their previous enthusiasm for academic collaborations with China and the current controversies and responses to IE with China, this section further examines the similarities and differences between the two countries given this contextual background. How is IE implicated in the U.S. and Canada as a result of new geopolitics and tensions with China?

Similarities

There are several similarities in how both countries have dramatically shifted their perspective on China, albeit the pulse is felt strongly and expressed more vocally in the U.S. Both countries initially wooed China, Canada first ahead of the U.S., and for both countries educational diplomacy/exchanges were central to this new relationship, albeit specific academic initiatives differed. The number and presence of Chinese students and scholars and extent of collaborations run fairly deep in both countries; in the U.S. Chinese students are the largest number of international students by far and in Canada, they are now second place to students from India.

While the scope and size of research relationships between the U.S. and China are much larger, Canada-China research relationships are fairly significant. Over time, both countries experienced a shift, with China increasingly investing at par or at times more than U.S. or Canada and also on U.S. or Canadian soil. Thus both U.S. and Canada have witnessed growth in China's soft power in IE. Canada, more specifically, has benefitted from China's financial investments in IE, shifting its role from funder to recipient.

In both countries, perception of China, from ally to adversary, pivoted over a fairly short period. China came to be identified as a clear threat to each nation's security and prosperity, and academic institutions, specifically research universities, were identified as vulnerable to Chinese espionage and theft. Chinese students and scholars, who were initially invited with open arms, were now viewed with caution and suspicion. Research collaborations with China were suspect and so was the Chinese government's reach within each nation's institutions.

Interestingly, in both countries, their respective government's viewed universities as naïve actors, unaware of the risks they caused through their open and welcoming scientific cultures. In both countries,

national security agencies, FBI in the case of the U.S. and CSIS in the case of Canada, began directly engaging with the academic community. This was done and talked about more openly in the U.S. than in Canada, where meetings were mostly “closed-door”. With growing skepticism, Chinese funded programs such as the Confucius Institutes were distrusted and often accused of political interference, and as a result both countries witnessed a closing down of these institutes. In the U.S. this was more directly maneuvered through government policy, while in the Canadian case, it was largely a result of controversy within local communities/institutions.

What is clear is that there is a growing distrust of China in both countries. In the U.S., President Trump’s inflammatory language and aggressive policy gestures against China and Chinese students and scholars could be considered fuel to anti-Asian sentiment; there was no such public endorsement in Canada, the exceptions being individual Conservative party candidates. Either way, both countries find themselves facing several dilemmas in balancing the interests of the universities to be open and welcoming of international students and research investments and those of the government in meeting national security objectives.

A neoliberal logic operational in both countries has resulted in a high reliance on international tuition revenue to meet institutional base budget requirements, given lowered funding investments in higher education by their respective state governments. Additionally, the U.S. and perhaps more so Canada, is reliant on international research funding and global collaborations as a marker of international competitiveness/ranking. China has been a significant contributor of individual fee-paying students, who in the long run contribute to U.S. and Canada’s talent pool. China has also been a contributor by way of institutional support in the form of research funding and other IE collaborations in both countries. Thus, moving forward, shifting relationships with China create highly problematic contexts for the higher educational sector in both countries.

Differences

While there are several similarities, there are also distinct differences between the two countries, as alluded to above, emanating largely from their specific IE contexts. Below three key differences are detailed.

IE as linked to national security

While both countries have strong economic rationales for engaging in IE, for the U.S., especially in contrast to Canada, national security as a rationale for IE has prevailed. Starting with the Cold war, the post-cold war period and then post 9/11, at each phase, the national security narrative lead to targeted investments in IE. In spite of occasional ebbs and flow of investments in IE, a path dependency was created. However, it is this path dependency that has been disrupted as a result of new geopolitics.

During the Trump administration, and under the current Biden administration, there is shift from the earlier national security narrative. In the context of China, IE is perceived as a risk not a strategy to secure national security, rationalizing the heavier securitization of IE. This has direct implications for university-government relations. Governments are increasingly seen as having legitimate authority over university regulation, with universities having to comply, on matters of securing national interest, disrupting accepted principles of institutional autonomy.

National security has never been a rationale for IE within the Canadian context. IE has thus far been seen as purely an economic rather than a political or security tool. In Canada, IE became an activity formally linked to trade, trade defining Canadian foreign policy to a large extent. Canada’s IE strategy speaks of IE as synonymous to the recruitment and retention of international students. However, for the first time in

Canada's IE policy discourses, national security is mentioned. This change can be largely attributed to Canada's shifting relations with China. The very same concerns as in the U.S. around increased regulation of research collaborations have taken a hold in the Canadian context. Yet, to date, the Canadian government has taken a far more cautious and less aggressive approach in establishing IE as a risk to national security. As an interviewee stated:

We don't discuss it [national security] in the more explicit and open ways in which our American counterparts do, right? Right in a way that allows them to embed this as an intrinsic part of how they do business and how they engage globally etc. We have never made it explicit. It's behind closed doors and a quiet corner here and a quiet corner there.

As a middle power whose foreign policy is tantamount to trade policy, and IE is more directly and openly linked to the recruitment and retention of international students, Canada in comparison to the U.S. focuses on maintaining economic security as opposed to the U.S.'s more political agenda of national security.

IE in context of new geopolitics

The context of new geopolitics suggests that given China's fast rising status as a global superpower and leader in the world's scientific research production, China is in a unique position to challenge a global system that has long been dominated by the West (i.e., Anglo America and Western Europe). This perceived threat has caused according to an interviewee, a sense of "...panic. Some of it is a kind of a policy panic about the US being challenged. And a desire for something to be seen, to be done. So, policies are enacted quite swiftly to deal with a threat from the Middle East or a threat from China rather than thinking about the long-term implications of a geopolitical [shift]."

So, the question becomes, in context of shifting geopolitics, how should the U.S. perceive its IE relations with China? Should it isolate or engage with China when it comes to academic collaborations? Will path dependency prevail? It is important to remember that the origins of IE at the U.S. nation-state level are directly linked to the Cold War period when rather than disengage, the U.S. and Russia began bi-national exchanges. The Fulbright Program was a Cold War strategic effort to learn about both states that were friend and foe.

Lee (2019) states, "a key benefit of IE is the ability to make what is 'foreign' more understandable and appreciated, including a country's complexities and the many cultural contradictions within them. These realities are as true for China as they are for the United States or any other country" (para 50). As global competition intensifies, scholars suggest that limiting international ties and curbing knowledge production with China or any other adversarial state will not benefit any nation-state. Haupt and Lee (in Lee, 2021) explain that national isolationism is not the answer and internationalization remains necessary, especially between the two global superpowers, and that the US has much more to gain than lose in collaborating with China.

The key seems to be: is the U.S. open and willing to engage with China, and if so, differently than in the past? As stated poignantly by an interviewee:

I think what is happening with China is something that is going to get progressively worse because of China's rise. China becomes an ever more significant or is likely to become an ever more significant player in world affairs. And the kind of China that was happy to learn and didn't demand equivalent respect, well that was a convenient and easy place to work with. But now, we are moving beyond that... China is looking for an exchange between equals.

Unlike the U.S., Canada is not a superpower and as such has always pursued a more practical approach in accepting global geopolitical power shifts. From being a funder of China's educational initiatives, Canada fairly comfortably shifted to being recipient of Chinese research and partnership funding. In fact, Canada speaks of adopting a 4Cs approach (coexist, compete, co-operate, and challenge) in how it deals with China as a maligned force (Smith, 2021). Rather than flexing its muscle too aggressively, or blindly mirroring policies of its Western allies, Canada as a nation reliant on international trade is taking a more cautious approach. Perhaps, this is why Canada is more willing to accept multipolarity in the global order. As an interviewee stated: "China is emerging as a leading investor, leading knowledge producer, leading innovator, leading on infrastructure. ... for countries like us, the question is: Can we afford not to be engaged?"

As well, having benefitted from Brexit and Trumpism, key geopolitical shifts that brought in a wave of growing nationalism, populism and anti-globalist and anti-immigrant sentiments across much of the world (Douglass, 2021), Canada is invested in maintaining its global perception of being open and welcoming to students and immigrants. But there are fears that given our close relationship and proximity with the U.S., Canada will be under pressure to conform and regulate IE, restricting student flow and international research collaborations. As confirmed by an interviewee:

It will be very easy for Canada just to roll over and follow the American lead. And to date I have been encouraged that there is more robust conversation and there has been some pushback. But there are tendencies. We are allies of the United States. Our defense depends on the United States. Our security depends on the United States. And so, at the same time over the decades, we played a useful role for the United States being able to do things that they themselves can't do.

IE as embedded in institutional autonomy

In both Canada and the U.S., universities are founded on principles of institutional autonomy and academic freedom. IE has benefitted from the nature of this relationship. Openness, academic freedom and intellectual curiosity has fostered international collaborations and ultimately national innovation and scientific advancement. IE is well respected and valued precisely because it is engaged with and by higher educational institutions that maintain an arm's length relationship with the government. In other words, IE as a model of partnership between a state (who sets policy and funding) and a non-state actor (higher educational institutions that implement and execute IE programs) works. It builds respect and trust among national and international communities, an excellent example being the U.S. government's Fulbright program, which has won respect world over for these precise reasons. As an interviewee stated, the link of IE and institutional autonomy "raises the issue of actually protecting the health of the goose that lays the golden egg."

Undoubtedly, universities work within, not outside, their "national political ecosystems" (Douglass, 2021) and are therefore influenced by government policy. Indeed, "when government sneezes then universities catch cold" (Marginson, 2019, para 1); as governments have reduced funding to universities, they have more aggressively pursued the recruitment of fee-paying international students to make up for lost state revenues. There is a direct/indirect link between government policy and institutions and IE is an outcome of this link.

Yet, current discourses on national security in relation to China are raising chilling concerns about the over reach of governments in relation to institutional autonomy. In the U.S. there are several examples of government regulation of university research linkages and collaborations; there has been the China Initiative and there is the China Competition Bill. In Canada, CSIS has regular meetings with university

representatives and has issued guidelines for universities to protect themselves against international collaborations that could prove to be national security risks. This is clearly encroachment of the government on matters under institutional jurisdiction. An interviewee explains, “now I think there is a much more aggressive and adversarial posture between governments and universities that are some ways particular to the issues of international education and pretty much China higher education relations”.

Scholars offer several points of view in assessing this shifting relationship. Lee (2019) criticizes the increased politicization of science, where rationales of national security given the changing political climate and the rise of China as a perceived threat create unwelcoming, closed academic environments which run counter to the role and function of universities “as global knowledge producers and disseminators” (para 2). Others make meaning of this shifting relationship as reflective of broader adversarial postures that political officials have towards universities. Research suggests that rise in populism along with protectionist ideologies often challenge both the roles and functions of universities and IE (Douglass, 2021). In the U.S. under ultra conservative governments, for example under Bush Jr. and Trump, and in Canada under Harper, universities were increasingly perceived as subversive to national interest.

Explaining how this context influences IE, an interviewee stated:

there was this sort of seeing of universities and colleges as kind of in an adversarial sense. And so, the international engagement, the skepticism of that, it was almost dovetailing, right? Because there is skepticism of higher education and the skepticism of international engagement or just global engagement broadly in that era of very nativist moment. So, I think you know it was almost just a perfect storm.

Perhaps it is this perception of universities as adversarial to government interest and/or growing distrust of their purpose, that leads to governments perceiving them as “naïve” actors in both countries, enabling governments then to increase regulation and push towards setting the rules of international academic engagement (Friesen, 2021). The key difference is that while in the U.S. the government has more directly intervened and regulated funding and collaborations with China, the Canadian government to date has not. This maybe in keeping with past practices, where issues of academic freedom, institutional autonomy and constitutional jurisdictional authority have often restrained Canadian federal government from overstepping its boundaries (Trilokekar, 2007); however, current pressures to conform its policies with its allies, Australia, the U.K., and the U.S. are very real.

CONCLUSION

This paper examines the similarities and differences between the U.S. and Canada in context of IE and shifting relations with China as a result of new geopolitics. It bases its comparison on the three contexts: first, rationales and approaches to IE in both countries; second, IE relations with China before conflict; and third, current controversies and government policy responses to IE relations with China.

IE as an important foreign policy tool for governments faces new challenges in this era of new geopolitics. On one hand, it creates challenges as agendas conflict. Initially IE provided an important avenue to build diplomatic relations with China. As the economic imperative of IE grew, China became important source of international students who provided a substantial revenue source and talent pool for both nations. The importance of IE as an economic tool for national prosperity has greatly increased in both countries. However, with China’s rise and growing geo-political conflicts, IE is increasingly assessed as a risk to

national security in both the U.S. and Canada. Academic affiliations with China are perceived as threatening to the national security of both countries.

IE policy discourses in this new geopolitical era are much more contradictory and challenging. Diplomatic, economic and national security interests collide and impact university-government relations. Universities increasingly lobby the government. Their interests lie in keeping borders open and enhancing their ability to partake in international scientific collaborations. The government/s recognize the tensions in balancing different priorities given IE's benefits to each country's domestic economy. However, increasingly, the national security narrative is pivoting governments towards increased scrutiny and regulation of university international relations, challenging the very foundational principles of institutional autonomy and academic freedom.

Further, in this very era of new geopolitics, some nations are witnessing growing neo-nationalist movements and protectionist sentiments creating a combination of anti-immigrant, nativist, anti-science, anti-globalist perspectives, at a time when there are escalating resource dependencies among nations and the importance of universities as knowledge produces and a drivers of economic growth and productivity has increased. If, as some scholars suggest, the U.S. as a hegemonic power is being challenged and there is in fact a transition of power from West to East, how is the U.S. and Canada, going to relate to this new geopolitical context? What will be the role and function of IE in this new context?

Perhaps it is ironic and counterproductive for governments to increasingly speak of regulating the scope of IE, at a time when they need to rethink and reimagine their engagement with new geopolitical powers in the context of evolving international relations. IE as a tool of foreign policy is powerful and effective if investments are made with long term objectives in mind, built on principles of mutual academic benefit and enable universities to operate under principles of institutional autonomy. Unfortunately, there has been insufficient debate and discussion on the implications and impacts on IE as a result of new geopolitics. This is an oversight. As an interviewee laments:

So, you know my bottom line is that this is too serious to ignore. It shouldn't just be treated as something that can just roll along. It needs maintenance, it needs research it needs thought, it needs planning, it needs attention to the experience of individuals. And it should not be taken for granted. And a system of international education that is based on assumptions and complacency and just counting on experiences of the past as normative. There is tremendous difficulty that way...And so, I am consistently concerned by the failure to take international education seriously and to understand it as something that needs attention. It is taken for granted and in multiple levels.

As the two country cases have illustrated, each country's engagement with IE, has been highly dependent on their historical rationales for IE, their respective geo-political positioning and their governance of university-government relations. Moving forward, however, there is an urgent need for thoughtful engagement between government and university communities on (re)defining IE in an era of new geopolitics.

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