Complicating International Education: Intersections of Internationalization and Indigenization

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Abstract

Internationalization of higher education is no longer a peripheral strategy for most universities and colleges, now positioned to influence multiple layers of institutions. Intercultural learning as a positive and necessary outcome has bolstered the importance of internationalization; in Canada, intercultural learning has increasingly been institutionalized as an organizational strategy. More recently, Indigenization, or the engagement with Indigenous knowledge and peoples, has been taken up by higher education institutions in Canada. These strategies are grounded in differing educational philosophies, values, and motivations but are implemented simultaneously.

This dissertation examines one Canadian higher education institution and the intersections of its strategic priorities of internationalization, interculturalization, and Indigenization. Utilizing case study methodology with interviews, document review, and observation as data collection methods, I examine the following research questions: 1) How do faculty and staff conceptualize the university’s international and intercultural efforts and motivations? 2) How does the institutional priority of increasing intercultural understanding engage with the internationalization and Indigenization organizational strategies of the university? 3) How do staff and faculty across the university understand the intersection of Indigenization and internationalization?

Through this dissertation, I make two primary arguments. First, internationalization’s implementation through a business framework has motivated a movement toward interculturalization to further academic learning on campus and temper more the neoliberal outcomes of internationalization. This relationship has established a lasting link between the two strategies. Second, the growing engagement of higher education in Indigenization efforts has brought about intersecting strategic priorities and a hope that interculturalization can support and further Indigenization. However, the Indigenization project is supported and motivated by Indigenous autonomy and sovereignty, not by Western organizational frameworks. Further possibilities of engagement require an uncoupling of business and economic motivations for internationalization and interculturalization to open both to the possibility of transformation.
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Chapter One: Shifting Perspectives of Knowledge and Intercultural Engagement of Difference

Globalization has created a world that is increasingly interconnected. One such place in which previously disconnected populations encounter one another is within the context of higher education. Often these efforts come under the strategy termed “internationalization.” Internationalization has historically been described as “an international and intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and services functions of the institution” (Knight, 1994, p. 1), brought about by political, economic, sociocultural, or academic motivations. As internationalization’s ubiquity in higher education continues to grow, the aim of many institutions is the further examination of and attempts at defining a more comprehensive internationalization that influences financial models, partnerships, curriculum, hiring, and research. In this environment, the university’s growing reliance on the economic aspects of internationalization has highlighted the need to more clearly highlight the student learning outcomes.

While higher education institutions’ attempts at internationalization are far from uniform, one common dimension is the inclusion of an intercultural framework (Deardorff, 2006; Knight, 2004; Paige & Mestenhauser, 1999). In this framework, intercultural competence is positioned as a necessary skill to effectively and appropriately communicate across cultures (Deardorff, 2006; Garson, 2016; Williams & Lee, 2015), presumably a skill that students need in an era of globalization. Because of the theoretical and practical influence of intercultural models, there is not always a clear demarcation between what is international and what is intercultural, or how the two are connected.

This dissertation examines one Canadian higher education institution’s attempts at
both internationalization and interculturalization. This examination is made more complex by the fact that this institution is currently engaged in efforts to engage with the local Indigenous community upon whose unceded land the institution is located. This engagement, which can be termed Indigenization, manifests itself through curriculum offerings, outreach, and services to support Indigenous students, research projects, hiring practices, and language learning. This engagement is thus becoming institutionalized at the same time, alongside and occasionally in tension with efforts at internationalization and interculturalization. This dissertation, therefore, examines the juncture of internationalization, interculturalization, and Indigenization at a Canadian institution of higher education. In doing so, it adds to the conversation of internationalization, including its purpose, strengths, and potential limitations, particularly in universities located in settler colonial nations\(^1\) of North America and beyond.

In order to contextualize the sociohistorical environment of this study, an examination of the nation–state’s relationship with internationalization and interculturalization is warranted. The nation–state as culture is a frequent unit of analysis for examination and comparison in foundational intercultural communication literature (Gudykunst, 2002; Hofstede, 1983) as well as the impetus for internationalization in higher education (de Wit, 2002). There has been little mention of colonialism in internationalization and the practical strategies taken up by universities, nor the intercultural competence frameworks that are used in tandem with internationalization,

\(^1\) Settler nation refers to nations that are engaged in settler colonialism, that is, ongoing colonization that displaces the communities indigenous to the land that is inhabited. Canada and the United States are both examples of settler nations as are New Zealand, Australia, and Israel.
particularly in the United States. Internationalization, then, centers the Western world, its knowledge and motivations for successful international and intercultural learning and does so in institutions located on unceded Indigenous lands. As a result, intercultural understanding through internationalization may mischaracterize contributions and perspectives from people who do not align themselves with a political nation–state orientation and have developed their own knowledge institutions and understanding outside of Western frameworks.

Across the United States and Canada, hundreds of distinct Indigenous tribes and communities are living within and over the national borders. Although these communities are indigenous to the land of the United States and Canada, through colonization efforts, Indigenous peoples have been framed as the “other” by a dominant culture (Tuck & Yang, 2012; Wolfe, 2016). They have been subject to assimilation practices—many rooted in educational systems—that ignore their sovereignty and deny their worldview. While Indigenous peoples in North America have specific rights in relationship to their federal governments, including rights around access to education and schooling (McClellan, Tippeconnic Fox, & Lowe, 2005; Pidgeon, 2018), they have not resulted in equity and opportunity for Indigenous students whether in the United States or Canada. Furthermore, mainstream education has often been seen as assimilationist (Smith, 2012) with universities and colleges grounded in an academic structure with colonial roots.

The location of these nations within the boundaries of the nation–state complicate typical definitions of internationalization used by higher education institutions, as do the motivations understood to support it as well as the objectives understood to result from it. Indigenous communities and issues of sovereignty challenge the nation–state as the
dominant framework in internationalization, as well as the motivations that benefit the nation. The diversity of Indigenous peoples also challenges the assumed homogeneity often implied in foundational intercultural competence literature and resists intercultural frameworks that are used to understand cultural difference. This phenomenon is especially relevant for settler nations like the United States and Canada that have Indigenous communities living within their claimed boundaries. Thus, the phenomenon has far-reaching implications in higher education programming, such as the strategic partnerships, curriculum, student recruitment, and study abroad programming and their touted outcomes.

Indeed, the internationalization of higher education is frequently grounded in governmental, political, and cultural systems that have colonial roots. Without critically examining internationalization to better understand its theoretical underpinnings and implications, it is likely that both international and intercultural efforts grounded in institutional plans continue to perpetuate values that exclude diversity of voices not captured by the current nation–state framework (Garson, 2016). Another possible outcome is to simply add Indigenous voices and pedagogy into Western models of intercultural understanding without recognizing them as distinct and powerful theories of change, thereby perpetuating the marginalization of Indigenous voices and knowledge.

Some institutions, however, have begun to more intentionally focus on issues of Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy in light of higher education’s role in colonization. Some of these efforts are focused organizationally, in which universities and colleges are seeking strategies to more intentionally engage with Indigenous communities geographically located near their campuses and predominately displaced by settler
populations. Higher education in Canada has begun to use the term “Indigenization” to describe a growing commitment to institutional change, which can include hiring practices, intentional community engagement and institutional partnerships, reforming student-facing services, promoting Indigenous language learning, and developing relevant curriculum for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students (Pidgeon, 2016). Indigenization is enacted in partnership and in communication with representatives from Indigenous communities, acknowledging each community will have its own practices, beliefs, and needs. Thus, Indigenization is not a uniform process widely applied to higher education; instead, each institution would have a unique project and strategy.

By understanding the historical arc of internationalization in higher education, it is possible to better understand how deeply embedded Eurocentric models of education are normalized in settler-states. With this grounded understanding, we are able to rigorously question the objectives and motivations that undergird internationalization in its current form, thereby examining how they influence the purported outcomes, including developing intercultural understanding and its connections to perpetuating a nation–state mindset. Through this examination, it is possible to begin to see practical and theoretical points of tension when considering Indigenization and internationalization as strategies toward change in higher education. In Chapter Two, I will further analyze internationalization, intercultural communication and competence, and Indigenization within Canadian higher education.

Research Goals and Guiding Research Questions

A growing number of scholars and educators in higher education institutions in Canada have begun to theorize about Indigenization’s intersection with
internationalization efforts and the possibility of decolonization in higher education. Many of these scholars bring critical perspectives to internationalization, including examining the motivations of international students studying in Canada as well as their experiences learning with a new context and culture. This dissertation contributes to these efforts by examining how staff and faculty—working in an institution intentionally improving services to Indigenous students and engagement with the Indigenous community—conceptualize internationalization within broader frameworks of Indigenization, settler colonialism, neoliberalism, and globalization. This study employed qualitative methods to understand how staff and faculty understand internationalization and Indigenization, with a particular look at staff members more deeply embedded in the international, intercultural, and Indigenous work of the university. These understandings may shape the policy, partnerships, research, and curriculum of internationalization and Indigenized frameworks that expand beyond colonial constructs of international and intercultural. Furthermore, these findings may help develop more critical mindsets around the intersections of internationalization and interculturalization. Through this study I aim to create an academic space for 1) critique of international and intercultural dimensions of internationalization; and 2) understanding how internationalization and interculturalization engagement might support Indigenization efforts. I am also interested in learning what institutional outcomes are envisioned through internationalization and Indigenization strategies to find possible overlaps, synergies, and tensions. The research questions driving this study are as follows:

1) How do faculty and staff conceptualize the university’s international and intercultural efforts and motivations?
2) How does the institutional priority of increasing intercultural understanding engage with the internationalization and Indigenization organizational strategies of the university?

3) How do staff and faculty across the university understand the intersection of Indigenization and internationalization?

**Truth and Reconciliation in Canada**

A brief description of the residential schools and their legacy in Canada is helpful to better understand the historic distrust of the Western educational system as well as the recent push toward Indigenization by Canadian higher education institutions. Beginning in 1876, over 150,000 Aboriginal children were forced to attend residential schools, or boarding schools, throughout Canada. The last of these schools closed as recently as the 1990s (*Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, 2015). Residential schools were “deemed by the government and non-government organizations at the time to be in the ‘best interests’ of Canada’s Aboriginal people” (Ball, 2004, p. 455), although in reality, residential schools were implemented with assimilation as the final goal. Connections to the students’ families and their Aboriginal culture were meant to be broken and rights ignored, so that students would eventually become inculcated by the dominant Euro-Christian Canadian worldview (*Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, 2015). Conquest and ultimately colonization of Indigenous people’s lands were framed as “natural and universal processes of human settlement” (Smith, 2012, p. 160). Settler nations create this narrative to chart a linear development of human progress (beginning at the primitive or Indigenous and advancing to the civilized). This is recognized as the Canadian government’s longstanding approach to erasing Indigenous cultures (Champagne & Abu-
Saad, 2006). Schools and educational policy combined Christian ideology, the concept of civilization, and farming to work toward assimilation (Adams, 2008).

In 2008, Canada created the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) following the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. The mandate to the Commission was twofold:

[To]…reveal to Canadians the complex truth about the history and the ongoing legacy of the church-run residential schools, in a manner that fully documents the individual and collective harms perpetuated against Aboriginal peoples, and honours the resilience and courage of former students, their families and communities; and to guide and inspire a process of truth and healing, leading towards reconciliation within Aboriginal families, and between Aboriginal peoples and non-Aboriginal communities, churches, governments, and Canadians generally. The process was to work to renew relationships on the basis of inclusion, mutual understanding and respect. (p. 23)

The Commission spoke with over 6,000 Aboriginal victims of the residential schools across Canada, gathering stories and experiences, and in 2015, the government of Canada published the results from the TRC. The Commission Report noted, “Reconciliation is not an Aboriginal problem, it is a Canadian one,” making certain that the efforts toward reconciliation were the responsibility of the both Aboriginal communities and Canadians. Indeed, one of the primary functions of the commission was to expose this history while focusing on truth telling in order to reject the racist relationships embedded in Canadian history and recognize the cultural genocide against the Aboriginal community (Pidgeon, 2016). A first step in the TRC process was to report to the non-Aboriginal public about
the generational violence enacted on First Nations communities by the Canadian government.

As part of the TRC, a comprehensive “Calls to Action” document was released implicating religious, governmental, educational, and health institutions as complicit and calling for acknowledgement of their legacy of violent assimilation practices against First Nations communities. The TRC also called for the education sector to actively work toward reconciliation and transformation (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, 2015). The TRC emphasized the importance of not only truth telling but of action as necessary in moving toward the possibility of reconciliation stating, “At stake is Canada’s place as a prosperous, just, and inclusive democracy” (p. 15) in the global world. Although education was used a tool of assimilation, it was also seen as an opportunity to move toward reconciliation. To do this, the education sector had to consider worldviews beyond just those of settlers (Pratt, Lalonde, Hanson, & Danyluk, 2017). The push toward inclusion of Indigenous history and knowledge could also be framed as institutional recognition of the value of this missing component of the educational system. Many higher education institutions have expressed commitment to these Calls to Action but have struggled to make intentional changes (Gaudry & Lorenz, 2018). Further discussion of the Canadian higher education environment and Indigenization will be addressed in Chapter Two.

**Description of Site**

The federal government of Canada communicated a public commitment to its Indigenous and non-Indigenous population through its TRC and corresponding Calls to Action released in 2015. The Commission’s work has arguably raised national public
attention among the non-Indigenous population of the assimilative and violent actions enacted on Indigenous children by federally sanctioned residential schools. The news often publicizes efforts to Indigenize and engage with Indigenous communities, but higher education spaces and universities have been taking uneven steps toward action. Due to the commitment of a growing number of institutions to Indigenize, I focused my study in Canada and specifically on a single institution that has made a commitment to internationalization, interculturalization, and Indigenization strategies.

As my aim was to better understand how internationalization and Indigenization strategies are interpreted and enacted by administrators and educators, the identification of an appropriate site was crucial. As the site of research I identified a medium-sized university in a Canadian province on the traditional and unceded territory of an Indigenous community, located in a mid-sized city. I will call this university West Mountain University (WMU) and will call the town where it is located Brookville. WMU is the only higher education institution in the city, which may lend to the intertwined relationship between the two; university programming and events are often open for community members and are at times scheduled within the community itself. Organizationally, WMU has a long history of commitment to international efforts as a strategy for growth and financial solvency. Intercultural understanding has been a strategic priority for WMU, and it has a robust interculturalization focus on campus. More recently, WMU has focused on Indigenization as part of its institutional ethos. In Chapter Three I will describe WMU in more detail, including its suitability as a site of research.

Given the confidentiality agreed upon with the case site and representatives from
the university, I will not use the name of the Indigenous community of the traditional lands where this university is located. I do wish to acknowledge, however, the Indigenous peoples of the unceded land where this case study takes place. As shared by one of the study’s participants, I wish to note that while the current university is charged to share knowledge through teaching, learning, and research, I recognize that the people of the land have always held their historical and sacred land as a place to also share their knowledge through teaching, learning, and research.”

**Positionality and Methodology**

Recognizing my own positionality as a non-Indigenous researcher, it was not the intention of this study to create or propose an Indigenous model of internationalization. Rather, as both a scholar and a practitioner in the field of international education and intercultural communication, it is my intention to continue to challenge the dominant narrative of which I am a part and examine the internationalization process and the intercultural outcomes of institutions committed to Indigenization. This process may ultimately serve to critique and disrupt the current model of internationalization and inform new models, while also engaging with settler colonialism. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine how faculty and staff, working in diverse positions and disciplines, understand how the university implements its international and intercultural goals and how these intersect with the efforts to Indigenize. My intent was to problematize the predominately Eurocentric discourse on internationalization and intercultural learning at an institution working to prioritize Indigenization from the perspectives of those working there.

In the spirit of this challenge, I set out to identify how faculty and staff understand
how internationalization might continue to purport and sustain the dominant Eurocentric narrative when engaging with Indigenous, non-Indigenous and international students. I looked to participants in this institution and their experiences to influence research questions as I constructed a study that was non-extractive in nature. Through my analysis, I hoped to begin to shift from the Western/neoliberal practices of internationalization toward practices that critically engage in questions of colonization and globalization, particularly for universities in settler nations. This shift supports reimagining a perspective of international education.

The study itself was informed by several foundational literatures. First, I will review internationalization literature, beginning with foundational literature to understand the field’s beginnings before moving to critical internationalization and its critique of the implications of internationalization’s entanglement with globalization (Beck, 2012; Stier, 2012; Stromquist, 2012; Vavrus & Pekol, 2015). Intercultural communication has been recognized as a significant component of internationalization (Knight, 1994; Mestenhauser, 2015) and has been identified as a priority at the WMU, so it will be a foundational concept of this study. I will include Critical Intercultural Communication (CIC) theory, which is an emergent field that critiques intercultural communication’s theoretical dependence on the nation–state and questions the values and purpose of reliance on intercultural competence as a signal of global citizenship (Collier, Hegde, Lee, Nakayama, & Yep, 2002; Ono, 2011; Yep, 2014). I will review Indigenous education literature, with a particular focus on higher education in Canada (Pidgeon 2008; 2016; Battiste, 2018). Finally, settler colonialism literature informed understanding of the environment in which internationalization is grounded in Canada and the United
States (Wolfe, 2006; Tuck & Yang, 2012). The desired outcome of this research was to develop an empirical challenge to the field of international education so that its members can understand the above-mentioned points of tension, creating space for different ways of understanding intercultural and international and the relationship between them.

**Conceptual Framework**

This study is informed by constructivist epistemology, a belief that knowledge is constructed through experiences and engagement with the world (Creswell, 2014). Through this framework, I seek to understand how faculty and staff at a higher education institution in Canada conceptualize, or make meaning, through their experiences in the context of Indigenizing higher education institutions. Both the institutional and social contexts of the study are essential to meaning making. As a researcher, I worked in relationship with the participants of the study, interpreting their experiences and understanding through my own lens to make meaning, recognizing that there is no one discoverable and objective truth (Crotty, 2012). The aim to better understand the university staff and faculty’s conceptualizations of institutional strategies of intercultural understanding, internationalization, and Indigenization informs and develops from constructivist inquiry (Lincoln, Lyman, & Guba, 2011).

The conceptual framework is also influenced by critical theory, acknowledging the systems of power at play that shape the educational environment in which the internationalization, interculturalization, and Indigenization of higher education are occurring. Grande (2000) notes critical theory grounds the subject into larger contexts of systems of exploitation and oppression. Settler colonialism describes the systems of exploitation and oppression in the specific example of First Nations communities in the
Canadian settler nation context. Scholars explain that in settler nations, the colonizers never left and are still exerting oppressive and colonizing systems (Tuck & Yang, 2012; Wolfe, 2006). Settler colonialism—and its challenge to the nation-state and critique of the settler nation—challenges the positive assumptions found in universities’ strategic priorities of interculturalization, internationalization, and even Indigenization. I will discuss settler colonialism and its connection to the Canadian context further in Chapter Two.

As a settler researcher focusing on institutional activities, Indigenous epistemology is not a space I purport to claim as grounding my study nor do I set out to provide an Indigenous perspective. I acknowledge that the underlying epistemology and understanding of knowledge guiding this study are based in dominant frameworks of the academy. At times Indigenous methodological practices have informed my research design. Wilson (2008) notes the importance of the relationship between the researcher and research. I spent much time reflecting on my research questions, my time in the field, and my analysis. In Chapter Three I will include a deeper introduction of myself as a researcher and my path to this topic.

My interest is in examining how international and intercultural educators grapple with Indigenization in their work. My research was not within Indigenous communities or centered on the Office of Indigenous Education, nor did I set out to collect knowledge and stories. I interviewed and observed educators dedicated to Indigenizing, who have committed to creating intentional relationships between Indigenous communities and higher education, and who will be experts in counseling what is appropriate to include and what is not. This study was designed to challenge a normalized perspective of
internationalization (Merriam, 2009) and to create space for alternative ontological and epistemological paradigmatic understandings of internationalization and interculturalization.

**Definitions**

Brief descriptions of key terms that will be used throughout this dissertation are listed below in order for readers to better understand the scope and rationale of the study. These terms and concepts will be explored at length in the literature review of Chapter Two. Through the dissertation process, three institutional strategies were examined: Indigenization, interculturalization, and internationalization.

**Indigenization.** Pidgeon (2016) describes Indigenization in the context of higher education, explaining it as the “centering (of) Indigenous knowledges and ways of being within the academy . . . transforming institutional initiatives, such as policy, curricular and co-curricular programs, and practices to support Indigenous success and empowerment” (p. 77). Indigenization has gained wider popularity in higher education in Canada following the Canadian government’s TRC and corresponding Calls to Action. The TRC, however, does not mark the beginning of all Canadian universities and colleges engaging with Indigenization; Indigenous scholars have been studying Indigenous knowledge and pedagogies, their tensions with Eurocentric education, and themes of decolonization for decades (Battiste, Bell, & Findlay, 2002; Pidgeon, 2016). Indigenization as a strategy is contested by scholars, given its grounding in structures of education and governance that have traditionally silenced Indigenous peoples.

**Internationalization.** Knight (1994) describes internationalization as “a range of activities, policies, and services that integrate an international and intercultural dimension
in the teaching, research and service functions of the institution” (p. 1). This definition was taken up by many scholars in the field but as internationalization has taken greater hold in higher education, comprehensive internationalization has emerged as a more holistic term and concept (Hudzik, 2011). Comprehensive internationalization is defined as a “commitment, confirmed through action, to infuse international and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research and service missions of higher education. It shapes institutional ethos and values and touches the entire high education enterprise” (Hudzik, 2011, p. 6).

**Globalization.** Internationalization scholars (see Altbach & Knight, 2007; de Wit, 2002; Knight, 2004) caution against the conflation of internationalization and globalization in the field. Knight and de Wit (1997) define globalization as “the flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values, [and] ideas . . . across borders. Globalization affects each country in a different way due to a nation’s individual history, traditions, culture and priorities” (p. 6). Globalization can be examined economically, culturally, and politically (Stromquist & Monkman, 2000). Although their definitions and scopes differ, internationalization and globalization are bound together as internationalization is often positioned by scholars as a reaction by higher education to address globalization (Childress, 2009; Knight, 2004; Knight & de Wit, 1997).

**Interculturalization.** Knight’s (1994) definition of internationalization references an intercultural dimension that is infused into the teaching, research, and service elements of the university. Intercultural has been researched throughout diverse disciplines, including communication studies, psychology, business, and nursing and is described as intercultural sensitivity, understanding, and competence. Developing intercultural
competence has been identified as a primary outcome of internationalization by leading scholars and practitioners (Deardorff, 2006). Some universities and colleges have created interculturalization strategies to further develop these skills and mindsets on campus.

**Decolonization.** Waziyatawin and Yellow Bird (2012) describe decolonization as “the meaningful and active resistance to the forces of colonialism that perpetuate the subjugation and/or exploitation of our minds, bodies, and lands.” Decolonization is an ongoing process over time, beginning with development of a critical consciousness before moving toward actionable steps grounded in deeper understanding (Wilson, 2004).

Decolonization in higher education may be examining the colonial structure of the institution, pedagogy, and curriculum. The term differs from Indigenization in that decolonization is about dismantling dominant frameworks, whether they be ways of knowing, understanding, or teaching, while Indigenization is about additive aspects of Indigenous knowledge. Cupples and Glynn (2014) suggest that decolonization must occur before Indigenization can happen. The interplay and emphasis on the relationship of decolonization and Indigenization are unique to each institution.

**Power.** In describing critical theory, LeCompte and Schensul (2010) describe an interest how systems “exert direct or indirect domination over the political, economic, social and cultural expressions of citizens or residents” and particularly those who are have been traditionally been excluded from access to those systems. Grande (2000), describes social power in the context of Indigenous identity, describing a “crisis of power – the power to name, shape, and control the products and conditions of one’s life and, particularly of one’s labor” (p. 348). Critical interculturalists are interested in themes of power relations, noting that people enter into communication with different levels of
privilege that influence the interaction (Martin & Nakayama, 1999).

**Terminology**

Throughout this study based in Canada, I used the term Indigenous, which the Accord on Indigenous Education (Archibald, Lundy, Reynolds, & Williams, 2010) explains is used “to include the distinct Canadian terms Aboriginal, First Nations, Indian, Métis, and Inuit” (p. 1). Aboriginal is used in governmental policy including the Canadian constitution and the TRC. Indigenous denotes a people’s historical connection to territory and current disenfranchisement and has been gaining prominence due to international Indigenous movements (Kesler, n.d.). Universities and other institutions may use terms like First Nations or Aboriginal in the language of their policy, programming, or affinity spaces; if this is the case, I will use the same terminology. Although I use the collective term Indigenous, there is incredible diversity and complexity of experiences and knowledge systems among Indigenous peoples. The experience of colonization does not necessarily bind Indigenous communities together by an identical experience (Munroe, Borden, Murray, Orr, Toney, & Meader, 2013), but all communities have experienced one form of colonization. I will explore Indigenous frameworks of education further in Chapter Two.

Part of the decolonization process is the recognition that colonial scholars often portray Indigenous knowledge as frozen in time. Such portrayals minimize descriptions of Aboriginal populations to observable cultural traditions such as ceremonies, performances, and symbols. Such surface-level observation misses the lessons that are communicated and transferred through such traditions (Battiste & Henderson, 2000) and maintain a normalized narrative of Indigenous communities as part of the past.
Comparatively, internationalization is often portrayed as a contemporary phenomenon, a strategy of higher education that has gained ground in the latter half of the 20th century when higher education institutions sought to be responsive to the trends of globalization. These complexities and the assumptions attached to both shaped the framework of my study and aim to understand how the Indigenization practices of the university inform and disrupt the work of internationalization and interculturalization.

**Limitations**

In reflecting on my own position as a settler researcher studying aspects of Indigenization and decolonization, I am informed by Mohanty’s (1991) critique of first-world feminists in post-colonial scholarship relegating women of the colonial world to reified subjects of study that are static and lack agency. The university in this study has intentionally engaged with the Indigenous community where it is located, building relationships and creating programs to benefit and support Indigenous students. The study focuses on the motivations and overarching strategy of the university and its staff and faculty that are public-facing and that have influenced the work of the university. While I did conduct interviews with staff and faculty working in Indigenous education at WMU, my questions addressed processual and organizational aspects of WMU engaging with these topics. Stories shared during story-telling events, conversations with elders, and other more intimate moments of conversation are not included in this study nor did I set out to engage local Indigenous community members or leaders.

While a case-study methodology provided the opportunity to focus on a single university and its efforts in Indigenization, the time for in-country data collection amounted to two site visits of two and a half weeks each coupled with online
communication between and after site visits. Universities can be fast-paced environments, particularly for staff and faculty who are heavily involved on campus and have many responsibilities. Additional time would have allowed for greater relationship-building across campus and for more relationships to organically form. Additionally, given the shorter timeline, pursuing students to engage in formalized interviews would have been difficult, particularly as one site visit was scheduled over the first weeks of school when students were busy attending orientations and welcome events and were generally getting to know their new environments. Limitations will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

**Significance of Study**

Both the Canadian government and its higher education institutions have shown interest in promoting international education and Indigenous education from a place of policy and strategy. According to Learn Canada 2020, a joint declaration of the provincial and territorial Ministers of Education, Aboriginal education and international education are key activity areas for national education plans (Council of Ministers of Education, 2008). Member organizations of higher education, including the Colleges and Institutes Canada and Universities Canada, have indicated international education and Indigenous education as strategic priorities. Canada’s national government has indicated a deep interest in international education with the focus on creating a highly competitive nation. In 2014, the government released its first international education strategy: *Harnessing Our Knowledge Advantage to Drive Innovation and Prosperity*. The strategy expounded on the economic and political benefits through partnerships with institutions in other countries and an increase in mobility of international students and scholars to
bring knowledge to Canada (Foreign Affairs Trade and Development Canada, 2014). The federal involvement in both strategies demonstrate there were stakeholders beyond just universities that were involved in promoting these strategies, signaling a political and economic link in promoting Indigenous and international student success.

It is my intention that this study will contribute to the critical theoretical engagement with internationalization and interculturalization within higher education. Internationalization is a common higher education strategy but is facing increasing criticism for proliferating Eurocentric and neoliberal education models. There has been a growing critical literature in Canada on issues of colonization and Indigenous peoples, but this scholarship has not been pursued in the United States. While the context between the United States and Canada differ in many ways—including the path of internationalization’s growth, the rise of interculturalization, and the process of colonization and treaty-rights—both countries are settler nations where universities are dominated by European models and are situated on unceded Indigenous land. Thus, my hope is to bring a more critical perspective to international education and the intercultural understanding and competencies typically attached to internationalization. Together with settler colonial critiques, my hope is to trouble the tendency toward surface-level engagement across borders.

Brandenburg and de Wit (2011) note that as internationalization has moved to the center of strategic priorities of higher education institutions, it has become more dogmatic and less innovative in nature. Scholars have argued that alternative understandings of knowledge are important to consider in internationalization to avoid the privileging of one epistemological paradigm (Garson, 2016; Paige & Mestenhauser,
1999; Trilokekar, 2016. If higher education continues to focus its strategies on a Western model of internationalization, institutions will keep erasing alternative models of knowing while upholding a system that is increasingly embedded in neoliberal and colonizing outcomes.

Currently, it is still early in the efforts to Indigenize campuses, and while university policies of Indigenization are continuously announced, there is a sense that institutions are grappling to better understand how best to engage with the TRC’s Calls to Action effectively. These conversations and critiques in Canada have been occurring across university and college campuses, but there has been little conversation in the United States about higher education’s engagement with Indigenous peoples, communities, pedagogy, and knowledge and the potential transformation to the institutions themselves.

Conclusion

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine how university staff and faculty understand the intersections of internationalization, interculturalization, and Indigenization in higher education and how these intersections influence their institution and their work. I also described a conceptual framework grounded in critical theory and constructivism and shaped by settler colonialism. In the next chapter, I will provide a historical arc of internationalization literature, from its beginnings as international education opportunities toward a growing strategy of higher education and its contemporary critics. I will then include critical intercultural communication literature, acknowledging the tie between internationalization and intercultural learning as well as the problematic tendency of focusing on the nation–state. Finally, I will review literature
exploring the entry and intersections of Indigenous knowledge and pedagogies with the academy, focusing on the Canadian higher education environment. Chapter Three describes the methodology used in this study, the research design, and my positionality. As a settler researcher engaging in issues of Indigenization in higher education, deep reflection has been essential in framing the parameters and research questions of this study. Chapter Four presents the findings, synthesizing the data collected through the study. Finally, Chapter Five concludes the dissertation, providing a macro-perspective on the findings and their implications in higher education institutions engaging in internationalization and Indigenization efforts.
Chapter Two: Higher Education Strategies for Change

“The increasing influence globalization and neoliberalism on the discourses of access to higher education requires institutions to be mindful of the tensions in the international movement and the indigenization movement” (Garson & Dumouchel, 2013), cited by Pidgeon (2016, p. 87).

As introduced in Chapter One, this dissertation will be examining the intersections of internationalization, interculturalization, and Indigenization in the context of a Canadian higher education university. In this chapter, I will provide a review of literature to better understand these movements as well as the context of Canada. The first body of literature explores internationalization’s history in higher education and the motivations supporting its beginnings before turning to critical perspectives that have more recently addressed its growth. The second body of literature will introduce intercultural communication as an objective of internationalization and critical intercultural communication literature as a critique of the functionalist grounding of the field. I will then turn to a settler colonialism framework and Indigenization before grounding the study in the Canadian context and the development of the higher education system.

Internationalization as Opportunity in Higher Education

The term international education became recognizable following World War I (Mestenhauser, 1998). Universities, however, have been working in international education for centuries. Early institutions of higher education in India and throughout Europe accepted students from different countries; courses were often taught in a
common language to accommodate this diversity, such as Latin in the Western world (Altbach & de Wit, 2015). Following the wars of the first half of the 20th century, international programming of higher education focused primarily on traditional student/scholar exchanges and partnerships as an arm of soft diplomacy (Altbach & Knight, 2007), establishing a connection between the goals of the nation and the purpose of education. Canada, positioning itself apart from Great Britain and other major powers, focused its efforts in the collaboration between education and international relations through development programming and cultural relations, labeling them as more humanistic approaches to internationalization (Trilokekar, 2009). These approaches of marrying international relations to education would have lasting effects on the manners in which internationalization would be implemented, varying country to country.

Jane Knight (2004) defines internationalization as the “process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education” (p. 11). Mestenhauser (2015) pushes this definition further, connecting internationalization specifically to knowledge, explaining, “International education consists of both formal and informal knowledge, cognitive, experiential, and implicit domains of learning, and it originates across multiple academic disciplines” (p. 5). Higher education institutions internationalize differently but generally through activities such as the recruitment of international students, sending domestic students abroad, faculty exchanges, and developing institutional partnerships for research or internationalizing curriculum at home (James, Cullinan & Curceru, 2013). Comprehensive internationalization is becoming more common to describe a holistic approach to internationalization in higher education that influences the ethos of an
institution at multiple levels (Hudzik, 2011).

In Stromquist’s (2007) case study examining internationalization at a private university, four areas of university work were identified as sites of incorporating internationalization strategy: governance, research, teaching, and student and faculty selection. Different institutions choose practices that best align with their needs depending on their political and economic context (Knight, 2004). Internationalization as a strategy is multi-layered, addressing many aspects of higher education as an organization. However, Knight (2004) noted that internationalization might occur at both the sectoral (national) and institutional levels, the former influencing policy decisions and regulatory frameworks and the latter influencing how institutions implement programming and strategies. Stakeholders of internationalization continue to grow, from those in the education sector on campus (faculty, staff, and students) including the business, government, and non-profit sectors.

Motivations behind internationalization vary in the literature with scholars outlining rationales from economic competitiveness and national security to human relations and cultural understanding (Garson, 2016; Knight, 1994; Stromquist, 2007). In a comprehensive analysis, de Wit (2002) outlines early rationales for implementation of international education proposed by scholars and their development over time, naming four categories for analysis: political, economic, sociocultural, and academic. The author then enumerates further subcategories under each, demonstrating the varied rationales institutions may claim for their internationalization plans. One common feature of de Wit’s (2002) motivational factors is that each were intended to create connections across nation–states.
More recently, international education has become associated with national economic policy and linkages to global commerce (Knight, 2004; Mestenhauser, 1998). The implementation and desired outcomes of internationalization within higher education are closely connected to larger political, governmental, and cultural values of the nation–states where universities and colleges are located. As stated by Maringe, Foskett, and Woodfield (2013), internationalization has been “driven by global and local economic, technological, cultural and political imperatives” (p. 10). Joseph (2012) indicates that the practice and rationales of internationalization of an institution will reflect the larger cultural and societal perceptions of the purpose and value of higher education. Professionals, then, must reflect on the missions, purposes, and values that will infuse the values of internationalization projects. For example, when referring to neoliberal and profit-making aspects of internationalization, Marginson (2011) asserts that when higher education does not center around the concept of the greater good—focusing instead on profit-making—higher education loses importance in the eye of the public.

In the late 20th century, internationalization as an educational framework in higher education was increasingly being shaped as response to globalization (de Wit, 2002). Altbach and Knight (2007) define globalization “as the economic, political and societal forces pushing 21st century higher education toward greater international involvement” (p. 290). Thus, in the new century there was a shift as internationalization strategies for higher education began to be described as a way to meet the challenges and opportunities of an increasingly globalized world by equipping students with skills and knowledge. The shift of strategy also reflects the neoliberal turn of Western governments toward the
preparation of students to be global market-ready (Harvey, 2005).

Stromquist's (2007) study of a private institution and its internationalization efforts revealed that higher education’s entry into the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) positioned education as a quantifiable and tradable commodity. Stromquist’s university case study in the United States is similar to many Canadian institutions in that the connection to trade and economics is linked to internationalization. The Canadian federal government’s international education strategy for higher education, *Harnessing Our Knowledge Advantage to Drive Innovation and Prosperity*, is introduced with a message from the Minister of International Trade (Global Affairs Canada, 2014) in which knowledge is positioned as a tool for economic prosperity. The connection between prosperity and internationalization is defined even more narrowly to include the economic contributions of international students and the potential of recruiting skilled labor and future Canadians (Anderson, 2015; Guo & Guo, 2017; Stein & Andreotti, 2016).

In summary, this section provides a brief historical background of internationalization, highlighting its roots in diplomacy between countries and its more recent growth as a phenomenon of higher education and marketization of education. Internationalization as a strategic priority of higher education has focused on the development of institutional partnerships, research opportunities, curriculum, student recruitment, and student programming across nation–states. Internationalization has become more connected to globalization as higher education has become increasingly connected to the political and economic realities of the nation–states where these institutions reside. Incentives and strategies for internationalization of higher education
are frequently positioned as opportunities for students to develop skills. These skills may be framed as cultural communication skills or focused on specific skills students may need in the neoliberal global economy (e.g., negotiating deals across borders). The focus on talent development for global economies may obscure higher education goals that focus on the global good (see Marginson, 2015) and align closely with higher education’s contemporary neoliberal focus (see Giroux, 2013). Neoliberal internationalization strategies are those that are frequently critiqued by a group of researchers who engage in the scholarship of “critical internationalization.”

**Critique of Globalization and Critical Internationalization**

The aspects of internationalization that are grounded in values of competitiveness—and that also reflect strengthening relationships between the government of the nation–state and higher education institutions—are those most frequently critiqued in Critical Internationalization circles. Beck (2009), for example, observed a lack of critical engagement theorizing around the linkage of globalization, economies, and internationalization. Herbert and Abdi (2013) further noted that the neoliberalization of countries where universities are engaging in internationalization reflects the nation–state’s political interests in the potential economic outcomes of international education. Ironically, the authors noted that such national interest increases while public funding simultaneously diminishes for education (Hebert & Abdi, 2013).

Critical scholars note there has further been little interrogation of the reasoning behind internationalization and the assumed positivity and idealized concepts of the global world. Globalization is acknowledged in the definition without exploring how it may affect the motivations and potential outcomes of internationalization (Beck, 2013).
In many ways, definitions of globalization imply that globalization is a non-negotiable force to which institutions must react via internationalization (Childress, 2009). The link between internationalization and an idealized globalization are particularly present in the positioning of international education as a gateway to immigration and a tool of universities to generate revenue. James, Cullinan, and Cruceru (2013) challenge normalized assumptions about internationalization and the idyllic global citizens that the process is intended to create. The authors use the example of internationalization and its focus to improve the global perspectives found on university webpages. According to the authors, internationalization discourse can be interpreted as a celebration: the university feels the educational system has domestically solved all issues regarding intercultural understanding, and it is now ready to tackle a new challenge.

Neoliberal influence is present in a variety of internationalization strategies. Altbach and Knight (2007) note that globalization and the growing capital spent on education has increased the movement of students. Education institutions themselves have built branch campuses abroad (Naidoo, 2009). These opportunities for growth in new markets typically benefit institutions located in the Global North that have capital and cache to attract students and export knowledge (Larkin, 2016). As funding has becomes scarcer for higher education, universities are looking toward other sources of income to fund ongoing programming. Internationalization provides an opportunity for revenue generation (James et al., 2013; Vavrus & Pekol, 2015), particularly through the increase of international students and the higher rates of tuition or fees they pay. Perceived quality of Western institutions has created what Naidoo (2009) calls an “academic trade” of large numbers of international students.
Maringe, Foskett, and Woodfield (2013) explore issues of North to South programming, noting that some consider internationalization “synonymous with the notion of Westernization, that is, the export of Western ideas, artefacts, culture, language, and practices to the other nations and the presentation of these as representing superior forms of humanity and existence” (p. 18). This could be seen both organizationally in the form of profit-generation through programmatic partnerships or increasing the number of international students attending an institution, or through reputational gains related to increased competitiveness for students in the global job market. Additionally, international security or economic competitiveness have been strong motivators for increasing visibility of the international nature of institutions (Knight, 1994).

Critical internationalization acknowledges the above-described systems of power at play in education, particularly when examining: 1) educational systems internationally; 2) partnerships between universities in the Global North and Global South; and 3) the movement of students across international borders (Vavrus & Pekol, 2015). Hebert and Abdi (2013) critique the economic focus of international education and knowledge capitalism, urging for reengagement with international education that contributes to a more equitable social world and honors learning relationships. Joseph (2011), working in the context of Australia, also supports internationalization as having the potential to engage in issues of social justice but recognizing that first the academy must re-engage with it practices.

Stein (2017b) expresses concern about the international work of the universities in relation to colonialism, stating, “Mainstream approaches to internationalization may further entrench colonialist, capitalist global relations and reproduce the Euro-
supremacist foundations of modern Western higher education” (p. S25). An example of such epistemic dominance in internationalization includes tokenization of difference and analysis of issues through a Western framework. Joseph’s (2011) description of a transformative internationalization model also encourages international educators to dig below surface-level integrated approaches to engage in more critical understandings of the knowledge systems that inform internationalization curriculum, collaborations, and policy. These both require deep shifts and disruptions of the dominant frameworks of internationalization from colonizing institutions.

**Critique of Intercultural Dimensions of Internationalization**

As noted above, scholars in the field of internationalization note that there are intercultural aspects of internationalization that are designed as student learning outcomes to better engage with diverse cultures in student mobility programming (de Wit, 2002; Knight, 2004; Paige & Mestenhauser, 1999b). Joseph (2011), then, proposes an integrative approach to internationalization that is reflective of intercultural dimensions and understandings, while critiquing the approach that places the Western world as central in the global model in which non-Western contexts are “othered.”

Mestenhauser and Paige (1999) have acknowledged the need to look beyond the parochial and Western-centric models of culture and knowledge when creating the rationale and implementation strategy of internationalization. Leask and de Wit’s (2016) call for internationalization that focuses on sustainability and collective understanding challenges the Western values and objectives that ground traditional internationalization efforts. Specific to the Canadian context of the internationalization of higher education, Garson (2016) challenges the privileging of a single understanding of knowledge over
others as a result of its perceived value in a global economy and proposes the intercultural framework of internationalization as one of the areas for dialogue. In this space, cultural variations of perspectives of knowledge are valued beyond the usefulness for the national economy or creating a dominant model of higher education. Garson’s call for alternative ways of knowing and acknowledging the danger of maintaining an ethnocentric perspective create space to theoretically challenge the canons of internationalization and engage more meaningfully with other ontologies and epistemologies.

**Intercultural Communication: Troubling the Nation–State and Systems of Power**

The intercultural dimension of internationalization is rooted in intercultural communication theory. Intercultural theories that have dominated internationalization, such as Hofstede’s (1984) cultural dimensions, the GLOBE study (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorman, & Gupta, 2004) and Bennett’s (1998) development model of intercultural sensitivity, are being critiqued by scholars today. Early intercultural communication efforts focused on improving diplomacy, such as creating trainings for foreign service agents for successful placements abroad (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2014). In its early roots, the nation–state was the common indicator of culture, ultimately supporting a static and hegemonic understanding of culture. Culture was positioned as a variable of communication, and intercultural competence was considered a skill to be gained and used primarily in the fields of international business and organizational behavior (Hofstede, 1983; House & Javidan, 2004; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997).

The linkage between intercultural communication and internationalization crystalized when international education scholars began to examine connecting
intercultural competencies to study abroad programming (Bennett, 2008; Bennett, 2012; Hammer, 2012). Bennett (and later Hammer, through instrumentation) shifted the focus of desired study abroad outcomes from the development of culture-specific skills to the development of culture-general skills and reflective practices. Developmental models of intercultural communication viewed reality as constructed from an individual’s lived experiences, thus culture could not be considered a static variable or reified (Bennett, 2012). In such models, culture is seen as dynamic; it is not “consensus-based” nor is it an item an individual can “carry” as a singular item (Collier, 2015).

Intercultural understanding is commonly positioned as competence, a measurable skill an individual can gain. Developmental intercultural models and the tools that measure them, therefore, have often been co-opted into broader internationalization agendas. In such models, the nation–state continues to be the primary measure of culture implicit in the study abroad model as well as the sojourner’s experience encountering difference (Paige, 1994). Additionally, Bennett (1998) did not consider power as a component of intercultural communication but more as an ideological presupposition. Therefore, in the context of study abroad and the measurement of intercultural development, power imbalances and historical relationships are not explored as foundational.

Critical communication interculturalists (those who form a small set of scholars who critically analyze intercultural communication theory) share a constructivist orientation with the interculturalists cited in the internationalization section above (Bennett, Hammer, and Paige, for example). This orientation views culture as socially constructed by the individual through experience and interactions with others. A primary
difference in the critical paradigm is its emphasis “that human behavior is always constrained by societal ideological superstructures and materials conditions that privilege some and advantage others” (Martin, Nakayama, & Carbaugh, 2012, p 28). While constructivist interculturalists focus their efforts on human-to-human understanding and diplomacy between nations, critical interculturalists aim to further social justice and bring about change in regard to the voices that are elevated in theory and practice.

One finds the disjuncture between historic, developmental-based, and essentialist notions of intercultural scholarship and the turn toward a critical engagement with intercultural communication in Ono’s critique of the essay by James Cheseboro, former president of the National Communication Association. In his essay, Cheseboro defended the nation–state model and its position in intercultural communication scholarship. Ono (2011) challenged these concepts by characterizing the nation–state as primarily a social construction, referencing Anderson’s “imagined entities” (2006), and questioning the legitimacy of the nation–state model. A reified definition of culture that equates homogenous culture with the nation–state creates an unquestioned standard of applicability and universality in which diverse perspectives of knowledge and understanding are not explored or valued (Ono, 2011). In such environments, the values of a dominant group are communicated as universal for all nation–state members, and aspects of identity and the self-efficacy of individuals disappear. Power differentials between cultures as an element of intercultural communication were introduced through this naming of dominant and non-dominant groups.

Yep (2014) further argued against an orientation of the nation–state as the common differentiator in comparing cultures, as such an orientation does not represent
the diversity of ideas found within a nation’s borders. In such cases, “Diverse groups are treated as homogenous, differences within national boundaries, ethnic groups, genders and races are obscured, and hegemonic notions of ‘culture’ are presented as ‘shared’ by all cultural members” (Moon, 1996, p. 76). Collier (2002) noted that it was no longer “valid to assume that culture can be easily synthesized into that which is produced or constituted in a particular geographical place or by a group of people who have similar ancestry or traditions” (p. x). When possibilities of difference and identity are not named or presented as elements of culture, non-dominant identities and their intersection with each other are ignored. Thus, the critique of the nation–state is not just an argument against a perceived homogeneity within a single culture, but also that the nation–state purports a framework of domination and hegemony (Halualani, Mendoza, & Drzewiecka, 2009).

Due to the dominance of the intercultural communication field by Western scholars, many studies are conducted from a perspective of trying to understand the “other,” or non-Western people and cultures of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Western culture is positioned as central in these studies. This positioning of the Western or European gaze and interpretation of culture(s) also illustrates the flow of research in which “non-Western cultures are targets for analysis and critique, but not as resources for theoretical insight” (Asante, Miike, & Yin, 2008, p. 3). Similarly, Collier, Hegde, Lee, Nakayama, and Yep (2002) discuss the importance of being aware of who benefits from intercultural communication as research can influence how cultural groups interact and understand each other. They contend, “Intercultural communication has, in some ways, served the interests of white U.S. Americans” (p. 223), as models have been created for
the success of Western interests, whether in education, commerce, or diplomacy.

Critical intercultural communication moves away from an individualistic model to one that encompasses a more relational and holistic perspective (Martin & Nakayama, 1999). The focus on individual skills of intercultural communication, particularly when examining intercultural competence as an outcome of internationalization in higher education, nullifies a focus of the interconnectedness of communities. Sorrells (2016) provides a model of developing intercultural understanding that centers increased global interaction and exchange in the context of hegemonic and colonizing systems. Cupples and Glynn (2014) offer an example of intercultural universities in Nicaragua that have created programming to connect Indigenous communities around the globe, building opportunities for knowledge sharing. This program could potentially be linked to both internationalization and Indigenization through a model of intercultural understanding that is based on Indigenous ways of knowing as dynamic and instructive perspectives. Pidgeon (2016), in examining Indigenization of higher education and student services, calls upon other scholars to leverage intercultural learning to increase understanding of Indigenous communities.

The paragraphs above provide an overview of emerging scholarship that troubles the traditional intercultural literature cited in internationalization. Critical intercultural communication challenges the Western grounding of the foundational literature used in international education. Collier et al. (2002), Asante et al. (2008), Ono (2011), Wilson (2004), and others have questioned the process of “othering” done in the name of international and intercultural research by Westerners without recognition of the power differentials inherent in some models. Critical intercultural communication scholars,
rather, propose a broader understanding of “culture,” a necessary delinking of nation-state and culture, and the devaluation of non-Western values and epistemologies. This work has direct relevance to new understandings of internationalization of higher education as well as its potential outcomes that value and create space for Indigenous perspectives to be explored, which shall be examined in the following paragraphs.

**Settler Colonialism and Higher Education in North America**

One of the core purposes of critical scholarship, as described above in the context of critical internationalization and critical intercultural communication, is to identify and trouble unequal power relations. These relations are grounded in larger systems and institutions that perpetuate exploitation, often invisible to many who have been socialized to accept these inequities as normal. They are rooted in and perpetuated by historical, political, and economic factors. An example of the legacy of these inequities is the founding of universities in North America and their continued existence as institutions of settler colonial nations. In order to better contextualize Indigenization and understand its complexity as a strategic priority of higher education, it is important to provide a historical grounding of the unique aspects of colonization in the setting of Canada. I will focus specifically on settler colonialism and its connection to the research of higher education and education policy in Canada.

Settler colonialism centers on ongoing colonization, acknowledging that in the case of countries like Canada, the United States, Australia, Palestine, and New Zealand, the colonizing population has never physically left. The institutions and governing structures put in place by colonizing powers in these locations endure (Wolfe, 2006). Colonialism necessitates the dominance of one group in a space over the community
indigenous to that place, and dominance is exercised through demands of labor (Wolfe, 2006). Importantly, settler colonialism is ongoing; it does not occur in a single moment in time (Tuck & Yang, 2012; Wolfe, 2006). Settlers continue to live on unceded land, and their institutions continue to govern the nation–states, leading to the erasure of the Indigenous communities. As Wolfe (2006) states, “Invasion is a structure not an event” (p. 388). Such is the case of many educational systems and schools positioned as (and interpreted as) structures and systems that require assimilation (Alfred, 2004; McClellan et al., 2005).

Tuck and Yang (2012) describe two forms of colonialism in order to further differentiate the particularities of settler colonialism: external and internal colonialism. In both of these forms, there is an external metropole of empire exerting control over the colonized land. External colonialism refers to the extraction of natural resources that are then moved beyond the created borders of the colonized land. Internal colonialism refers to the use of systems to control resources and people within the borders of the colonized land. Settler colonialism is unique in that there is no difference between the colonized land and the empire or metropole; in this form of colonialism, “The colonizer has come to stay” (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Settler colonialism uses elimination of Indigenous peoples as a tool of ongoing dominance and erasure, breaking down existing communities and their societal structures to force assimilation (Wolfe, 2006). This elimination can then create space for settlers to begin a narrative of belonging. As Veracini (2011) states, “Whereas colonialism reinforces the distinction between colony and metropole, settler colonialism erases it” (p. 3).

In settler colonialism, land is central (Tuck & Yang, 2012; Wolfe, 2006). For the
settler, land is a commodity that can be used as an entry to the economic market. Settlers must be able to position themselves as legitimate owners of settled land in order to justify the independence of the larger empire (Wolfe, 2006). To encourage settler seizure of land, a moral justification is connected to forgive settlers and grant them sovereignty, ultimately forcing the displacement of the original inhabitants. As Wolfe (2006) notes, land is not only central to settler colonialism—representing a new home and source of livelihood—it also is central to the Western/European definition of property. Universities in both Canada and the United States, including the sites of study, are located on unceded Indigenous land (Johnson, 2016), emblematic of continued settler colonialism.

In North America, education was used as a tool toward this erasure, focused on teaching Indigenous students the role of the citizen/farmer, the importance of land ownership, and the colonizers’ language. Land could then be divested from tribal holdings for individual agricultural use (Adams, 2008). This treatment of land and the environment as resources is sharply at odds with an Indigenous framework of the world that is relational and in which concepts such as animate and inanimate are understood differently (Hart, 2010; Kovach, 2005). This is an ontological break from the Indigenous definition and understanding of the natural world (Tuck & Yang, 2012).

Thus, those who remain after waves of colonization are subject to a process of assimilation into the colonizers’ way of life. As noted by Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012), the enforcement of “civilization” through colonization and assimilation embedded in educational systems in Canada, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand were thought to provide better educational opportunities and a more humane way of life to the original inhabitants of the land. Assimilation-focused education was the
rationale for creating Indian schools to teach Christian values and understandings of citizenship, thus weakening Indigenous communities and knowledge, which were seen as inferior (Adams, 2008). In settler colonial nations, education was often positioned as a gift for Indigenous people, moving them toward modernity while also socializing students to the values of the nation–state (Champagne & Abu-Saad, 2006).

Historically, as the Western world encountered Indigenous communities, Western colonizers created a narrative around “discovery,” in which the native communities were not seen as the holders of knowledge that existed outside of their relationship with the colonizers (Smith, 2012). Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991) explain, “In the context of a First Nations perspective of the university, higher education is not a neutral enterprise” (p. 11). In describing this relationship in New Zealand, “The master narrative has been the one established by European accounts, while the Maori interpretations remained as oral histories” (Smith, 2012, p.150). Western colonizing populations privileged their own knowledge over that of the Indigenous communities (Madjidi & Restoule, 2008). As Champagne (2015) noted, early universities in the colonial United States taught worldviews and religion that supported the European colonial powers. The purpose of education in settler nations was assimilation, for the Indigenous communities to lose their own knowledge and identity, and for the settling immigrant communities to adhere to a singular narrative of identity and knowledge to further the burgeoning settler nation.

Sonn, Bishop, and Humphries (2000) posit that non-dominant groups that have voluntarily moved to a new country because of migration are more likely to align themselves with mainstream culture in an educational context. Meanwhile, non-dominant communities that are involuntary members of the dominant environment, such as Native
American or Indigenous communities, “enter schooling with a set of cultural characteristics developed in response to the challenges of a social, economic, and psychological history of rejection and oppression. Mainstream structures will do little to change their social and economic status” (p. 128).

Settler colonialism models of education have changed little since the arrival of Europeans in North America. Such models permeate how educational systems and organizational strategies are put into place. Higher education in Canada, similar to other settler colonial nations, is based on values of “excellence, integration and modernity” (Battise et al., 2002, p. 86). Higher education left as a settler institution ultimately serves nation–state goals of governance and success of the market economy of which Indigenous communities are not a part (Champagne, 2015). The following section, however, provides an overview of Indigenous models of education and the entry of Indigenous epistemologies into the academy.

**Frameworks of Education**

Indigenous ways of knowing have been present in North America for thousands of years but are still largely treated as peripheral as they challenge colonial perspectives of research, epistemology, and ontology. Therefore, scholars have created frameworks that serve as theoretical and practical models for education. It is important to note that these models are not representative of all Indigenous communities and philosophies, although they have similar features and structures for iterative knowledge building. These models have been included to better understand values such as interconnectedness, land and interconnectedness, and how they may trouble colonial or neoliberal notions of education.
4-R Model. One example of a framework is Kirkness and Barnhardt’s (1991) 4-R model. The four Rs stand for respect for Indigenous knowledge, responsible relationships, reciprocity, and relevant programs. The authors explain that students entering universities immediately encounter a worldview that emphasizes written knowledge as “real” over oral knowledge and other knowledges connected to First Nation communities. Survival (and ultimately success) in higher education often requires an acceptance of the knowledge privileged by the institution. Such acceptance (or acquiescence) often results in a turning away from the knowledge of the community and people. In this case, Kirkness and Barnhardt remind institutions of a broader understanding of knowledge and ways of knowing that exist beyond the narrow understandings of higher education. Respect for Indigenous knowledge requires that institutions demonstrate a valid and important place for Indigenous ways of knowing in the institution. Relationships in higher education traditionally place instructors as the producers or impacters of learning and knowledge and students as the receivers or consumers. Such a model is at odds with the more relational or personal relationships to which First Nations students may be more accustomed. Reciprocity encourages iterative teaching methods where the teacher engages with the knowledge and experiences of students, which establishes stronger relationships, deeper understanding, and more opportunities for creating new paradigms or frameworks for understanding knowledge. Finally, relevance is the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge and practices into the ongoing education of students while simultaneously sustaining and benefiting Indigenous communities.

Wholism. Pidgeon incorporated the 4-R framework into a more interconnected
model, using what she deemed “wholistic” with a “w” to demonstrate the “whole being” in knowledge creation. Figure 1 represents Pidgeon’s Wholistic Model, showing the importance of acknowledging territory and connections to local communities, nations, and the larger global community. Pidgeon called for education that included a spiritual element of humanity, in addition to the physical, emotional, and intellectual elements. Although designed as a specific approach for supporting Indigenous students, the Wholistic model may inform broader program development goals.

*Figure 1: Pidgeon’s “Wholistic” Model of Indigenized Education*


**Ecology.** Cajete (1993) acknowledged the spirituality aspect of Indigenous knowledge as a differentiator from the kind of Western knowledge typically valued in higher education institutions. Cajete explains that while capitalism and consumerism are ingrained in the American sense of the “real world,” the spirit and nature are the “real world” in Indigenous ways of knowing. The model of ecology emphasizes living and learning to be fully integrated. This model calls upon scholars to connect knowledge
creation to an experiential model. Finally, the model calls for education that is focused on the whole person, not just the cognitive learning emphasized in the Western world. Simpson (2014) describes education and pedagogy as coming directly from the land and people’s relationship to it. Context is central to knowledge.

**Medicine Wheel.** The Medicine Wheel, shaped like a circle equally divided into four quarters, is often attributed to directions that demonstrate interconnectedness. All quarters are necessary for the whole, representing a sense of balance, relationship, and flow (Porter, 2015). The directions may represent the four seasons or the four elements (Regnier, 1995) and can also be illustrative of the four aspects of humanness: the East is associated with spiritual energy, the North with cognitive energy, the West with physical energy, and the South with emotional energy (Calliou, 1995). The use of the Medicine Wheel varies widely, reflecting the diversity of Indigenous communities in which it is grounded. Examples include its use to elevate relationships and connectedness found in Indigenous research (Wilson, 2008), teaching and learning (Wilson, 1995), and conceptualization of services and outreach (Dapice, 2006; LaFever, 2016; Pidgeon, 2016).

**Animation.** Similar to Pidgeon (2016), Battise, Bell, and Findlay (2002) extended the 4-R model by using the term *animation* to describe how best to change higher education. The authors explain:

Animation recognizes that Aboriginal education requires a process of participation, consultation, collaboration, consensus-building, participatory research, and sharing led by Aboriginal peoples and grounded in Indigenous knowledge rather than the (neo) colonial command economy that imposes
programs, courses, and information generated in the university by academic and administrators to “assist” Aboriginal students. (p. 86)

Thus, animation reflects the dynamic and lived examples of Indigenous knowledge and languages. The authors describe sites for animation in the Eurocentric education in the settler colony nations (i.e. Canada, the United States, Australia) in order to move toward decolonization. Battiste et al.’s (2002) vision creates opportunities for the exploration and validation of Indigenous methodologies and perspectives. A summary of Battiste et al.’s recommendations are found in Figure 2 below.

**Figure 2: Animate Framework for Indigenizing Higher Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sites for Animation</th>
<th>Core Ideas</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Relationships with elders</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Indigenous ethical guidelines</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Indigenous knowledge materials</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Indigenous relationships with citizenship</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Critical Indigenous mass</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Dialogues for research and training</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Indigenized visual arts curriculum</td>
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**The Gift.** Kuokkanen (2007) uses the notion of “the gift” to model how higher education may engage Indigenous epistemologies and knowledge traditions to the academy. In this framework, Kuokkanen positions the gift as an alternative to the concept of exchange, which is centered on a market-driven neoliberal model. Notions of reciprocity and activism are strong components of this paradigm. Communities play an active role in the gift framework, both as beneficiaries of research and as a voice that
drives research agendas. Kuokkanen (2007) asserts, however, that the academy must change its organizational and ontological foundations in order to accept the gift of Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies, considering them not just as quaint traditions but as robust examples of knowledge and methods.

Importantly, these models demonstrate the many ways in which Indigenous knowledge is positioned as a place of dynamic learning and action with the potential for transformation, rejecting its marginalization under settler colonialism. Sumida Huaman and Brayboy (2017) describe efforts to “expose pervasive myths regarding dominant constructions of knowledge and education and interrupt them by highlighting local Indigenous knowledges and epistemologies” to inform and change colonial spaces. In these models, interruption and transformation of educational spaces is central.

The conceptual and visual methods above are a sample representative of Indigenous philosophies specifically tied to education. These philosophies are not representative of all Indigenous communities but highlight some values that may be held in common and that challenge the structure and practice of Western higher education institutions. In the models presented, education is seen as connected rather than compartmentalized, at odds with the distinct disciplines that are the hallmark of higher education institutions. There is also a lack of hierarchy in the models; reciprocity and connectedness encourage an equitable model of learning between community, university, and student body. In this study, understanding how internationalization is conceptualized and carried out in relation to Indigenization is a core research question. These models—authored by Indigenous scholars to address learning and often in relationship to Western models of education that have required assimilation of Indigenous learners—offer a
better understanding of the potential points of tension when examining internationalization, particularly the Western values and assumptions on which it is constructed.

**Indigenization: Changing the Academy**

The TRC’s release of Calls to Action called for educational, health, religious, and other institutions across Canada to redress the ongoing damage of residential schools. Calls to Action addressing education centered on issues of access, language rights and learning, curriculum, autonomy, and community engagement across institutional and federal levels; these calls for change in education writ large have led to many universities seeking to Indigenize. Pidgeon (2016) describes Indigenization as a strategy that aims to disrupt settler domination of higher education as an institution, while supporting Indigenous student success in higher education by creating connections between the Indigenous communities and higher education institutions. When Indigenization is actually put into practice in higher education, however, there is a movement that pushes against relegating Indigenous culture to the periphery. There is a concern that Indigenization might ultimately result in tokenization and the continued assimilation of Indigenous students, scholars, and faculty.

Indigenization has been characterized by some scholars as grounded in a shift in the concepts of knowledge itself. Kuokkanen (2007) calls for the academy to take responsibility for Indigenization and to recognize that “the academy will have to acknowledge that it is founded on very limited conceptions of knowledge and the world” (p. 3). Battiste (2008), in discussing changes to Indigenous education generally, notes:

The challenge also continues for educators to be able to reflect critically on the
current educational system in terms of whose knowledge is offered, who decides what is offered, what outcomes are rewarded and who benefits, and, more important, how those processes are achieved in an ethnically appropriate manner in higher educational institutions. (p. 498)

Knowledge and its purpose are reimagined, questioning the practice of knowledge creation common in the academy in which all knowledge should be available to all people with little regard to the potential damage of extractive methods of learning and research. Wilson (2001) noted that an Indigenous paradigm is relational, unlike the more Eurocentric model in which knowledge is positioned as a commodity that can be gained. Reflecting on the nature of knowledge, Kovach (2005) describes knowledge as fluid, non-linear, and relational as well as experiential. Indigenization is then a process of transformation that centers a cognitive shift, a repositioning of materials and resources, and intentional engagement with community.

Wilson (2004) argues that the process of rethinking higher education must begin with developing critical consciousness. Wasibord and Mellado (2014) describe this process as one of “de-Westernization,” describing a change in academic knowledge, which “has been historically organized around analytical concepts, epistemologies, arguments, and evidence developed in the United States and Western Europe” (p. 362). The shift toward de-Westernization offers an opportunity for more expansive research and frameworks, particularly from an Indigenized perspective. Critical consciousness is an important first step for all stakeholders in higher education because universities and the academy are still rooted in Western and colonial traditions of education (Kuokkanen, 2007), and Indigenous knowledge and programming might just be limited to Native
Studies programs. If educators lack critical consciousness, then the development of an Indigenization strategy will not have an impact on the institution as a whole. In such circumstances, students who identify with Indigenous epistemologies or ontologies will be expected to assimilate or join specialized faculties that survive on the margins of institutions.

Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) caution the Indigenization project has the potential to be reduced to the incorporation of Indigenous students into the existing structures of higher education, solely focused on an assimilated success of Indigenous students, faculty, and staff without changing the system of higher education. Pidgeon (2016) notes that the process of Indigenization must be authentic, describing such authenticity as “Indigenization that moves away from the tokenized checklist response, that merely tolerates Indigenous knowledge(s), to one where Indigenous knowledge(s) are embraced as part of the institutional fabric” (p. 77). Battiste et al. (2002) and Marker (2004) argue that Indigenizing does not mean simply incorporating Indigenous knowledge into an existing institution, for such incorporation would not disrupt histories of power associated with settler colonialism. Simply adding elements is still assimilative in nature, sustaining the Western-centric model of education and continuing to “other” Indigenous knowledge and research. Alfred (2004) noted that an end goal of Indigenization is to transform institutions into places where values, knowledge, and organizational philosophies are respected, thus moving beyond isolated programming to all aspects of the institution.

While Indigenization’s commitment to institutional reform is promising, scholars also caution against essentializing Indigenous knowledge to a component that can be held as a binary opposite other strategies and activities, including internationalization. Pidgeon
(2016) describes Indigenization as “movement centering Indigenous knowledges and ways of being within the academy, in essence transforming institutional initiatives, such as policy, curricular and co-curricular programs, and practices to support Indigenous success and empowerment” (p. 77), including international education as one site of potential transformation. A component of transformation is a deeper engagement in relational knowledge that focuses on community rather than the individual. Although not leveraged from Indigenous positions, critiques of individualism and the emphasis of nation-building have begun to find their way into international education. Leask and de Wit (2016), for example, called for a “reimagining” of internationalization that focuses on international relationship-building to counter nationalist trends.

Levi and Durham (2015) note that “in the twenty-first century, indigeneity increasingly exists through the conditions of emerging globality” (p. 397). There are global implications to localized knowledge and concerns. In Cupples and Glynn’s (2014) example of an intercultural university, programming rooted in Indigenous and intercultural knowledge disrupts the assumption that Indigenous knowledge stopped at contact. The authors instead claim that Indigenous knowledge continues to “develop, hybridize and function as sites of productive disagreement” (p. 64). Therefore, in all the examples described in this section, there is potential for Indigenization to have influence on institutions in concert with other initiatives but also as a stand-alone initiative.

**Education in Canada: A Case of Settler Colonialism and Anti-Colonial Activism**

Kuokkanen (2007) notes that in Canada “decolonization has meant reclaiming and validating indigenous epistemologies, methodologies and research questions” (p. 143). Tuck and Yang (2012), however, note that there is a danger of decolonization being
reduced to a metaphor. The authors emphasize that decolonizing must be unsettling as well as deeply connected to Indigenous peoples and knowledge; it is not a term for mindset shifting or non-Indigenous issues. When decolonization is used metaphorically, it mutes disruptive and transformational change and ultimately reconciles “settler guilt and complicity” (p. 3). Importantly, indigenization and decolonization are not interchangeable terms. Gaudry and Lorenz (2017), in their research surveying Indigenous scholars and allies, note the potential for a decolonial indigenization that is grounded in dismantling and transforming the university—points that lie outside the rhetoric of Indigenization simply as an organizational tool.

Further, the emphasis on place in Indigenization may create a tension between campuses striving to establish a so-called global footprint and the importance of place in Indigenization. Marker (2004), in a review of the 4-R framework as an approach for Indigenization of higher education, asked whether the academy had indeed been transformed or whether the push toward greater Indigenous integration had disrupted the academy but then ultimately stagnated. Marker noted other changes in higher education occurring alongside Indigenization with a note toward internationalization: “An emphasis on preparing students for careers in a globalized marketplace has frequently rendered the place-based knowledge and identity of Indigenous people to be an antiquated and contentious voice, listened to only in the most nonchalant fashion” (p. 172). Place-based knowledge and land are still understood only through a Western lens, rather than places of dynamism and learning as described in the Indigenous education models.

In spite of efforts toward reconciliation and truth-telling, settler colonialism continues. Coulthard (2014) posits that the language of recognition of Indigenous
communities, particularly in the case of the settler-state of Canada, will not transform the colonial relationship that exists between them. In this case, Coulthard argues that recognition efforts ultimately serve the interest of the settler-state, confirming the dominance of the colonial power. Corntassel and Holder (2008) warn that truth commissions and apologies often lead to only symbolic changes rather than addressing injustices and accountability. Concessions to Indigenous communities for the right to land or cultural practices still place the communities as subordinate to the settler-state and its structures because the concept of recognition is still driven by the dominant community.

Coulthard (2014) suggests moving toward a “resurgent politics of recognition” led by Indigenous peoples: reclaiming, recreating, and revitalizing Indigenous philosophies and ways of life. Similarly, Alfred (2004) explains that understanding colonialism must go beyond the historical understanding of colonization, stating, “The true meaning of ‘colonialism’ emerges from a consideration of how we as Indigenous peoples have lost the freedom to exist as Indigenous peoples in almost every single sphere of existence” (p. 89). In this setting, change must be led by Indigenous communities that can disrupt and transcend the settler colonial structure that continues to govern the nation–state.

Tuck and Yang (2012) assert that decolonization should occur through the giving back of land seized from Indigenous communities through settler colonialism. In their analysis, understanding of settler colonialism and inclusion of Indigenous knowledge into the academy is not fully decolonizing; that can only come with the release of the land to its Indigenous inhabitants. Johnson (2016), for example, explores how a university that has benefited from sitting on the unceded land of the Musqueam could repay the
displaced community through tuition waivers to bridge the gap of access to post-secondary education. Actionable steps of reconciliation on behalf of the university, decided upon in conjunction with local Indigenous communities, are important in moving Indigenization forward (Johnson, 2011).

It is noteworthy that prior to the TRC, scholars were engaged in this work at universities across Canada, including the University of British Columbia and the establishment of Indigenous institutions like the Gabriel Dumont Institute and Nikola Valley Institute of Technology (Pidgeon, 2016). Battiste et al. (2002) look toward the framework of their own institution, the University of Saskatchewan, to note that change “tends to still be primarily about the insiders and how much or how little they will have to adjust their practices and share their privileges in order to ‘respond’ to (by once again determining) outsiders’ ‘needs’” (p. 83). Canadian institutions have made some progress in identifying embedded Eurocentric traditions, but they still support Eurocentric values such as modernity and excellence (Findlay, 2000).

Beyond the call to improve issues and policies affecting Indigenous communities, the TRC’s Calls to Action “also call[s] for settler communities to initiate a form of self-transformation” (Chung, 2016, p. 405). Battiste et al. note that Indigenization of higher education cannot just be the responsibility of the Indigenous communities, but that non-Indigenous people also are integral to change. As Pidgeon notes when examining Indigenization following the release of the TRC (2016), administrators who do not identify as Aboriginal “must understand what Indigenization really means, and that Indigenization cannot be defined or bounded by their expectations of what it should mean” (p. 79). To do so effectively will require a disruption of the current power
dynamic so that Indigenous communities take lead (Battiste et al., 2002).

In general, there is an instructive discourse related to Indigenization and decolonization emerging from Canadian higher education institutions. There are concerns of whether institutions and their organizational implementation of Indigenization can move beyond cursory changes and meaningfully and intentionally center Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy. Meanwhile, Indigenous scholars, allies, and other stakeholders are engaged in thoughtful and passionate discussion about knowledge, land rights, and framing the purpose of higher education. While intellectual and practical discussions continue on how Indigenization develops, the initial efforts toward greater engagement with Indigenous students on campus are important.

**Education in Canada: Higher Education Organization**

As noted, the site of this study will be a university in Canada. Internationalization’s relationship with higher education institutions necessitates a strong understanding of the development of higher education in Canada. In this section, I will focus on the context of higher education and international education efforts specific to this environment. Canada’s governmental structure as a federation gives certain responsibilities and power to the federal government, while others are the purview of the provincial government (Jones, 2009). Early in Canada’s history, education was considered to be a localized issue under the responsibility of each province. Provincial governance over higher education was due to the small percentage of students in the early years of the nation–state who were bound for higher education. Low enrollments reflected Canada’s relatively small population. Following World War II, Canada experienced a massification of higher education as soldiers returning from war sought
opportunities to attend higher education, and the population of the country overall began to change and take an interest in education (Jones, 2014). Due to the sharp rise of students, the federal government became more involved and began providing grants and funding to manage the influx of students (Cameron, 1997). Despite the traditional provincial oversight of higher education, the success of international education is a national priority that has influenced the provinces’ engagement with the strategy.

Provinces have developed higher education unique to their populations. As populations grew in the westward provinces, provincial universities—similar to the land-grand universities founded in United States—were established. The focus of these institutions was service to the economic development of the nearby community (Jones, 2014). These public universities are now defined as higher education institutions that are able to grant both undergraduate and graduate degrees. Non-university higher education institutions grew as well, with some provinces building the community college model, providing more vocational opportunities and greater access to higher education (Jones, 1997). According to the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, there are currently 163 public and private universities and 183 public colleges and institutions in Canada. In 2007, tuition for domestic students averaged $4,524 for private institutions and $2,400 for public institutions. Provincial Ministers of Education remain the primary overseers of higher education, with the federal government providing the policy areas of “financial assistance, research and development, cultural and language policy initiative and human resources development” (Jones, 2009, p. 361).

The Canadian higher education environment has influenced the ways in which internationalization has developed over time. Universities have historically engaged in
internationalization independently due to Canada’s provincial oversight of higher education (Shubert, Jones, & Trilokekar, 2009). Shubert et al. (2009) provide further historical perspective to better understand internationalization’s place in Canadian higher education and the critiques it has faced by scholars. Shubert et al. note that Canada has not experienced a profound critical incident that has prompted a reactive approach to educational policy (like 9/11 in the United States), so visa policies for international students have been relatively stable over the years.

Universities in Canada developed within a relatively homogenous field of institutions rather than a hierarchal range: “Universities were publicly supported secular, degree-granting institutions with similar governance and administrative structure” (Jones, 2014, p. 17). The lack of stratification resulted in a relative sense of equality amongst all institutions, without the focus on rankings and positioning that has developed worldwide today (Jones, 2014). In the context of internationalization, the push toward being a world-class institution or participating in the quest for ever-higher rankings may have developed more slowly in such a setting than in other countries. Finally, there is an ethic of multiculturalism that has existed in Canada for many years, positioning Canada as a welcoming country for potential international students (Shubert et al., 2009; Trilokekar & Kizilbash, 2013). Given these national contexts, it is likely that Canadian universities’ international strategies have developed at the intersection between national context and institutional culture (Johnstone & Proctor, in press).

**Education in Canada: International Education Efforts**

Internationalization has thus developed differently in Canada than in the United States and other western and/or settler nations. Organization-promoting international
education in Canada necessarily focuses on different aspects of the internationalization project unique to its context. In a 2014 review of international education from the data of participating universities, Universities Canada, a membership organization for university presidents that advocates for higher education at the federal level, noted that 96% of universities say internationalization is a priority for strategic planning. Only three percent of Canadian students are studying abroad presently, although 97% of institutions offer international programs to students. Universities Canada also has made a commitment to improving study abroad programming in higher education and promoting a cultural of mobility by making available study abroad opportunities to a larger number of students. Studying abroad is positioned as an opportunity for students to develop a global mindset and increase competitiveness to support the Canadian economy, as well an opportunity for Canadian students to better understand “the diverse cultures, histories and values that make up our country” (Universities Canada, 2015). Current barriers students face in participating in study abroad programming include the high cost and inflexible curriculum of the university (Universities Canada, 2014).

Despite relatively low levels of outbound mobility, over 80% of Canadian institutions have committed to internationalization at home, including hosting international students, providing international faculty research and professional development opportunities, and internationalizing curriculum (Universities Canada, 2014). International student numbers are increasing, with more students hailing from increasingly diverse backgrounds than the typically European-based students from earlier years of international education (James, Cullinan, & Cruceru, 2013). According to the statistics of the department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, (2015)
international students studying in Canada, the majority of students currently hail from China, India, Korea, and France, although Korean numbers have decreased since 2006. The Canadian Bureau of International Education notes that the fastest growth has come from India and Nigeria.

Knight (2004), a University of Toronto-based scholar, calls upon international educators to think broadly about programming, stating, “Internationalization is also about relating to the diversity of cultures that exists within countries, communities, and institutions and so intercultural is used to address the aspects of internationalization at home” (p. 11). Efforts toward internationalization at home and opportunities for intercultural learning are sites of examination of colonizing practices. Stein (2017a) uses a colonial discourse analysis of EduCanada, the Canadian government’s brand for education, to examine how international education is marketed to potential students. These studies question whether institutions from settler colonial backgrounds like the United States, Canada, and Australia are communicating a national narrative that acknowledges Indigenous peoples and colonization or maintains a nationalistic narrative that extols the virtue of the nation–state and the education students will receive.

In January 2014, Canada released its first international education strategy, *Harnessing Our Knowledge Advantage to Drive Innovation and Prosperity*. This strategy focuses on international student recruitment and the development of talent, and it encourages students to study abroad for similar development. The strategy is housed on the trade and global market website, highlighting the economic importance Canada places on international education. Canada has a vested interest in immigration and its support of the national workforce and economic growth, hence political and international policy are
becoming more intertwined with higher education (Trilokekar & El Masri, 2016). Critics argue that the federal strategy presented in 2014 reinforces an economic perspective of internationalization. Trilokekar (2016) suggests the strategy “serves as a tool to reinforce (1) societal exclusion (not inclusion); (2) class hierarchy (not equity); (3) political borders (not mobility); and (4) global competition (not reciprocity)” (p. 1). The strategy promotes a specific definition of internationalization that is intimately tied to the economic success of the nation–state through talent development, recruitment of potential immigrants, and trade. Garson (2014) calls for a deeper examination of internationalization that acknowledges the economic benefits of increased international student numbers, while also reassessing the student benefits and outcomes. At the same time Garson also notes that simply increasing populations of international students (and potential immigrants) will not necessarily lead to deeper intercultural understanding.

**Conclusion**

The previous paragraphs provide a historical and contextual overview for this study. Canada’s higher education is engaged in processes of internationalization and Indigenization. At first blush, these two processes may seem to be at ends of a binary. Critical scholars for both Indigenization and internationalization discuss the importance of decoupling higher education and the nation–state’s economic and political interests in higher education institutions. Indigenization scholars have critiqued Eurocentric models of knowledge and education, highlighting the challenge of Western higher education institutions to authentically Indigenize. As Indigenous knowledge scholarship grows alongside the Indigenous student population, decolonial Indigenization looks to transform institutions, not just add tokenized or cultural elements. Universities engaging in
internationalization, and the efforts of interculturalization, must then reassess the values and objectives that undergird such strategies to better understand how they will intersect with Indigenization efforts.
Chapter Three: Research Methodology

This study is positioned to explore the intersections of strategic priorities within a Canadian higher education institution, which I will call Western Mountain University (WMU), by understanding how faculty and staff conceptualize the motivations and objectives driving the strategies of internationalization, interculturalization, and Indigenization. The research questions guiding this study are: 1) How do faculty and staff conceptualize the university’s international efforts and intercultural understanding and their motivations? 2) How does the institutional priority of increasing intercultural understanding engage with the internationalization and Indigenization efforts of the university? and 3) How do staff and faculty across the university understand the intersection of Indigenization and internationalization?

In this chapter, I will first establish my study in a qualitative design framework before describing the epistemological grounding that informs this study and the research questions. I then provide a brief sketch of Indigenous methodology and its influences on critical theory as well as the overall design of this research study. Then, I will describe case study methodology as well as the methods I utilized in the study. I will include a description of my research plan and the data analysis process. This is followed by a reflection on my own positionality, including what led me to this research and how this positionality influenced my experience in the field. I conclude with a discussion of validity and delimitations of this study.

Research Design

My research design examines an institution of higher education located in Canada that has established strategies of internationalization, Indigenization, and
interculturalization as institutional priorities. This dissertation is grounded in a qualitative research design using a case study methodology. As the phenomenon of Indigenization and internationalization intersecting is a contemporary and ongoing issue, it was crucial to have an inductive model that could be constructed and reconstructed as I engaged in field work with the site of research. A qualitative study is best positioned to allow for the flexibility in researching an emerging practice and carrying out deep engagement for understanding the conceptualization of a topic (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). Rather than utilizing quantitative measurements and indicators of success, a strategy that may be rooted in other methodologies and epistemologies, this study will be more reflective in nature, in “search of meaning” rather than a “search of law” (Geertz, 1973). This study is positioned to best understand the meaning-making of participants in the unique and specific context of the university environment. Qualitative research is interpretive of the world: “Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3). This study examined how university staff and faculty understand internationalization, interculturalization, and Indigenization as intersecting and autonomous strategic priorities within a higher education institution that has declared commitment to all.

The research design is based on a case study examining a single higher education institution in Canada. Case studies are useful when studying educational innovations and are able to provide a rich context to better understand the complexity of a unique research site (Merriam, 2009). A case study provides the opportunity for an intensive description and analysis of a bounded social phenomenon, for instance a social entity, such as a
program, institution, process, event, or concept. In addition to the focus of the case as a location or institution, a case study “facilitates the conveying of the experience of actors and stakeholders” (Stake, 2005, p. 454). For this reason, delimiting the case and its boundaries is the “single most defining characterization of case study research” (Merriam, 2009, p. 27). For this study, the boundary is a single Canadian higher education university and the faculty and staff employed or recently employed there.

A qualitative case study provided the opportunity to focus on the phenomenon of intersecting strategies in the context of one mid-sized university (Merriam, 2009), thus engaging at multiple levels and areas of the institution to allow a depth of analysis. To capture a diversity of perspectives, it was important to engage with staff and faculty members both vertically and horizontally, across multiple hierarchal levels of the organization, and across many offices on campus. I set out to generate “thick” description (Geertz, 1973), looking at ways staff and faculty within a university understand seemingly conflicting strategies that are occurring simultaneously in the educational environment.

This study was not framed as a comparative study between higher education in Canada and the United States nor was it designed to be generalizable to any university. Given the qualitative nature of the study design and the positionality of the researcher, as described later in this chapter, it is not meant to measure whether an institution is succeeding at internationalizing, interculturalizing, or Indigenizing. It is a case designed to more deeply understand the experiences encountered by those working at these specific universities and colleges. Bartlett and Vavrus (2017) contend that case studies resulting in rich detail can be generative of theoretical insights that can lend to
The findings of this study as described in Chapter Four and the implications as outlined in Chapter Five offer potential learnings about the limits of interculturalization and the tensions brought by intersecting institutional strategies.

As a non-Indigenous researcher, I cannot claim first-hand experience in the day-to-day experiences of community knowledge. However, there are specific elements of Indigenous methodologies such as relationship-building, self-reflective practices, and introduction of myself as a researcher and my relationship to the study that have informed my research. Therefore, this study is an institutional case study that was informed by Indigenous scholars and their work in bringing Indigenous methodologies to the larger public (see, for example, Wilson and Tuhiwai-Smith). Later in this chapter, I discuss my positionality through an introduction of myself as a researcher and also provide impressions from my time spent on campus.

**Epistemological Framing**

This study is informed by constructivist and critical epistemologies. Constructivism rejects the notion of an objective “truth” in the world, waiting to be found. Instead, knowledge is constructed from experiences; it is not discoverable (Crotty, 1998). Locating this study in a constructivist approach is particularly relevant given the grounding of faculty and staff conceptualizations of strategic priorities that are chosen and defined (or not) by the university and how they are enacted on a university campus. This is further complicated by the burgeoning movement of Indigenization and the many ways in which it is understood and implemented by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff and faculty. In constructivism, meaning is informed by one’s interactions with other people, the environment, the systems in which one lives, the objects within one’s
environment, and ultimately the constant overlapping of these layers. Meaning is complex and varied, constructed at both an individual level and through shared experiences; this was particularly relevant when engaging in topics that can be grounded in themes of community and connectedness. Constructivist research recognizes that the role of the researcher is to search for complexity while interpreting these experiences that lead to an inductive process of theory building (Creswell, 2013).

In addition to constructivist knowledge grounding this study is an emphasis on the context of the environment in which the study is located. Critical research recognizes and highlights systems of power and oppression as present and active in any environment. In this paradigm, researchers will “find themselves interrogating commonly held values, assumptions, challenging conventional social structures and engaging in social action” (Crotty, 2012, p. 157). Critical theory pushes beyond the individual experience and understanding, highlighting connections to larger systems of oppression in which communities live and work (Grande, 2000). Critical research and its focus on issues of power and oppression that critique and push for change (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011) align well with my study. Focusing on the intersections of strategic priorities that have political and economic import at a university located in Canada will engage with settler colonialism and neoliberalism and their continued influence in education.

Yet critical perspectives reflecting Marxist theory and notions of self-determination and empowerment (Denzin, 2005; Grande, 2000) may not be appropriate for this study and its participants given their tie to Western concepts of economy and capitalism. Thus, while I ground this study in critical and constructivist epistemologies, I also recognize that they are representative of a Western legacy of academic scholarship.
There were moments during the data collection and data analysis portions that complicated the shape of the case and the analysis. As faculty and staff work to create space both for Indigenous students and knowledge in the academy, there was a keen awareness that the academy itself resists transformation and Indigenous models of knowing. Indigenization is deeply rooted in the acknowledgement of the assimilationist practices of settler education systems and the continued implications of colonization that permeate many institutions. Indigenous knowledges have not traditionally been recognized as valid (Smith, 2012); the academy continues to be firmly entrenched in Eurocentric traditions and positivist research practices (Denzin, 2005). An in-depth case study will allow me to better understand these ways of knowing through multiple interactions with participants.

More concretely, elements of Indigenous methodology informed my data analysis and the final writing of this dissertation. Smith’s (2012) critique of early social science researchers’ common appropriation of local knowledge was a reminder that this case was bounded to an institution, and the purpose of the study was an examination to find points of tension between internationalization, interculturalization, and Indigenization. This was particularly true from the practitioner perspective of those doing the work of engaging with students, facilitating trainings, and discussing outcomes. I sought to acknowledge the wisdom of participants in the findings and implications sections of this dissertation.

**Researcher Positionality**

As a non-Indigenous researcher interested in Indigenization and how it may inform, challenge, and deconstruct international education, I recognize the need to intentionally consider my own positionality in this work. In Wilson’s (2008) examination
of Indigenous methodology, the researcher is positioned as a storyteller and their personal experiences—much like Peshkin’s (1988) subjectivities—inform the researcher’s understanding and interpretation of the data and stories they will encounter. In order to create intentional relationships, including a relationship with the readers of my work, the storyteller must openly reflect and share their own journey in relation to the research topic. In this section, I discuss my background and lived experiences, not just my theoretical and academic interests, that have influenced my point of view and journey to this research.

I come from a settler background. My family roots are in Europe, and while some are known to me, others have been lost through migration and circumstances that have not carried on the stories of our origins. My mother’s family migrated to the United States from Germany, the most recent migrant being my great-grandfather who immigrated immediately preceding the Great War. They all settled in Iowa as farmers. My understanding is that my great-grandfather never spoke of his life and family in Germany. While the German language was spoken for generations in school and church, World War II ensured the language did not endure to the present day. Part of my father’s family is from England, while the other side seems to reach far and wide. I know little else of the ancestry of my family and have had little interest in pursuing familial connections to Europe, although I hold the stories and experiences of my grandparents, as well as those of my own parents, very closely.

I have often wondered about this lack of curiosity, particularly being a person committed to history and stories. Perhaps it is due to the lack of empathy acquaintances researching their ancestry seem to hold for newly arrived immigrants, encouraging their
assimilation while decrying their own cultural loss. More poignantly, I suspect my lack of engagement with my ancestry is due to the feeling of belongingness afforded those who grow up with the privileges of being white, middle-class, and Christian in the United States. While I feel deeply connected to Minnesota, I have come to understand that I am not of this place; the origins of my ancestors are not rooted in this land. I believe these tensions are important to hold and examine when moving in the space of decolonization as a settler-researcher and avoid “a settler desire to be made innocent” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 9).

Following my master’s program, I spent a year on the U.S.–Mexico border as a coordinator for programming on immigration education in a binational setting before moving back to Minnesota. Prior to this, I worked primarily in non-profit organizations in St. Paul, Minnesota, and Antigua, Guatemala. Much of my experience has been working across borders that are not simply defined by the nation–state and are further complicated by uneven power relations. When preparing volunteers and students for international experiences in Guatemala, there was little interrogation about the legacy of colonization and complexity of cultural identity within the country, which further divided and marginalized Indigenous communities. There was even less of a discussion of the political and economic relationships between the United States and Guatemala, the implications of trade agreements, and the resulting migration of people. The difference discussed felt surface-level, and the request for increased empathy and potential support of the organization did not result in fundamental shifts of thinking of volunteers and students. There was no wrestling and reflecting on the structures in place—many supported by the United States—that resulted in the poverty and inequity they observed.
while in country.

Intercultural communication and understanding have been central to my own engagement with international education, particularly as I began my career in higher education. Reflection on one’s own identity and values is central to deeper understanding that can lead to empathy, relationship building, and even commitment to language learning, moving the experience beyond tourism. Often, however, I was disappointed by what I felt was a lack of intentional engagement with topics of inequity, cultural difference, and different ways of knowing. In reality, there was often little time to be able to engage with these topics as they were not the disciplinary focus of many of the programs. The models of intercultural communication in international education seemed only relevant in an international setting outside the United States with little connection to diversity at home (or within the colonial space I call home).

While working at an educational nonprofit organization that partnered with Indigenous communities within the United States and beyond to create cross-cultural programming, I began troubling the idea of the nation–state in the context of international education. I attended a conference session on decolonizing internationalization that aligned with my own growing interests and experiences. I continued to reflect on a perspective of intercultural communication and international education in which international is often positioned as “over there” rather than within a nation’s borders and the resulting tendency to essentialize national culture. I have continued to trouble the purposes of internationalization, particularly of study abroad, even as I work in it.

Meanwhile, in my academic life, I began to engage in Critical Intercultural Communication. I was energized to find scholars interrogating the dominant intercultural
discourse in the international field and highlighting the centering of the Western world and the erasure of historically marginalized communities (Asante, Miike, & Yin, 2008; Moon, 1996; Ono, 2011; Yep, 2014) while questioning who really benefits from intercultural competence (Collier, Hegde, Lee, Nakayama, & Yep, 2002). As I thought more about the sovereign nations found in my state and what is meant when international educators discuss crossing borders, I began reading more on decolonization in the context of education and attending university-wide events focusing on the topic. I sought conversations with those engaged in the work to better understand their perspectives on how colonization infiltrates an institution and began to reflect on how this would influence an institution’s internationalization and interculturalization efforts.

While decolonization is undoubtedly present throughout scholarship with the United States, I found little engagement with colonization or Indigenous ways of knowing in the international education field. At a national conference on international education held in the United States, I attended a decolonizing international education session. The conference sessions critically engaging with international education from a colonizing perspective were primarily led by Canadian presenters. I found higher education institutions in Canada to be a place where conversations around colonialism were not only taking place, but practitioners and researchers were taking steps to examine programming, teaching, and institutional practices. Through continued conversations and correspondence; attending a conference in Canada focused on internationalization, Indigenization, and intercultural communication; and reflections with faculty advisors and mentors; I made the decision to continue to explore this phenomenon for my dissertation.
My outsider perspective continues as a U.S. educator conducting research in a Canadian higher education context. This aspect of my positionality brought about assumptions of shared meanings regarding terms and strategies, which I will discuss more in the methods. I spent considerable time researching higher education systems in Canada, as well as the early history of Canada and its colonization, through peer-reviewed scholarship and other sources as I developed the research design and prepared for field research.

**Research Site**

I have bounded this study to a single university as a case. I will call the university West Mountain University (WMU) to protect the confidentiality of the study. WMU is a mid-sized institution that has only recently become a university after having been a college; it is still considered a new institution, which allows it some flexibility and dexterity in creating policy and programming. For some, it also signals that WMU is still finding its identity as an institution. WMU offers both undergraduate and graduate programs and a robust menu of programs that span many disciplines and professions. According to WMU’s website, the student population is just over 28,000 in 2017-2018, with students in both on-campus and open-learning programs. Of this number, just under 23,000 students have Canadian citizenship. Among the 23,000 students with Canadian citizenship, around 10% are Aboriginal students.

WMU is located in a mid-size city I will call Brookville. There are no other institutions of higher education in Brookville, and the nearest university or college is a substantial drive. Brookville is served by a regional airport, with the closest international airport over three hours away. Brookville is located on the unceded territory of an
Indigenous people, and there are more permanent signals of this relationship throughout the city. There is a close relationship between Brookville and WMU. University events held on campus are often open to the community and are at times organized in spaces in town. Occasionally, community events are held on campus. During orientation, many local organizations and companies exhibit at the university, distributing information about goods and services. When in town, anytime I spoke with people about my research at WMU, people had experience with the university and its international programming.

Focusing on WMU provided the opportunity to explore the meta-, macro-, and micro- levels of the institution, including the way in which an institution’s administrators, faculty, and staff take up federally supported initiatives such as Indigenization and internationalization through institutional policies, partnerships, and everyday programming and training. On campus, Indigenous programming and services span academic, administrative, and student services and are spread across several offices and centers on campus. The overarching organizational arm is the Office of Indigenous Education, which is led by an executive director and an associate director with a small supporting team. This office leads the campus-wide strategic initiatives, often coordinating efforts between departments and offices on campus as well as providing outreach to school districts and communities.

WMU developed a research center tasked with engaging Indigenous graduate and undergraduate scholars through research and publishing opportunities that holds a research chair. There are efforts to promote study of the local Indigenous language through classes. Additionally, cultural markers are present across campus, from culturally relevant art to classroom architecture. Indigenous student services, primarily staffed by
Indigenous employees, is located in a small house-like structure on campus, which also houses WMU’s Elders program, a program in which Elders employed by the university mentor and counsel students. These programs aim to enhance Indigenous student representation and learning opportunities as well as to strengthen student success. The influences of these efforts are seen and felt across campus and at WMU events.

The Global Office, WMU’s international education, training, and development department, coordinates and facilitates the university’s international activities, including international student recruitment, student mobility, and professional education opportunities. Interculturalization efforts are headed by a small team housed independently from the Global Office. The Global Office appears to be an exemplar of neoliberal internationalization with a mission to support the economic sustainability of WMU, develop globally minded graduates, and promote global engagement (West Mountain University, n.d.). The prominence of this center on campus provides an opportunity to observe the potential tensions between a neoliberal embodiment of internationalization, a critical perspective of intercultural education, and the Indigenization efforts.

This study was conducted during a time when WMU experienced a substantial growth in the number of international students on campus. According to WMU’s website, international students accounted for 16% of the total student population for the 2017-2018 year. At the time of data collection, administrators and staff members stated that the international student population had nearly doubled to 30% of the total student population. Part of this growth was due to federal immigration policies. In 2018, as part of a policy to streamline the process of securing student visas for students from countries
that have historically had a more difficult process, Canada introduced Student Direct Stream (Government of Canada, 2019). The initiative cut down on visa processing time and opened additional post-secondary courses at any learning institutions to qualifying students. This substantial growth in a rather short period of time highlighted international student recruitment and the implications of a quickly growing population on campus and beyond.

**Methods: Document Review**

Documentary information and review was an important method for data collection for this study, particularly to better understand the environment and priorities of WMU from an institutional perspective. WMU’s website and handbooks provided insight into the organizational structure of WMU and the connections between offices to better understand working relationships and partnerships on campus. The strategic priorities document for WMU, created for 2014 to 2019, provided a framework to understand how the institution made sense of interculturalization, internationalization, and Indigenization as three separate but connected pillars of the university. Yin (2014) notes that documents may reflect biases, even as they are meant to be recordings of events; in the same vein, these strategic documents communicated certain assumptions around the potential outcomes that connected the three strategies. This framing guided the organization of the reporting of the findings, as found in Chapter Four.

Documentary information provided very straightforward information, including the names of offices, faculty and staff facilitating events, and other data that can be used to corroborate evidence from other sources (Yin, 2014). Documents including university policies, practices, and student-facing information (such as marketing materials) as well
as web-based campus information provided valuable insight on the positioning and understanding of internationalization, interculturalization, and Indigenization and their intended outcomes. Considering the intended audience and messages of the documents, as described by Merriam and Tisdell (2016), the materials provided insight into the work and outreach of the Global Office and the Office of Indigenous Education.

**Methods: Interviews**

Interviews were an important method for gathering data, allowing for deeper engagement for people to share how they understand their environment and their experiences (Weiss, 1994). As a researcher, it is imperative to intentionally build rapport with study participants not only through listening, but also through the construction of thoughtful questions. Semi-structured interviews were employed to allow for open-endedness and variation when necessary (Leech, 2002). In a constructivist case study methodology, creating space for interviewees to articulate their own conceptualizations of the studied phenomenon was particularly relevant. I created a standard set of scaffolded questions with additional questions designed for faculty and staff in Indigenous education, international education, and interculturalization (see Appendix A & B). The questions served as a platform on which to start conversations, build trust, and create opportunities for reflection. The questions were intentionally designed to allow for participants to interpret and describe what they thought was important to share in order to better understand how they conceptualize topics.

When I began interviewing, it became evident that it would be important to avoid providing theoretical terminology as these might signal the need to provide an institutional response rather than a personal one. Thus, I asked about internationalization
more generally, focusing on international education efforts and international topics. I found participants often assumed we shared an understanding around topics—indicating a similar university experience between the United States and Canada—and thus a concern that their responses were already known to me. To try to encourage participants to expound more on the specifics of their understanding of the three strategies, I added a short statement about the differences in how higher education and the topics of international, intercultural, and Indigenous education are used in the two countries. Through this statement, I hoped to assure them that anything they shared would most likely be new information for me and that I would find it interesting and important.

I was interested in interviewing both those who do the work of the strategic priorities of internationalization, interculturalization, and Indigenization work and those who influence the work, heeding Mestenhauser’s (1998) note that to understand internationalization, one must interface with all those engaged in the work. I extended this philosophy to the work of Indigenization and interculturalization. These strategies are layered and complex, so I aimed to better understand how individuals at all levels of the university understand the meaning and potential implications of an institution implementing strategies and their connecting discourses. Additionally, it was important to interview staff and faculty outside the work of the strategic priorities and their direct influence to capture perspectives from those who may be more skeptical or critical of the projects and the institution and have not sought to participate directly.

**Interview Participants**

My primary contact was the coordinator of intercultural communication who partners with diverse stakeholders across campus around global and Indigenous work.
Given the need to begin interviews immediately upon my arrival on-site, it was necessary to begin communication and introductions a month before my departure to build my schedule for the time I was on campus. The first step in establishing contact was to create a list of potential participants after reviewing organization structure and leadership in offices and centers across campus. I shared this list with my primary contact who made initial introductions via email prior to my first site visit in March 2018. Some of the requests were then delegated to others within offices. I scheduled follow-up interviews with some key participants for my second site visit in August/September 2018. I found that I was able to connect with additional contacts during my second visit through relationships I had begun to develop during my first visit.

As Patton (2002) cautions, I did not want to rely simply on the easy and convenient interviews that provided only the positive aspects of efforts, so I decided to pursue relationships while on the ground during my site visits. During my time attending orientations and talks, I also reached out to interview people who led sessions and followed up on introductions if possible. I was invited to attend a roundtable meeting with researchers on campus working in Indigenous education topics by one participant and was able to schedule other interviews from that meeting. These meetings also resulted in additional literature as participants shared favorite articles and books.

I conducted 26 interviews with 18 staff and faculty between March and October 2018 (Appendix C). The majority of interviews were conducted in person and four were conducted via Zoom to incorporate video conferencing if possible. I interviewed 12 administrators and staff that work directly with programming and services related to Indigenous education, international education, and interculturalization on campus (Figure
3). This might include student services designed specifically for international or Indigenous students, a research center, faculty development, and classroom instruction around topics of interculturalization and Indigenization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 3: Horizontal Level of University</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area of Work</td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interculturalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Education (International Students &amp; Student Mobility)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Education (Student Services, Research, &amp; Education Offices)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I set out to engage in interviews with instructors and faculty who may be incorporating Indigenous, local, and global topics into their classrooms. I interviewed six faculty, administrators, and staff members who worked throughout the institution outside of Indigenization, international education, and interculturalization efforts. Some of the instructors had attended WMU’s *Interculturalizing the Curriculum*, a professional development opportunity and consultation service for faculty to better engage in global, local, and Aboriginal topics in their curriculum. Others had extensive experience working with international and Indigenous students from a centralized administrative or student services office.

Vertically throughout the organization, I interviewed administrators, staff, and faculty from the macro-, or institutional, level as well as the meso-, or programming, level (Figure 4). I met with the administrative leads for WMU’s interculturalization plan, the Office of Indigenous Education, and the Global Office. I also met with administrators
who are charged with implementing strategic priorities within their offices, such as a central student services office, as well as staff in offices incorporating the policies into their work on campus, like the Center for Teaching and Learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4: Vertical Level of University</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructors/Faculty</td>
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<td>Administrators</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
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**Methods: Observation**

Wolcott (1994) describes the data collection method of observation as experiential in nature. The data collected from observation adds to the rich description needed for deep understanding of a topic. I scheduled my first site visits during times when energy and resources were focused on events exploring intersections between international, Indigenous and intercultural discourses. I attended an annual week-long event focused on international topics that included panel discussions, keynote speakers, special movie showings, music, and art exhibitions. Visiting Indigenous scholars from the United States and Hawaii led some of the sessions during the week-long event focusing on topics as wide ranging as Indigenous epistemology, storytelling, and language.

When I returned in October, I attended the orientation for new international students and the larger incoming student population. These orientations spanned multiple days and included training and informational sessions driven by PowerPoints as well as resource fairs to orient international students to living in Canada and in Brookville. An orientation session for all students was held on the final day of the week and began with
entry to Indigenous drumming, led by staff from the Office of Indigenous Education, before transitioning to a land acknowledgement. These events were primarily to welcome all students to campus and to give some statistics about the incoming class.

My role was primarily as a passive participant; the content of many of the sessions was relevant both to the subject of this dissertation and to the data collection. During these sessions, I used a small template (Appendix D) based on Merriam and Tisdall’s (2016) checklist of observational elements to record observations including: 1) the physical setting and environment; 2) the participants, including who is participating and how many; 3) the activities and interactions of people; 4) conversations including who is speaking and who is listening; 5) subtle factors such as unplanned activities or nonverbal communication; and 6) my own behavior and impressions during the event. All of these elements were important to analyze the nature of sessions throughout the week-long event, including the intended audiences and objectives, the facilitators or leaders of the session, and the style in which information was shared, as well as my own reactions to the event, speaker, or session as an audience participant and researcher. I paid special attention to topics informed by the phenomenon of Indigenization and internationalization, taking note when intercultural understanding was being referenced and how it was described. Observing these events gave me insight into how WMU is presenting programming or research to audiences, whether to students, other staff and faculty, or international educators from other institutions.

Field notes from a session I attended during the week-long event on campus highlight how Indigenization may be challenging to understand for non-Indigenous members of university communities, requiring a fundamental paradigmatic shift in
thinking. Box 1 contains a reflective essay I wrote after attending an Indigenization workshop offered on campus. As a white settler scholar who has only ever attended settler schools (from preschool to graduate school), and as a former staff member in higher education, I attended the event with expectations of objectives and lessons I would gain. I soon began to distinguish a shift of education from the formalized schooling I had experienced and come to expect in classrooms and the university setting.

**Box 1: Reflective Essay**

*During the week-long annual event with international, intercultural, and Indigenization sessions, there was a series of workshops, trainings, and speakers scheduled for a variety of stakeholders on campus. One morning, I was able to attend an Indigenization workshop led by an administrator of the Office of Indigenous Education at WMU as well as a visiting elder from an Indigenous community outside of Canada. All participants were asked to sit in a circle and introduce themselves; our introductions included our own ethnic background, the story of our name, and, for those who identified as settlers from outside Brookville, a land acknowledgement of the traditional peoples where we lived. As a visiting scholar from the University of Minnesota, I introduced myself as from the traditional lands of the Dakota people and gave a short history of my name and my family. We then began listening to the storytelling. As time passed and the stories continued, I waited for outcomes or lessons to be drawn, and my mind began to wander. I found myself squirming as I tried to sit still, questioning why we were still just listening and not discussing strategies as a large group. The stories ended and some connections were explained, but no round-group discussions were facilitated, or handouts distributed. The workshop ended.*
It was not until later, as I reflected on the experience and on interviewing others, that I suddenly realized that the workshop was a demonstration. It was an example of decolonizing a classroom and a lesson in the practice of listening, a practice different than the active listening skills I had learned. This was an experiential workshop. Stories were told to demonstrate how knowledge is connected to land and community and how it is shared; participants were meant to listen and make connections themselves. Indigenization was not captured by the models I had used to describe it in literature reviews. It was a lesson that challenged my own education in the best practices of teaching and learning and an indicator that I was not as practiced in listening as I had thought. It was also a powerful reminder of what I had read in literature about this topic: that Indigenization was not going to be captured in a single workshop or completed by meeting certain requirements or steps. It would take a fundamental shift of mindset for the many stakeholders educated in Western academic systems who expected clear objectives and skills for success.

I spent time exploring the campus, noting spaces and their uses, as well as the channels and images used to communicate programming and institutional priorities in order get a better sense of the culture of the university (Yin, 2014). I had coffee at the coffee chains on campus and spent time at the coffee shops located in the buildings where the Office of Indigenous Education and the Global Office are both located to get a sense of the environment and feel on campus. I ate lunch at the Culinary Arts building, where students prepare meals as part of their university experience. While limited in my time on-site, I wanted to be present on campus and was pleased to be able to run into people I was beginning to know, grab lunch, and walk around the campus.
Field observations can be useful in “provid[ing] knowledge of the context or to provide specific incidents, behaviors and so on that can be used as reference points for subsequent interviews” (Merriam, 2009, p. 119). These observations provided opportunities for greater depth of discussion, influencing questions for follow-up interviews. I was able to get a better sense of the breadth of programming offered at WMU, the many commuters that drive to campus and the availability of parking, the increased construction of building on campus, and the pockets of students hanging out on campus after the campus offices close.

**Research Plan**

Two data collection visits to WMU were completed: in the spring semester of 2018 and the start of the fall semester of 2018. The timing of the visits provided an opportunity to span an academic year, even if it was not sequential. My first visit coincided with a week-long university event in March dedicated to international and intercultural experiences, research, trainings, and events. A flyer from WMU described the event as “an opportunity to share culture, international experience, research and interests while celebrating WMU’s international community and international collaborations.” It was possible to attend and observe events targeting themes of internationalization, interculturalization, and Indigenization organized for students as well as staff and faculty. During the week-long event I attended workshops on Indigenization and intercultural communication as well as student-led programming, drumming, and storytelling, and speaking events with visiting scholars. During each activity, when appropriate, I recorded impressions of activities, the participants, and how topics of international and intercultural education were discussed. As noted by Yin
(2014), it is important to collect data from people and institutions during everyday situations. Therefore, in addition to the specialized events, I also spent time in the community spaces on campus, drinking coffee at on-campus cafes and paying attention to fliers, announcements, and events. I was on campus for two weeks during the April 2018 visit.

From April to June 2018, I transcribed twelve interviews using an online service that utilizes an algorithm method; I would then listen to each interview to edit and correct errors before saving the final transcription. Transcriptions were sent to participants with a request for any necessary edits and changes if desired by participants; five participants confirmed small edits. These transcriptions were then uploaded to a qualitative data manager to begin coding. Two participants preferred to not record their interviews; notes and impressions from these interviews were uploaded to the data manager. There were two interviews that were held more informally in public places where recording was not possible. Following those interviews, I recorded notes and themes. A final interview’s recording was lost due to a computer malfunction before it could be transcribed by the online transcription service; notes of this interview were uploaded to the data manager as well.

I returned for a second trip in August 2018 for the beginning of the school year. While not aligning chronologically with a single academic year, this timing did provide an opportunity to observe orientations, trainings, and welcoming for both domestic and international students on campus. I was able to reconnect with participants I had met in the spring and schedule follow-up interviews with additional questions following my review of the first interview transcriptions.
While I focused efforts to conduct interviews during my visits, I was not limited to being on campus to continue communication with contacts. I conducted four interviews through Skype and other videoconferencing tools. Between August and November, I transcribed the remainder of interviews for analysis.

**Analysis**

The analysis process of data began inductively as I worked to find patterns and create thematic categories. My strategy was informed by Tesch’s (as cited by Creswell, 2013) steps in forming code: review data, create a list of topics, compare the list and data to organize, create categories, decide on abbreviations, organize materials by category, and then review to recode if necessary. My review began while reading the transcripts and listening to the recorded interview to check for accuracy, make edits, and organize the document. I then re-read the transcriptions for emerging ideas, focusing on transcripts individually for themes that then connected interview topics together.

Using a qualitative data manager, I first began to organize the data by the method in which it was collected. Saldana’s (2016) description of coding as the linking of ideas informed the process, as I looked to bring together similarities in participant ideas around Indigenization, international education, and interculturalization. I then coded for similarities in the ways in which participants spoke about the topics, including themes of shared conceptualizations and points of departure. Emerson et al. (2011), as cited in Saldana, provides a list of questions for the researcher while reviewing data including reflecting on what people are doing, what they are trying to accomplish, how participants talk about what is going on, and finally, why I chose the data and codes that I did.

In qualitative analysis, the researcher is an instrument in the research process
(Maxwell, 2014), ultimately deciding which data are included or excluded in the study. Therefore, I pursued qualitative credibility in findings (Creswell, 2013) through triangulation of descriptive and interpretive data. Stake (2005) describes triangulation as a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation (p. 454). To achieve greater credibility and to better triangulate sources and confirm the categories and themes found within the data, I employed three methods for data collection: interviews, observation, and document review (Creswell, 2013). Additionally, having a range of participants both horizontally and vertically provided data from multiple levels of the institution to avoid a singular perspective and bias. An inherent bias within this study is that all participants were interested in participating in the study itself, and nearly all had an experience with Indigenization, interculturalization, or internationalization, and the success of the strategies were related to their positions and work.

It was important to continuously engage in reflection throughout analysis and writing to stay focused on the questions of the research and take into account the delimitations as outlined. Additionally, I discussed challenges with two contacts with whom I had developed deeper relationships, one being my initial contact for the study. When needed, I checked with my primary contact about organizational and timeline-related questions for clarity and accuracy. I discussed concerns about engaging with Indigenization as a topic with my contact who worked primarily with Indigenous research projects. Prior to submitting to committee, I shared my findings chapter with my primary contact for review.
Delimitation

In this study, I set out to study one university as an exemplar to better understand the phenomenon of the intersection of internationalization and Indigenization and the conceptualization of that intersection by administrators and staff. It became apparent that intercultural education was going to be an important theme to include and that widening the participants beyond those administrators tasked with internationalization would provide a more nuanced and rich perspective given the relatively new engagement with Indigenization. Due to the decentralized nature of higher education in Canada and the provincial relationship with higher education institutions and funding models, each province and each institution engages in internationalization differently. Additionally, as Indigenization is focused on engaging with Indigenous knowledge in partnership with Indigenous communities and students, efforts will be localized due to the diversity of Indigenous communities throughout Canada. With this in mind, I do not set out to make generalizable conclusions about Indigenous, intercultural, and international education efforts that can be taken up by every university and college. I do, however, believe that better understanding the tensions between the synergies of this case may inform questions and efforts for universities interested in engaging in critically examining their internationalization efforts, particularly as decolonization rises in popularity in the practitioner and academic realms.

Further, it is not the intention of this study to create an Indigenous model of change or extract community knowledge that I position as my own. My research model is not embedded within a First Nations community or reserve, but rather in a settler colony university. The aim is to more deeply analyze the efforts of those tasked with working
with the international and intercultural efforts of a university as they seek to engage with Indigenization, both conceptually and its enactment on campus. As a researcher and a practitioner in international education and intercultural communication in higher education, my intention is to create space in the dominant frameworks of international education and identify places of tension for further analysis and possible change in the field.

Confidentiality

In the process of site selection and introductions to interviews, I discussed confidentiality of data and the best practices for this project to align with the IRB standards. I made efforts to move beyond the “do no harm” ethical stance of academic research as outlined in the IRB, recognizing potential issues of power at play when studying the phenomenon of Indigenization in the academy. In Wilson's (2008) description of an Indigenous research paradigm, he notes that in an Indigenous methodology and axiology, a researcher is a part of the research design, process, and analysis; because of this, there is an accountability on the researcher’s behalf to all who are part of the research process. A commitment to respect, reciprocity, and responsibility are important. At the start of any interview, I spent time introducing myself as a researcher and my positionality, the goals of my research, and delimitations of the study, namely, that the study was not evaluative in nature. As explained by Jones, Torres, and Arminio (2014), I took care with language to avoid further marginalization and be clear about my own interest in the research and questions I hope to understand. This was very important when reaching out to staff and faculty to discuss the possibility of meeting and the potential for interviews.
One challenge was how best to maintain confidentiality, something that was important for the study and to many participants sharing their personal perspectives and impressions of strategies and concepts that are complex and potentially controversial. I assigned names to participants to maintain confidentiality, as well as provided a pseudonym for the university and the city where it is located. I felt it was important to acknowledge the Indigenous peoples of the area; at the same time, this would reveal the location of the institution and potentially the individual participants. After discussing with my primary contact and another contact in the Indigenous Research Center, I met with an administrator in Indigenous Education to discuss best practices and the best path forward. Ultimately, she suggested that it would be best to make this acknowledgement without naming the specific peoples on whose unceded land WMU is located.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the epistemological grounding of my research design in constructivist and critical theory, influenced by the settler-colonial environment in which Canadian higher education is situated. The nature of my research question, to understand conceptualizations of the intersections of Indigenization, interculturalization, and internationalization, led me to an institutional case study methodology. This methodology allowed me to better understand the phenomenon at a single university in Canada, engaging with faculty and staff and participating in university programming and events to experience how strategic priorities show up in different ways on campus. The nature of the design was responsive to the challenges and realities as higher education institutions struggle to engage with Indigenous knowledge at the same time as the mandate to do so continues to grow. While not setting out to make generalizable claims
for every university, I hope to generate insights and contribute to the growing literature engaging critical internationalization.
Chapter Four: Findings

The purpose of this study was to understand the intersections and dimensions of the institutional strategies related to Indigenization and internationalization in a higher education institution. The study specifically aimed to understand how those intersections influence the work and experiences of staff and faculty enmeshed in the university’s international education and intercultural efforts. As noted in the methodology chapter of this dissertation, the interview participants of this study span multiple vertical levels of the university, from administrative and leadership positions to student services staff to instructors and faculty. The participants also span horizontally across the university, from academic and administrative departments to central student services available for all WMU students, as well as student services offices dedicated to serving international and Aboriginal students.

In this chapter, I will first describe WMU’s strategic priority of increasing intercultural understanding to ground the institutional positioning of internationalization and Indigenization and their connections to interculturalization, an institutional theme that emerged from this study. I will then examine the efforts to internationalize the campus and their connection with developing intercultural understanding. Next, I will provide an overview of how interculturalization has developed as a stand-alone effort at WMU. I will then move to examine the more recent efforts of Indigenization and its intersections with efforts in developing intercultural understanding. I will conclude by examining the connections between internationalization and Indigenization as themes of higher education reform.
WMU’s Institutional Strategy: Intercultural Understanding

WMU’s Strategic Priorities are documented in online sources and define the strategic directions of the university for a period of five years. In this section I will highlight these priorities and how participants experienced them during their interviews. Currently there are five strategic priorities for WMU: student success, intercultural understanding, research capacity, entrepreneurial capacity, and sustainability. I will not examine the strategies of increasing student success, research capacity, entrepreneurial capacity, and sustainability because they were outside the scope of the initiatives most relevant to this study. The strategic priority of increasing intercultural understanding states that, “WMU will prioritize programs and practices that support diversity, inclusion and intercultural understanding between our Aboriginal, local, regional and global communities” and grounds this prioritization in four components: Indigenization, internationalization, the Canadian environment, and the “creation of a culture of inclusion.” In the strategy document, internationalization and Indigenization describe different methods and practices of “teaching, learning, knowledge, research and creative practice”: internationalization addresses a “globally-engaged” perspective and Indigenization addresses “traditional and contemporary Aboriginal” perspectives. Internationalization and Indigenization’s placement within the “increasing intercultural understanding” strategy establishes a connection between these movements and their perceived potential influence on the institution. The strategic priority document does not operationalize the terms “diversity” or “inclusion.”

The strategies outlined by the university are connected with specific audiences but share the expansive methods in which they will be implemented (teaching, learning,
knowledge, research, and creative practice) and share an objective of promoting diversity and intercultural understanding on campus. The term “intercultural understanding” is defined in organizational terms, although in other documentation WMU’s leadership utilized Bennett’s (2009) definition of intercultural learning: “Acquiring increased awareness of subjective cultural contexts (worldviews) including one’s own, and developing a greater ability to interact sensitively and competently across cultural contexts.” In many ways, however, “intercultural understanding” is the umbrella term at WMU through which organizational strategies of internationalization and Indigenization can be explained to stakeholders. Following this structural model, I will present findings in the order in which they appear in WMU’s strategy document.

**International Efforts at WMU**

The first set of findings relate to how faculty and staff understand and experience international education on campus and the motivations that ground their work. To better understand the scope of the international work of the university, a synopsis of activities is provided that addresses “internationalization at home” activities as well as institutional efforts abroad. The WMU website provides an expansive picture of the international efforts. WMU offers a student mobility program for on-campus students, commonly described as study abroad programming. Study abroad offerings include semester exchanges and some short-term programming designed and led by WMU faculty. In addition to student mobility is the mobility of faculty, including opportunities to teach or conduct research abroad. There is also a very popular annual series of internationally themed speakers, food, cultural activities, and performance arts that is open to all students, staff, and faculty, as well as the community of Brookville at large, that
comprises part of the “internationalization at home” portfolio.

Most participants in this study identified the Global Office (pseudonym) as the unit responsible for managing international programs and the driver of internationalization efforts. As Alice explained, “International is really run, in my experience, with the Global Office. So that’s where the international students register, that's how they're put in courses, and that's where all the international pieces are brought forward.” The Global Office’s support of international students was a primary descriptor of the international programming at WMU. Organizationally, international student recruitment and admissions, student mobility programs, and offshore and non-credit programming are all housed within the Global Office. The Global Office has its own student services staff, often with linkages to, or originally from, countries reflecting the international student population. The office also employs a team of marketing representatives, many of whom are located around the world to provide support to local agents as well as training and marketing support on behalf of WMU. The Global Office has field offices around the world, primarily throughout Asia, to support recruiting efforts for WMU.

One of WMU’s key offshore activities is the development of international relationships and partnerships to create student courses and non-credit programming opportunities. Offshore programming might occur through the negotiation of agreements with a partner abroad to provide WMU programming on site. Other international institutional agreements might provide opportunities for students to transfer credits earned at an institution to WMU for further study programs. Students might also be conditionally accepted to WMU by attending and completing preparatory programming
at a partner institution. WMU has more than 40 partner institutions.

WMU also hosts a variety of short-term programs for international visitors on its campus. WMU offers trainings that incorporate learning content as well as activities so that participants can “gain an appreciation of Canadian culture” during the program, an aspect that can be enhanced by the offering of homestays in Brookville. The learning content can be geared toward professional development, skill development, and language skills. Non-degree programming on campus can range widely; for example, a group of high school students might stay for a month in Brookville with programmed activities and language learning opportunities. Trainings can be customizable or open enrollment and are geared toward diverse participants.

The Global Office’s webpage described the office as the “international education, training and development division” of the WMU. The Global Office’s mission statement names its commitment to supporting the economic sustainability of WMU, thus signaling the importance of international student recruitment for the university’s health. The primary audience for the website appears to be future international students and current international students given the links and pages. International agents and partners are also featured prominently with well-developed menus for finding programs and contact information for WMU. The Global Office’s mission also names its provision of WMU students, faculty, and staff with opportunities for global engagement, a theme that is less developed on the website. Internationalization does have a small presence as a header for a few links, including interculturalization and research, which take the user out of the Global Office website. There is some information for student mobility programming, but there is little content for learning opportunities. The organizational structure and
responsibilities of the Global Office provide some context for participant responses for rationale and motivations of international education on campus.

**Faculty and Staff Understandings of the Internationalization Agenda:**

**Entrepreneurial Activity**

When asked about the internationalization efforts of the university, nearly all participants responded by discussing international student recruitment as the primary activity of internationalization on campus. This emphasis on the recruitment was found across all participant positions and areas of the university. One reason why there may such a strong focus on recruitment at WMU is that the federal government of Canada has promoted the growth of international students in Canada as a potential revenue-generating activity for both institutions and their host community. Student mobility, however, is quite low in Canada in comparison with the United States; around two and a half percent of undergraduate students study abroad for credit (Universities Canada, 2014) compared to over 10% in the United States (IIE). Increasing student mobility numbers has taken up as a place for growth within universities to support their efforts in developing “globally aware graduates.” All faculty interviewed with the exception of one has considerable experience teaching to international students, in both English language classes and mainstream classes for all students.

Faculty and staff alike acknowledged the Global Office’s emphasis on business creation and marketing as fundamental to its scope and purpose, motivating its focus on international student recruitment. Julie, an ESL faculty member, noted the Global Office’s history:

> Originally the Global Office was our marketing agent, so to speak. But then now,
they're not, they're not only marketers, they're really the bridge. They provide this support for international students when they get to the campus as well as support to the agents in the other countries to bring students here. So, they're like this hub to attract and to support international students here.

International agents work with prospective students to guide them through application processes, provide information about the university, and assist them in preparing to study as an international student. Universities will often contract authorized agents around the world to support recruitment efforts. Amanda explained this further: “They have a marketing team or a recruitment team and whole agent network and they train their agents around the world . . . so they’d bring in all the agents on expense to come here on campus, a very strong marketing machine.”

The connection between the Global Office and a machine are demonstrative of the economic motivations de Wit (2004) describes when outlining four primary motivations for internationalization: political, economic, cultural, and academic. These motivations were taken up in the field by other early scholarship (Knight & De Wit, 1997) to explain how internationalization is influenced by other stakeholders in education including the state, business entities, professors, and students. Lumby and Foskett (2016) narrowed the four primary rationales to two: one that is grounded in the philosophical purpose of internationalization and the other grounded in the economic and market returns of internationalization. Data from this study indicate that the economic and market dimensions of internationalization are a primary driver of its development at WMU.

The centrality and market-based effectiveness of the Global Office was acknowledged by participants from across the university. WMU’s large and growing
international student population, the university’s increasing profile as a desirable location (evidenced by the growth of international student numbers), and its physical resources (such as campus buildings) were all reflective of the role the Global Office played on campus. Bill, an administrator from Indigenous Student Services, described the Global Office and its scope:

They have a pretty healthy outreach in different countries and have put “WMU” on the map, I guess, for internationalizing. And then through the funds, they've hired positions and started realizing there was a big culture shock for a lot of students coming.

For Bill, the Global Office and internationalization project were directly tied to the number of international students on campus. Bill also acknowledged some of the challenges of recruitment, which will be addressed later in this chapter. The success of the office has been understood by its ability to create a larger pipeline of international students, which has led to more funds to support campus projects as well as the staff growth in the office.

According to interview participants, the role of the office is very clear: the Global Office is described exclusively as an administrative unit; it does not have academic responsibilities. Amanda explained, “Our international programs is not an academic entity. They’re an administrative unit . . . they’re entirely a business unit and they’re evaluated on . . . their revenues.” Sally, an administrator in the Global Office, described its responsibilities:

To be perfectly honest, it's the number of students, you know; international students are an important component of the makeup of this campus, it's quite
large. So that is a priority, recruitment and retention. So, I see my role and my
team's role as the retention piece of that.

The Global Office’s mission to support institutional economic sustainability is directly
connected to recruitment and retention of international students. International students
heavily augment the student population.

The office, and its perceived indicators of success, highlighted that
internationalization in North American universities is indeed often driven by economic
rationales. When describing the Global Office, preliminary interviews with participants
indicated the office’s main function was economic, not necessarily educational. The
creation of curriculum or other activities that promoted intercultural understanding or
enhanced learning objectives on campus (a strategic goal of the university) were not
within the purview of the office’s responsibilities.

Jillian, an administrator in the central student services, explained:

It’s not the mandate, like the Global Office has no mandate to do any work with
faculty or any academic programming . . . other than facilitating mobility and
partnerships. So, they’re not involved in curriculum or pedagogy or any of those
types of things.

The mission statement of the Global Office indicates that it has an organizational role in
creating opportunities for “global engagement” and names individual values and
capacities such as “global mindedness” and “intercultural capacity” as aspirational goals
of the office’s work. However, there are no academic or curricular objectives pursued by
the office in its day-to-day work. This external framing of the institutional commitment to
international student recruitment as foundational to the Global Office is matched
internally by the responses of staff and faculty.

Internationalization at WMU

The paragraphs above indicated that WMU’s institutional focus for internationalization was on the recruitment of international students. This focus, which is narrower than Knight’s conceptualization of “Comprehensive Internationalization,” was frequently rationalized by stakeholders for pragmatic reasons. The most important rationale for WMU’s international student recruitment focus was that it was a response to changes in Canadian higher education funding models, which made universities responsible for larger portions of their operating costs than in the past.

Nearly all participants identified a strong linkage between institutional funding and the recruitment of international students. Some participants contextualized the financial importance of the recruitment of international students, explaining its support of the financial model of WMU and placing this reality within the larger Canadian environment of higher education funding. According to WMU’s website, tuition paid by international students was over triple the tuition paid by domestic students. While some of this difference in fee may be attributed to public subsidies for higher education for domestic students (Anderson, 2015), international students are still charged at a much higher rate to offset the cost of higher education.

Jennifer, a faculty member in English as a Second Language (ESL), a department that both offers English classes to international students and offers Teaching as a Second Language certification, described WMU’s early years as a small college weathering institutional funding changes brought on by a lack of provincial funding for universities and colleges. She explained, “So they [university and colleges] start to look their own
way. Many [institutions] have donors, but we were never in that position because we were a small college.” Amanda describes the early decision to pursue international student recruitment as strategic for the institution:

We (WMU) were not funded at the same level as other institutions in [the province] and the senior leadership at the time thought it [recruitment of international students] would be good for the university and the community. International students at WMU have been an important component of the university’s fiscal plan for funding for the majority of the history of the institution.

WMU’s history as a small, locally serving college that has more recently undergone a change to a university signals an attempt to emulate other institutions that have been working in more lucrative spaces of higher education, such as research and institutional partnerships, and which may benefit from a stronger global reputation.

For many staff and faculty who worked outside the Global Office, the emphasis on the recruitment of international students represented a tension between the potential for intercultural learning and the uncomfortable economic realities of their tuition revenue. Alice described the “cynical” side of recruitment as that which was attached to the funding the international students bring to the Canadian universities. She explained:

They're like, well they just need the money because international students pay higher tuition fees than domestic students and they . . . fall outside of the grants from the province. And so, that's one thing, like to say that . . . there's a funding model that supports bringing international students to campus, but I don't think that would ever be sufficient. I don't think you generate the buy-in from the
community.

John captured the entangled nature of international student recruitment in acknowledging the financial returns: “I don't think that's the only reason for it. Of course. I think it is offering a space for international students to be educated in WMU. I think that’s what's at the heart of it.” John’s optimistic take on the educational value of student mobility was offset by the realities of perceptions in smaller university towns in Canada. Alice, for example, acknowledged that education-focused, short-term immigration has not always been acknowledged or accepted by Canadian university communities and towns, and she referenced a closely intertwined relationship between WMU and Brookville.

A second major reason that international students are attractive to WMU is that Canadian demographics are changing. The overall growth rate of the Canadian population is slowing, leaving fewer college-age students available for recruitment at the local level. The increase of international students buoyed the overall student population at WMU. John, a student services staff member, explained:

WMU as it sits right now . . . domestic students have kind of flat-lined for enrollments, so it's neither going up or down, staying pretty consistent. I believe that's right across [the province] as well, whereas international enrollments have gone up, and they continue to go up.

The potential student population must then shift from the traditional students to find pockets of students to sustain the university’s enrollment needs and to find opportunities for tuition growth. The growth of international students has doubled the growth of domestic university students from 2000 to 2011 in Canada; the Canadian Bureau of International Education’s statistics show an increase of 154% between 2010 and 2018.
(CBIE). These demographics align with steady decreases in funding support from the federal government (Anderson, 2015).

WMU’s core internationalization strategy of recruiting high numbers of international students had an impact on campus. The recent sudden growth in the international student population had been felt across campus. Faculty and staff described classrooms where 80 to 90% of the students were international students, creating the need to tailor teaching and classroom management. Megan, from the Global Office, describes the complexity of this influx of students with differing educational experiences and expectations in the classroom. Julie, an ESL faculty member, spoke of the challenges of the sudden demographic change and varying levels of preparation of students for Canadian-style education as well as the struggle for instructors to adapt instruction. “I think that's the challenge with internationalizing . . . how do you uphold the academic, linguistic standards while at the same time attracting and supporting international markets?” Lily, a faculty member with many international students in classes, described the challenges faced by international students who were admitted over the past few years:

So, I think what's happened with the Global Office is that they focused on certain nations. And so all of a sudden that, that happens, right? Like we had 700 students from India arrive on our campus last January, and many of them didn't have a place to stay. They didn't know the system, they didn't have a clue, right?

Faculty and staff signaled the concern that sudden growth can influence the delivery of education and the preparation of students to be successful in the academic environment of Canada. In addition to this tension of international students as potentially challenging the educational environment of Canadian universities, there are also practical questions when
a large number of students arrive to a campus: where will they be housed, how will they be engaged on campus, et cetera?

In the case of WMU, India has recently surpassed China as the top sending nation to WMU. However, these top two sending countries account for over 60% of the international student body. The next largest sending country, Nigeria, accounts for just three percent of the international students on campus. These demographic swings by nationality influence the services and staff and also call in to question the diversity of the international campus.

The paragraphs above demonstrate that WMU staff members are familiar with the budgetary challenges their institution faces and have identified the recruitment of international students (and their higher fees) as a way of supporting institutional viability. At WMU, internationalization was defined centrally as the recruitment of international students. Critical scholars Stein and Andreotti (2016) identified this as a neoliberal phenomenon in contemporary higher education. They noted that “today, international students are largely framed in higher education policy and practice as ‘cash’ (i.e., economic assets)” (p. 220). Stein and Andreotti problematize this framing, yet data from WMU suggests a range of responses, from strategic to complicit acceptance of “economic realities.”

**Implications of Narrowed Internationalization**

Participants in this study did not overtly question the institutional strategy that focused on international student recruitment, but several faculty and staff expressed concern about the implications of such recruitment on the educational quality of the institution and the personal experiences of international students. Lee (2010), for example...
found that non-white international students on a U.S. campus often experienced unequal treatment or harassment by peers and instructors. Comments by Bill and Megan in the paragraphs above indicate that faculty and staff concerns aligned more with the experiential elements of international student engagement (see Lee, 2010) than the macro-level framing of students (see Andreotti and Stein)—as might be expected by student-facing staff. Nonetheless, theoretical critiques by scholars aligned with everyday concerns by staff on WMU’s campus.

As universities faced the realities of rapidly changing demographics, Jennifer described attending trainings and sessions from Canadian universities encountering the same challenges and the need for staff and faculty to develop understanding and increase skill-building to meet these changes. At WMU, individual champions introduced and advocated for “intercultural learning” as a strategy for preparing instructors and students for the influx of international students in order to create a more stable learning environment. Intercultural learning theory assumes that if individuals are aware of, and sensitive to, differences in communication, daily habits, and ways of knowing, that they will be better able to understand and appreciate others. Such acceptance requires personal reflection on one’s own cultural communication, daily habits, and ways of knowing as a way of building respect and appreciation for others. In the paragraphs below, I describe how intercultural learning and internationalization were institutionally connected at WMU.

**Internationalization and Connections to Intercultural Learning**

Faculty members who teach international students, as well as central administrators and Indigenous education administrators, discussed the specific
connection between the international student population and a growing commitment to intercultural understanding as a tool for enhancing the educational experience at WMU for all students. Julie, an administrator and faculty member in the ESL department, invoked a philosophical motivation for the recruitment of international students: “I think part of it is because, I'd like to believe that part of it's because, it's truly our vision and mission here to create a sense of intercultural conversation.” The concept of intercultural understanding was discussed as part of the fabric of the campus that emerged in training and skill building for staff and faculty, facilitated by the early leaders of interculturalization, as well as for learning outcomes and skill building for students.

Natasha (a former international student herself) described these values when she hypothesized why international students came to WMU and Canada in general:

I would think they're going that route because Canada is an open place, it welcomes everyone and it would only make sense for the campus itself to somehow adopt some interculturalization and just accepting . . . and be more educated about different cultural norms and values because the more you know, the better you are able to handle those situations, but if we don't know, we'll have stigmas and stereotypes that we use to try and justify and resolve issues.

Natasha’s quote highlights the broader aspirations of interculturalists at WMU. Ideals of reducing stigma, eliminating stereotypes, and building interpersonal understanding were drivers of intercultural institutional strategy at WMU. The discourse of increasing intercultural understanding was woven throughout the interviews as a way for WMU as a community to improve its service to international students, who would inevitably continue to be recruited in the contemporary fiscal environment. This is succinctly
summed up by Jillian: “The internationalization at home, if you will, is very much focused on international student recruitment and on-campus international students, partly because those numbers are so high and they're really not avoidable, that's the reality.”

On a practical level, WMU focused its institutional efforts on two strategies: 1) increasing enrollment of fee-paying international students (even if this meant heavy enrollments from a few nations rather than global outreach); and 2) using intercultural communication and understanding as tools for potentially enhancing the on-campus experiences of both international and other students. The latter aim was informed by “Internationalization at Home” theory as referenced by Jillian (Beelen & Jones, 2015), which posits that international visitors (such as students) can promote international and intercultural learning of others through their presence on campus. Faculty and staff in the paragraphs below describe the complexity of this process.

**International Students: The On-Campus Experience**

Faculty and staff discussed the importance of intercultural understanding and developing intercultural skills in the context of growing international student numbers in the classroom and an increasing concern around classroom dynamics. As Megan explained, simply having international students on campus does not lead to a successful international campus:

There’s an expectation that just by having the diversity and the numbers of students on campus is internationalizing us. However, it's creating challenges because we're not empowering and internationalizing our faculty, and we're not internationalizing our staff. Therefore, there is opportunity for conflict, misunderstandings.
Megan’s concern about not “internationalizing” staff relays the broader institutional strategies and tensions at WMU. There is a strong desire from an administrative standpoint to recruit and enroll international students. From an operational standpoint, faculty and staff have expressed concerns about the understanding of domestic “hosts” of new visitors. From an academic and student-learning standpoint, there was also a degree of hope that the international students’ presence would build greater intercultural understanding among all members of the WMU community. Megan’s concern suggests skepticism that these elements can occur successfully without formal and institutional training. Natasha exemplified these tensions through stories of students coming to the Global Office and sharing their feelings of being misunderstood and marginalized. There were encounters with instructors, primarily, in which students felt they were grouped together and framed as the “other” in a classroom, or when instructors insinuated that someone other than the student completed an assignment.

Thus, as Natasha noted, cultural misunderstandings still occurred on campus in spite of the “global village” aspirational term that she used to describe the campus. Staff working directly with students used the terminology of “intercultural understanding” for instructors to navigate difference and improve interpersonal relationships, which were particularly important for the international students to feel welcome.

Lindsey, an administrator in central student services, for example, explained this connection most directly: “We have intercultural because we have international students and we have students going away on study abroad, and so it responds to the needs . . . relative to that activity, those activities.” Intercultural understanding was seen as an important approach to promoting the acceptance of international students on campus, but
the framework was not always drawn upon as a conflict-resolution strategy for other populations (as will be discussed later in this chapter).

Once the issues of intercultural tensions began to arise on campus, an administrative leader in the Global Office and a small number of proponents across campus began to work toward offering trainings widely. Amanda, an academic department faculty member who in an earlier administrative role worked more directly with the global office, clarified:

International [the Global Office] funded a lot of intercultural training, they're the original investors of it. And really a lot of it came about because of the pushback from academic units. Academic units were feeling pressure or actually being impacted by the changing student population and concerned about their ability to deliver a good learning experience for everybody, in order to counteract that or to help support it however you want to look at it, funds were invested in intercultural training here at WMU.

The development of intercultural understanding as a skillset was a pragmatic approach to supporting international students as faculty and instructors encountered increasingly diverse classrooms. John further explained, “Many instructors may not have learned to teach in an international classroom setting; this is a professional development opportunity, separate from the discipline that they are teaching.” Interculturalization was a term that began to be used at large on campus to describe intercultural teaching strategies and curricular workshops as well as opportunities to develop intercultural understanding between Canadian faculty members and international students. In spite of this early support, there are currently no staff members tasked with leading
interculturalization at the Global Office.

Jillian, a core member of the interculturalization at WMU, strongly advocated for focused efforts on developing intercultural understanding, citing the strategic priority of recruitment and retention of international students. She explained that WMU needed to “build our capacity to work with all these students who we’re literally . . . going around the world and selling a future to.” The following paragraphs describe how WMU countered prevailing characterizations of such work as “internationalization” and instead embraced the term “interculturalization.”

The Origins of Interculturalization at WMU

The Global Office’s operational history shifted, over a number of years, from solely recruiting international students to both recruitment of students and campus expertise on “interculturalization.” Faculty and staff, however, did not always accept that administrators were more concerned about interculturalism as a learning opportunity than the economic return of internationalization. For example, Elizabeth, a faculty member in education, suggests that funding drives recruitment more than WMU’s value-driven statements regarding diversity: “I think the marketing around having international students here implies that it's a bit more thought out than it is, but I honestly don't see the purpose beyond more money for this institution.” Lily also wondered about claims related to diversity by examining the focus of recruitment efforts:

I would ask what are we doing to build intercultural understanding? What are we doing to facilitate, you know, that cross-cultural piece when you have such diversity on the campuses? . . . How does the right hand and the left hand coordinate to make their experience, the students’ experience, a good experience?
Both Lily and Elizabeth mused about what was being done to intentionally develop a
diverse and global campus community as claimed by the institutional strategies.
Therefore, the intercultural agenda at WMU always faced skepticism on the part of
faculty and staff. At the same time, the agenda grew and gradually began to influence
institutional processes beyond internationalization. The emergence of interculturalization
will be chronicled in the next section.

From Internationalization to Interculturalization

As time passed, WMU began to conflate earlier terminology that it had previously
used in relation to internationalization and intercultural learning (a response to
internationalization). Central actors at WMU later began to use the term
“interculturalization,” which is used for the focused efforts toward building intercultural
understanding and sensitivity at WMU across all university audiences. The term is also
commonly used throughout other institutions of higher education in Canada. The shift in
terminology appeared to be a discursive shift to minimize discomfort about revenue-
focused internationalization. Jennifer explained this decoupling and redirection:

I think to me the internationalization seemed more like a business approach . . . So
my understanding is that it's got to be, it's beyond internationalization. It's not
about nations, it's about people, and people come from whatever cultural
background, regardless of whether they're in their community or there's a
specifically strong religious group or whatever it happens to be . . . So for me, I
don't even really use the word international.

Internationalization is too focused on the nation–state and operationalization of a
business strategy, removing it from the learning and skill-building that is possible
between individuals.

Although the reason for the change from internationalization to interculturalization was not addressed specifically in the interviews, the use of the term allowed participants to expand its usage beyond its original construction of *response to internationalization* (my term). On the Global Office website, a page for faculty resources for internationalization specifically references WMU’s Academic Plan to incorporate international and intercultural experiences for all WMU students. Here, interculturalization is invoked alongside internationalization with both being connected to curricular and pedagogical activities:

Faculty have the authority to direct student learning and model the knowledge, behaviors and values of a global perspective.

Interculturalization/internationalization of curricula involves infusing Western and non-Western perspectives into courses and offering students learning opportunities that will prepare them as professionals and citizens in an increasingly interconnected world. This may involve adaptations in both pedagogy and curriculum. WMU recognizes this challenge and is committed to supporting and building expertise across the disciplines.

The relationship between interculturalization and internationalization appeared interchangeable at times, conflated at others, but it appeared to be most often used in discursive transition (i.e., “internationalization” was being slowly replaced by “interculturalization”). The reasons for this transition are highlighted in the paragraphs below.

First, the Global Office, which was responsible for internationalization and an
early proponent of intercultural learning, was replaced as the core WMU office that supports interculturalization; there is a link to an intercultural learning page that sits outside the Global Office website. Listed is an “intercultural team” that conducts intercultural training and other interculturalization efforts rather than the Global Office. The specialist “team” exemplifies an understanding that interculturalism stretches beyond internationalization and that interculturalization requires a specific team of experts to teach students, staff, and faculty about this concept, although the size of the team is small given the scope of its work.

For many years, the intercultural “team” consisted of one full-time employee, Jillian, who was tasked with the interculturalization work for faculty, staff, and students. Participants often invoked Jillian as a champion of intercultural work, having started as a contractor before convincing the university of the need for a full-time employee. Jillian holds a doctorate degree, a credential that communicates credibility in an often hierarchal environment. Recently, a second person was added to the team, also with a doctorate degree and a background in culture, gender, and race. At the time of this study, two additional staff members had part-time appointments on the intercultural team, bringing the team membership to four.

According to instructor participants and a primary interculturalization administrator, the ESL department was one of the first units involved in the early efforts to develop interculturally informed teaching practices. Some ESL instructors described the intent of the trainings was to position international students not as a group with inherent deficits in the classroom but as resources of knowledge and expertise. As a unit, Julie, the chair of ESL, explained the early work. The ESL department set out to “bridge
the gap between where their [international students’] English is when they arrive to them entering successfully into university classes.” Julie noted that ESL faculty are often the first to see international students, but soon other instructors will have intercultural encounters as well. Jennifer, who is now retired from the ESL department, spoke about the role of interculturalization and faculty development across the university:

But what about the faculty? Right? Who predominantly don't have any teaching background, they are subject area experts, right? So, and whether or not they have any intercultural knowledge, thoughts, whatever, I don't know, but at least if I can offer something, maybe they'll be interested in it.

Whether this philosophy of international students and the value of their experiences was brought to bear in the classrooms is not clear.

The development of interculturalization, presumably practiced and facilitated by instructors, also appeared to be instrumental in advancing WMU’s public positioning as a global university. In the introduction of a published resource on global mindedness created for academic departments, WMU leadership describes how faculty members and instructors are “continually seeking ways in which to become effective at teaching a culturally diverse student body” (2007, p. 2) and references the need for tangible teaching and facilitation practices in the classroom. International students in the classroom are named as a component of the culturally diverse campus, with the university’s teaching and learning center ready to support instructors. In this vein, “interculturalization” is more than a response to internationalization. The term still incorporates the experiences of international students, but it also evolved to describe broad concepts of diversity at WMU, rather than just the integrative experiences of international students.
The intercultural learning team offers multiple professional development opportunities on campus intended to improve intercultural understanding and skill building for students, staff, and faculty. Offerings include trainings, classes, workshops, and tools. An intercultural assessment tool (the Intercultural Development Inventory or IDI) has been used widely with faculty and staff on campus to create a baseline of understanding across campus. In tandem with the IDI is the possibility of scheduling a one-on-one debrief to discuss the assessment results, potential challenges, and opportunities for learning. Interest in the tool and intercultural training appears to have been strong across campus. One student services staff member working in interculturalization described the institution-wide participation:

Like 85% of our faculty and staff went through and did the intercultural development inventory, and the vast majority of them did individual debriefs, which was awesome. Marketing and communications went through, their whole team did the workshop, which was amazing. And then not quite half of them went through and did an individual debrief.

The inclusion of marketing team members in intercultural training was unique in that many universities that engage in similar trainings typically only involve student-facing employees. In this case, WMU’s staff responsible for its public brand as well as the entire Global Office staff were part of the intercultural development initiative and exemplified the ascendancy and influence of the practice of “interculturalization” on campus.

Nearly all the faculty and instructors who participated in this study and agreed to be interviewed had participated in an interculturalization of the curriculum program organized and facilitated on campus. This interdisciplinary professional development
opportunity has been offered out of the center that overseas teaching and faculty
development for nearly 10 years and focuses on intercultural theory, inclusive pedagogy,
and learning outcome design with the objective to “help to prepare students as effective
professionals and citizens in increasingly complex and diverse global and local contexts”
(interculturalization website). Jillian describes the workshop:

An intensive three-day program or a four-day program depending on how you
look at it where we move . . . from basic cultural self-awareness, to understanding
one's own developmental orientation, to differences and similarities, to . . .
looking at other developmental models that can support curriculum and
pedagogical revisions, to then actually revising existing syllabi, looking at . . .
learning outcomes, an enhancement to result in intercultural global learning
outcomes within already existing curriculum.

Through the workshop and relationship with WMU’s Center for Teaching, intercultural
understanding became more embedded in the curricular outputs of the university and
furthered the positioning of intercultural understanding as a framework to design a course
rather than just an outcome.

In addition to opportunities for staff and faculty, the intercultural team engaged
with the entire student population across campus. The intercultural team was available to
visit classrooms to present or facilitate workshops and advocated to be part of the
orientation for international students and the welcoming orientation session for all
incoming WMU students. Through student group trainings and other opportunities, some
students were able to take the IDI administered by the interculturalization team. WMU
also has an Intercultural Ambassadors program for undergraduate students where they are
able to participate in trainings and workshops and implement projects on campus to bring about greater intercultural understanding. According to WMU’s website, the program “provides opportunities for personal, professional and academic development” and is positioned as an opportunity to engage in change on the WMU campus.

In these examples of engagement, the IDI was primarily administered to better prepare audiences to discuss concepts of intercultural difference and cultural self-awareness and development. The following section describes how interculturalization began to reduce focus on borders (i.e. “international” status) and instead promote a focus on “competency” of staff and students to work interculturally on campus.

**The Turn toward Skill Building**

Interculturalization draws from “culture general” theories of intercultural development, which posit that individuals can develop a series of competencies that can be utilized when communicating with others from different cultures than one’s own. Although recently, scholars have criticized competency models (see, for example, Murray-Garcia and Tervalon, 1998). Competencies and sensitivities are relatively easy to measure through published instruments and are often popular at institutions wishing to track progress on specific indicators. WMU interculturalization staff utilized capacity and intercultural sensitivity in its language; however, the ethos of competency continues to emerge at times.

WMU, for example, offers a one-credit certificate program offered to students focused on “global competency” to recognize students’ intercultural and international experiences. According to a newly updated website description, Global Competency gives students “documented evidence of knowledge, skills, and attitudes of a globally-
minded citizen” (WMU website, 2019). In order to earn a certificate, students must reach a minimum point total based on previous global or intercultural experiences. These experiences can include studying abroad, speaking a second language, taking classes with an international or intercultural focus, volunteering outside of Canada, or volunteering with an intercultural or international focus in another part of Canada. The program culminates in a presentation or session at a campus-wide event and a portfolio documenting their experiences. Both faculty and interculturalization staff described this opportunity to further develop understanding.

The theoretical underpinning for intercultural competence and its utility comes from a variety of sources, but Deardorff (2004) outlines the most common definition of intercultural competence as “the ability to communicative effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes” (p. 194). The use of “competence” is unique in this credential as intercultural competence is not a term used in WMU’s strategic priorities nor by interview participants; “intercultural sensitivity” and “understanding” are primarily used instead. However, the one-credit program and the use of the IDI represent an institutional shift to terminology that is more measurable than the narrowly focused understanding of internationalization at WMU.

Readers should note that interculturalization is a term chosen by WMU to describe its process, but it is connected to other concepts popular in higher education—such as diversity and multiculturalism—which primarily refer to the presence of multiple cultural influences within a specific population (like a campus or nation–state). Interculturalization as a strategy, while placed outside the Global Office, is still closely linked to the international student population. It has a strong presence, delivered through
training, teaching, dialogue, and learning, primarily to equip staff and faculty to better engage with international students. The leadership of the interculturalization team pushes against a traditional understanding of their work to think more critically of the outcomes when working with international students. Jillian says when “we talk about integrating students, we talk about . . . supporting their deficiencies, and that’s all very reminiscent of this idea that we need to fix them up so that they’re good to fit into a Eurocentric system.” This distinction and critique of “fixing” students to be successful at WMU, given its early positioning alongside internationalization (as well as purpose and motivations for both strategies), complicate the potential relationship with Indigenization and assimilationist expectations of Indigenous students. The implicit and explicit connections between internationalization and intercultural understanding also potentially influence their engagement with Indigenization efforts on campus. The next section provides a summary of interculturalization at WMU and how staff members further identify the term with a broader Canadian higher education phenomenon: multiculturalism. This discussion provides a set-up for the following section on Indigenization, another movement and initiative on WMU’s campus that interfaces with internationalization and interculturalization.

**Interculturalization and the Canadian Context**

As noted above, interculturalization is a processual description of institutional strategy at WMU. Although the relationship was not completely clear from this dataset, the term interculturalization may be either conflated or compartmented to another term frequently used in Canadian higher education: “multiculturalism.” In describing WMU’s campus, some participants referred to interculturalization and multiculturalism in similar
ways. A high-level student services administrator and a staff member in the Global Office described the “multicultural feel” of the campus, specifying the presence of many different people with distinct cultural practices, particularly international but also referencing Indigenous and other Canadians with diverse ethnic backgrounds. This feeling of multiculturalism was invoked during an interview about international recruitment. John described WMU’s multicultural campus as one that could be attractive to prospective students.

It's definitely a pro, right? Do you see in the marketing material, you see international and domestic students? It is the multiculturalism. You see it, that it's there. You see it on campus when you walk around, it's there. If you see classrooms, it's there. It's in domestic and international marketing. It's not just in one or the other, you know? It is sold as, “This is what you are walking into” kind of thing. It is the reality of WMU, it's the reality of most Canadian universities right now.

To some staff and faculty, internationalization, and specifically the recruitment of international students, contribute to the continued multiculturalism of Canada. Multiculturalism is understood to be positive by WMU leadership and is highlighted in the university’s public-facing marketing materials for both domestic and international student audiences. In a document created by the Global Office, the term is used frequently by WMU faculty and staff to describe the increasingly internationalized campus and multicultural classrooms. The resource connects the multiculturalism and international students, explaining, “Multicultural classrooms pose a number of opportunities and challenges for faculty members. International students come to us with
different educational backgrounds and learning experiences that stem from their own countries and cultures.” John argues that this multiculturalism is not just a marketing tactic, but the reality of the classrooms and campus of WMU and increasingly reflective of contemporary Canada.

Similarly, student services staff and administrators, as well as faculty, referenced the notion of a Canadian identity and national values in describing motivations for internationalization and intercultural understanding. Natasha described Canada as an “open place” and welcoming to international students. Emily and Alice posited this desire to be welcoming in a Canadian context was partially constructed in opposition to observed attitudes in the United States. Emily provided insight into this relationship:

And I think that there are, there is a real desire and impetus for change there [at the university]. And I, you know, I would actually relate that to the political situation in the United States to where, I think, there is a genuine fear of those levels of polarization, being something that maybe will bleed into Canadian society or, and also, just already exist, right?

The desire for multiculturalism and to be “welcoming” through interculturalization was the rationale by some senior administrators to support both internationalization and Indigenization and Reconciliation (to be addressed later in this chapter) under the umbrella of interculturalization. This stated openness to the feeling of multiculturalism supported by internationalization efforts and facilitated by interculturalization was noteworthy. Jillian described how s/he understood the relationship between interculturalization and multiculturalism within the historical context of Canada:
We’ve had an official multiculturalism policy since 1971. Now has multiculturalism really served us? Again on a surface level. Yes, we have tolerance . . . Multiculturalism to me is that we have representation and recognition of these multiple cultures that we have. Is there any interaction or inclusion? Sometimes. So, I mean, to me that’s the difference between multicultural and intercultural.

In spite of the positioning of intercultural as potentially digging below the “multicultural surface” to facilitate more intentional learning, Jillian described concern that interculturalism could potentially be relegated to the polite, but ultimately shallow, engagement with difference. Jillian’s, John’s, and others’ responses indicated that individuals were grappling with terminology embraced by the institution but also used in Canadian policy and the field of intercultural understanding.

In sum, the term and process of interculturalization appeared to be informed by a variety of terms, processes, and initiatives and bubbled up as an overarching strategy for the campus. Presumably, interculturalization’s focus on understanding difference would build social cohesion and strong bonds on campus. However, interculturalization as a tool for informing all situations and initiatives has limitations. In the following sections, I highlight the complex interactions between interculturalists and those focused on Indigenizing WMU.

**Indigenization at WMU**

As indicated in the introduction of this chapter, Indigenization is currently listed under WMU’s strategic priority of increasing intercultural understanding. There, Indigenization is described as “the inclusion of traditional and contemporary Aboriginal
teaching, learning, knowledge, research and creative process” on the WMU campus.

Indigenous WMU, the website that describes the university’s multi-faceted approaches to Indigenous engagement, includes a brief definition of Indigenization as “initiatives created for WMU to come together and create a campus that is welcoming and supportive to all, especially Indigenous students and staff.” The addition of the clause “especially for Indigenous students and staff” centers Indigenous people and their experience on campus in the efforts of Indigenization. For Indigenous WMU, Indigenization’s purpose is not just general knowledge creation, but to embrace the varied ways in which Indigenous identities, ways of knowing, and self-determination are understood and experienced on campus.

Christopher, an administrator in the Office of Indigenous Education, explained the importance of a broad-based and comprehensive approach to Indigenization of the university in order to meet students and community members wherever they are in their education journey. It was important to not simply compartmentalize efforts to a single discipline or office, as he has seen happen in other universities in the United States and Canada. Christopher invoked the strategic priority in describing the process of Indigenization:

It's also the key point of this story, is that the institution has prioritized it and I see that as a difference. So, once you get that commitment, then you can make an impact with the instructors and then it goes down to the learning groups, because it's the Indigenous learners you want to impact, and you want to have Indigenous knowledge at your institution. And once you established that, it's amazing what happens, too, is that the non-Indigenous learners benefit, because you have Elders
in the classroom, because you have Indigenous knowledge in the curriculum, because you do this in an Indigenous respectful way, you honor your Indigenous learners and your non-Indigenous learners.

Indigenization as understood by Christopher, focused on Indigenous learners and intentional in its implementation, is ultimately beneficial for all learners on campus.

A number of staff members and central administrators whose work was outside of the Office of Indigenous Education expressed enthusiasm and commitment toward engaging in Indigenization. At the same time, they expressed they were not always clear on what the core work of Indigenization was. As one central student services staff member acknowledged:

Indigenization is hard because it's not like Indigenization is a thing, right? And Indigenization is something that's being talked about on multiple different levels across the university. So, Indigenization looks very different for the Faculty of Education and Social Work than it would look like for the faculty of Student Development. So again, Indigenization looks different for our faculty of Student Development than it looks different for [the Student Center for Indigenous Students] who actually works with Aboriginal Indigenous students.

In this sense, Indigenization is not a strategy that is easily defined and operationalized.

A few interview participants outside of the Indigenizing movement wondered whether a common definition of Indigenization from WMU would be helpful to encourage better understanding and more opportunities for collaboration across campus. As explained by Jillian:

It's not as though they [Office of Indigenous Education and other offices] don't
collaborate and work together, it's just that it's a little bit confusing, I think, who's doing, like what Indigenization means because to some people it means supporting Indigenous students, to others it means decolonizing practice, to others it means Indigenizing the university policies and processes. And for others it's really about land sovereignty and political right. So, there's almost like a continuum, and I don't think that's unique to this campus, I think that's what this country is going through right now.

As alluded to by Jillian, Indigenization is a relatively new movement that is currently gaining ground in Canadian higher education and has the possibility of moving in many different directions. The varied definitions noted by Jillian have different implications for implementation, ranging from curricular changes to structural institutional changes. However, while a definition might bring together non-Indigenous staff and faculty to be more targeted in efforts, ultimately it contradicts what is a holistic and complex process.

Highlighting the varied understandings of Indigenization, Charlotte, a director of the university’s research center for Indigenous students, provides an understanding that is expansive both theoretically and practically. She explains:

My own sort of understanding of Indigenization is that it means we retain some hope in the institution. Decolonization means we’re done. Let’s start again. I think Indigenization is about making the university welcoming. It's about that pluriversity idea, right? Not talking about one set of ideas, we’re talking about numerous. It's about recognizing the university as a pluriversity as opposed to university.

WMU’s strategic priority of Indigenization is happening simultaneously with the larger
higher education community’s grappling of how to understand and how best to carry out this strategy. Indigenization, while expressing some continued belief in higher education, calls for a transformation of the academy that moves beyond aspects of “welcoming” to centering initiatives that are driven by Indigenous scholars and students, and may not fit neatly into definitions desired by other units on campus.

Identity and positionality influenced participants’ discussion of Indigenization. Those that identified as settlers in Canada expressed concern in how best to engage in Indigenization authentically and respectfully. Some participants explained their reticence toward definition and action, explaining the risk of recolonizing. Central to their understanding was the importance of Indigenous faculty, staff, students, and community members leading how and when to Indigenize. Emily, a student services staff member working in interculturalization, refused to offer a definition when asked to share its meaning, describing her reasoning thusly:

I think it's an extremely contested term. And I respect that contestation. I think that it needs to be contested, it needs to be worked out, and I don't particularly think that it's necessarily a good . . . to have either an institution come up with a firm and finished definition. And I also definitely don't think that it's my place as a white settler to . . . impose a sort of definition.

For many participants, the stakes are understood as high, particularly given Canada’s history of colonization and violence, and thus caution is important. This guidance is challenging, as Alice asked, “How do we as settlers also help, like what do we do that's right, that helps? That doesn't just add, give them [Indigenous students and scholars on campus] more work.” Alice presents her own dilemma in participating in the
Indigenization efforts of the movement, capturing the complexity of self-determination in Indigenization when it is put into the context of a Western construct of higher education. Thus, the enthusiasm and support for Indigenization on WMU’s campus is tempered by an institutional ethos that values particular structures and ways of work; structures that are replicated throughout higher education in Canada. Charlotte places WMU’s work in Indigenization into a larger context and scope:

The reality of the Indigenization projects is that you have to deal with this day to day, unintentional or intentional racism because of an overarching structure that doesn’t want to change. The reason I kind of hesitate... this institution responds to governmental guidelines on what a university is; it responds to research outputs because that’s how their funding works. So, you can’t just blame the institution because the institution exists with a larger structure that’s saying, “This is how you should be structured.” Indigenization as a strategy will necessarily take a different shape than other strategies of higher education that are operationalized across campus.

Strategic priorities are often connected to tasks and assessments to measure success; however, when offices on campus attempt to reduce Indigenization to a set of tasks, it counters Christopher’s broader vision of the holistic initiative. Pidgeon (2016) further warns that Indigenization is more than a checklist, so visions must go beyond a series of talking points and agenda items.

Elizabeth noted that binaries may limit imagination and the intersectional identities of persons on campus and how this positionality influences perspectives and roles. She describes:
I feel that the campus in some ways operates under these binaries in terms of the student body and the students’ identities. And a lot of my own research has to do with student identities. This is something that I felt I should bring up . . . and so just to lay that out clearly, there’s this understanding that we have domestic students and international students. And then within the domestic student body, there is this understanding that there’s Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. But I learned very quickly that non-Indigenous in this context means white. And so there’s a whole bunch of identities that are missing.

Further, simply being Indigenous does not mean that you are not also a settler; Charlotte explained how being Indigenous and not from the community where the university is located still make one a visitor. The use of the labels “Indigenous” and “International” and “intercultural” fails to capture the complexity within the student population and account for the complexity of experiences.

Motivations for Indigenization

When asked about the motivations for Indigenization, responses varied among participants. Often a participant’s professional location predicted their response to Indigenization, but no two answers were the same, highlighting the complexity of the process. Staff and faculty discussed the significance of the TRC in the history of Canada, bringing a spotlight to the many years of marginalization of Indigenous peoples, marginalization that included the repression of Indigenous ways of knowing. Lily posited, "I think part of it’s political, definitely being driven politically . . . and it's, you know, the timing because of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the TRC, and the Calls to Action and the post-secondary and the secondary education systems being drawn
into that. I think that's, that's really an important piece, right?” Hilary, an administrator in Aboriginal Education, noted that all departments have committed to the TRC and the Calls to Action, opening possibilities of change to their coursework and curriculum.

A primary motivation for supporting Indigenization at WMU for the Indigenous Student Center and the Indigenous student research programming is to increase the number of, and improve support for, Indigenous students on campus. Currently, Aboriginal students represent 10% of the total student body and, as Bill, an administrator in the Indigenous Student Center, notes, the Indigenous population is one of the populations that is experiencing substantial growth in Canada. He said:

The Indigenous population is increasing, and we do have a lot more graduate students coming through the circuits and, and also our completion rates with that, right, I think that stood out as something that we needed to look at, throughout the whole . . . province-wide and research has been done, you know, around that and, and looking at those numbers and we continue to monitor.

Charlotte references this motivation when describing her work in supporting Indigenization: “My role is to just take how they [staff and faculty] understand it and get the best outcome for Indigenous students.” There is acknowledgement that staff and faculty have distinct understandings of the work and their engagement, but the focus is the student experience.

During interviews, participants from all areas of the university discussed an initiative, which I will simply call “the Project,” that had begun through the efforts of an academic dean to “design, operationalize, evaluate and share practices aimed at increasing Indigenous advancement and Indigenizing West Mountain University.” Hilary
in the Office of Indigenous Education noted that all departments were approached and all were participating. Amanda described the dean’s work on this initiative: “She's kind of mobilizing interest across campus on research matters and on Indigenizing the curriculum.” Interestingly, the work of the project moved beyond the academic enterprises of the university; the objectives of the Project included increasing parity in enrollment, recruitment, and completion with Indigenous learners. Megan discussed connections between the Project and the institutional partnerships for student mobility: “Northern Arizona is a very strategic partner in the sense that we really want to nurture that relationship from a number of areas. So, for instance, we want to be looking at it from the ‘Project’ opportunities.”

Administrators in the Global Office discussed their commitment to the Project but still were troubling how best to move forward, primarily focusing on the international student population building knowledge about the Indigenous peoples of the area. The objectives of the project are both strategic (student recruitment) and processual (sharing what happens in day-to-day Indigenization work with others). At the time of this writing, this initiative had only recently started, but exemplifies one of the ways in which WMU faculty, staff, and administrators have been able to imagine how each office and department can contribute to Indigenization efforts.

**Connections of Indigenization to Interculturalization**

The connections between Indigenization and interculturalization are not as clearly defined as internationalization and interculturalization, yet there have been moments of engagement between the two movements on campus. Jillian described interculturalization as a way for some staff and faculty at WMU to engage in Indigenization conversations:
So it seems to me that there is a bit of a shift that, you know, this, the settler population is taking some responsibility for responding to the calls where, you know, myself, I wouldn't really feel comfortable leading any charge to Indigenize the curriculum because I'm not Indigenous. So, I can say that Interculturalizing curriculum provides certainly a foundation for people to be able to do that other heavy lifting.

Nearly all participants were clear that the decisions of how Indigenization is enacted sit squarely with the Indigenous WMU staff and faculty from the Indigenous community where the institution is located, along with the local Indigenous community members and leadership. Due to limited numbers of Indigenous faculty and staff members, this can be difficult given the potential for additional labor on top of their regular workload. Interculturalization, in this setting, was described as a foundation for settler staff and faculty to be better equipped for deeper discussions on how best to engage in Indigenization without burdening Indigenous staff and faculty with this responsibility and work.

Jennifer, an early ESL instructor, and Jillian, the lead of interculturalization efforts, were attentive to the need for Indigenous perspectives but were less clear on how best to move forward. Jennifer described a first step of inviting the Executive Director of the Office of Indigenous Education as a speaker during the workshop and hosting other Indigenous educators to facilitate experiential empathy building exercises. Echoing the concerns of many participants and highlighting tensions that will be explored in subsequent sections, Jennifer noted the importance of sensitivity in bringing Indigenization into a conversation of internationalization: “That's way too close to home.
It's way more raw. And it's very different because it's like comparing a box to a circle in terms of structure, communication, societies, all of that.” Indigenization was not simply a model or framework that could be added to the curriculum nor was it a matter of integrating Indigenous topics into the training. Given the historical and national context, the topic was one that had to be approached over time and very intentionally.

The Indigenizing movement at WMU is still in process. Much is still unsettled in relation to its role within the core or periphery of the institution, and the extent to which Charlotte said, WMU will be an interculturalized university or a pluriversity. The distinction is clear and politically important. WMU currently has particular governance, academic, and financial structures that are increasingly informed by international and multicultural perspectives. Interculturalization, in many ways, allows for this. Indigenization, however, may challenge these structures in ways that international students or other interest groups cannot. For this reason, there are limitations to the influence of interculturalization as it currently informs institutional practice, and in relation to Indigenization. These limitations are described in the next section.

**Indigenization and Interculturalization**

Those leading the intercultural work of the university discussed the complexity of the work and the need to critically examine the current narrow focus of interculturalization and its assessment. John, who has been involved in intercultural work at the university, was direct in differentiating interculturalization and Indigenization:

I believe Indigenization and intercultural are two separate things. There's intersectionality of course, between those two things. I worry that Indigenization will become intercultural, and it will just be a space within intercultural, where I
do believe it needs to be its own thing.

This concern of interculturalization obscuring Indigenization was discussed widely among both those who are trying to Indigenize their work and those whose work is more grounded in the Indigenization efforts of the institution. Bill, in Aboriginal student services, noted, “We need to make sure that we're . . . if we're going to go down the road of interculturalization or internationalization, that you need to first look at, you know, Indigenization. That's a good place to start.”

Charlotte and Elizabeth discussed whether interculturalization, given its efforts in valuing international experiences and culture, will just add Indigenous peoples as another aspect of its scope. If all are given equal space, this might flatten the Indigenous experience, taking it out of the important context of settler colonialism as well as discount important issues of autonomy in educational spaces. As Charlotte, a research associate, cautions:

We have to think about the spaces that the institutions are on and the knowledge that needs to ground the institution, because there's nowhere else in this world that's [the Indigenous people of WMU’s campus]. There's nowhere else. And so shouldn't we first be respectful to the knowledge that was formed on this land, and then think about how other knowledges can inform that knowledge or can integrate with that knowledge?

Within Charlotte’s quote is a challenge that might be perceived as denying equal credence to all experiences—a challenge that may be problematic in the campus’s intercultural ethos. Her perspectives as well as Bill’s acknowledge the historic and contemporary sovereignty of Indigenous knowledge in the specific place of WMU.
Creating a diversity of knowledge is important in a university setting, but not before strengthening engagement and centering the knowledge and practices of those people who are indigenous to the land where the university exists.

At WMU, interculturalization is a core reform effort, reinforced by strategic priorities. Students, staff, and faculty from across units have engaged in training and assessment of intercultural competencies. WMU’s interculturalization movement in many ways incorporated internationalization but expanded intercultural concepts to fit a variety of campus constituents. However, alignment with Indigenization, according to participants, was not as intuitive. Participants from across the university expressed concern about the incorporation of Indigenization into the interculturalization work. The risk, to some, was quite unsettling and was a threat to Indigenous ontology and epistemology on campus.

**Multicultural and Intercultural Strategies**

As noted in the paragraphs above, interculturalization is a specific process strategy at WMU. Staff and faculty often invoked multiculturalism when discussing interculturalization; some staff members suggested that interculturalization enhanced multiculturalism; while others connected interculturalization with multiculturalism as similar projects. As described earlier, a high-level student services administrator and staff member in the Global Office described the multicultural “feel” of the campus, specifying the presence of people with distinct cultural practices on campus, particularly international students, but also referenced Indigenous and other Canadians with diverse ethnic backgrounds.

In that context, multiculturalism was used benignly as a descriptor. The term
“multicultural,” however, was not approached lightly by some participants in the study. Multiculturalism is grounded in Canada’s history of multiculturalism as a federal policy. The Canadian Multiculturalism Policy of 1971 sought to position cultural pluralism, represented by the ethnocultural groups of Canada, as a national resource. This policy set out to create a sense of inclusiveness among Canadians, focusing on acceptance of different groups, interaction between these groups, and a common language (Berry, 2011, p. 8).

While publicly framed as inclusive, multiculturalism was described by some participants as ultimately an effort to silence Indigenous peoples and their concerns through linguistic and cultural assimilation. John described,

In a lot of contexts, it [multiculturalism] was to kind of quiet down Aboriginal people, too. To be like, “We're all together. Hold on a second, we're all Canadians. So, let's get together. Let's hold hands and be together, right?” And then it was like, “Whoa, hold on a second. No!”

Charlotte and John described experiences in other settler countries where multiculturalism is deemed unfavorable given the sociopolitical context. Charlotte explained:

New Zealand tried to become multicultural, and Maori said, “No, you haven't even got bicultural down,” so by around the same time that Canada legislated being multicultural, New Zealand looked at it, and Maori said, “No, you cannot be multicultural until you’ve got bicultural.”

The relationship between the Maori and the state of New Zealand is outlined in a constitutional treaty (Kymlicka, 2012), establishing both as “founding peoples” (Bell,
Biculturalism in New Zealand developed along a movement toward self-determination of the Maori economically and politically (Bell, 2009) in a settler country. Multiculturalism would potentially undermine the efforts toward self-determination and autonomy, ultimately supporting a neoliberal multiculturalism that emphasizes a singular nationalist identity (Kymlicka, 2012).

The sociohistorical relationship of multiculturalism in Canada provides insight to better understand some responses to efforts to put interculturalization efforts into conversation with Indigenization. Some faculty and staff expressed concern that intercultural was just a substituted term for multicultural that would continue to flatten the experiences of peoples who were not of the dominant ethnocultural group. Elizabeth posited,

And so honestly it feels like intercultural just seems like a new word to replace multicultural, and it somehow evokes something better for people because it's "inter," so it implies “between” rather than just “many”—rather than the mosaic, there is this assumed, like not mixing, but relation, connection.

Elizabeth discussed concern of the implications of funding when universities focus on terms like diversity, multiculturalization, and interculturalization. As one term gains in popularity, universities may then prioritize projects above others in a context of limited funding for higher education.

As Jillian mentioned earlier, there is a potential that intercultural would also be seen as a movement that could potentially be stuck at a surface-level depth, only focusing on the visible trappings of culture and difference rather than deeper structural issues. Elizabeth likens interculturalization and multiculturalism in their potential to be surface
level, stating, “And so I feel like these tools around multiculturalism and interculturalism, I feel like they don’t actually help us look . . . beneath the surface.” Given the history of the policy of multiculturalism in Canada, there appear to be opportunities for conflation between the terms and what they purport to do, which are concerns the majority of the interculturalization team acknowledged. The conflation is particularly problematic when placed within the context of institutional racism within higher education.

The paragraphs above exemplified some of the epistemological and ontological tensions between the Indigenization movement at WMU (which is culturally grounded and focused on self-determination) to the interculturalization strategy (which takes a culture-general, competencies-based approach to understanding difference). Interculturalization has wide influence on WMU’s campus, with an original aim at integrating international students through a broad-based professional development agenda for faculty. Interculturalization, however, does not appear to be as workable of a strategy for Indigenization (as it is defined at WMU) as it is for internationalization (as it is defined at WMU). Indigenization’s focus on identity, self-determination, and historic tensions in higher education have made the terminology “intercultural” and “multicultural” questionable in both policy and practice to some scholars and students.

At the close of field work for this chapter, the above-mentioned tensions were not resolved. Interculturalization, promoted as a potential connecting point for all people in the diverse environment of WMU, was questioned by some faculty and staff working more directly in the Indigenization campus reform movement. This appears to be primarily due to concern that interculturalization would lead or integrate Indigenization efforts rather than position Indigenization as an autonomous movement with hopes and
aspirations that may include intercultural understanding. This study was concluded at a point in time when there was not a resolution to the question of whether interculturalization would continue as an attempted organizing lens for Indigenization, but at the completion of field work, there appeared to be limitations to the strategic reach of interculturalization at WMU.

The final section of this chapter will examine the institutional relations between two movements explained in relation to interculturalization: internationalization and Indigenization. The purpose of the final section is to report on findings about how internationalization and Indigenization relate to each other at WMU, both with and without respect to interculturalization. The section will be followed by an over-arching summary of this chapter.

**Internationalization and Indigenization**

The intersections between the strategies of internationalization and Indigenization were difficult to pinpoint; interculturalization appeared to be the strongest institutional effort to bring the concepts together. The communicated motivations behind internationalization and specifically international student recruitment appeared to be a barrier in understanding how the two would interact. Knight (2015) defined internationalization as a potentially far-reaching institutional reform initiative, and Hudzic (2010) emphasized comprehensive internationalization connections to institutional missions. WMU primarily focused its internationalization efforts on student mobility, emphasizing the recruitment of students from a handful of countries who had the means to pay tuition. There was no examination or engagement of this recruitment through an Indigenization lens.
Sally explained that while her interest in Indigenization as a leader in the Global Office was high, the relationship between the Global Office and Indigenization advocates on campus was, at the time of the study, disconnected:

It’s still quite separate. So, it’s like Indigenization is happening over here. The internationalization is over [there] . . . I really feel the next step is when we are developing institutional strategic plans and priorities . . . is that part of the strategy looks at meshing these priorities. What are some points where these can connect and move forward together?

Sally’s point about “meshing” and “connecting points” is telling. Neither the internationalization nor Indigenization approaches would likely benefit from a full “meshing” of activities. Such meshing would reduce the individual contributions on campus and blurs lines in ways that have been critiqued in relation to interculturalization. However, there may be “connecting points” in which agendas can align around specific goals. At the time of field data collection, the university made strategic priorities, but there was little concerted effort to view the strategic “connecting points” that could be leveraged. This was highlighted by one participant who worked directly with international students and shared she saw no connection between the international work of the university and Indigenization efforts.

Despite a lack of strategic intersections, there were individual examples of Indigenization and internationalization intersecting in the curricular context of the experience of international students. In interviews with Sally and David, a current and former administrator at the Global Office respectively, both discussed the opportunity to
better educate incoming international students about the Indigenous peoples of Canada.

Bill from the Indigenous Student Center explained:

We've come across . . . some interesting, if I can say that, responses to what they [international students] thought, you know, Native people were and where they are, and there was so much misinformation and ignorance around Indigenous people here. And not because of, you know, intentional . . . I think the people who come from different countries came here and they have been told a different story.

International students are immediately confronted with a brief education about Indigeneity upon arrival to campus. For example, at the start of the international student orientation, an Elder provided a land acknowledgement and extended a welcome to the international students participating. This is a common occurrence before any campus event, but in this setting, an administrator from the Global Office provided some contextual information to this speaker and to Canadian history and the history of place. However, there were no additional sessions led by Indigenous WMU during the international orientation week.

A more formal acknowledgement by the Indigenous student services leaders, along with drumming, led the entry for the welcome ceremony for all incoming students, domestic and international. During the orientation for all incoming students, administrators describing the incoming student demographics used terms of nations rather than countries to demonstrate the diverse backgrounds of the students. One speaker noted that she was using the terminology of nations rather than countries deliberately to encompass First Nations students and other communities in
addition to the many countries represented by international students. These small actions appear to be signals for audiences to communicate on-campus efforts toward deeper engagement with Indigenous communities and issues.

Jennifer, an instructor in ESL with Metis background, discussed curriculum practices that brought together Indigenous topics and experiences with the international student programming so prevalent on campus. Jennifer described an early experiential class visit with visiting international professionals:

When I taught a visiting group of Chinese teachers who wanted to learn methodology, I took them to the residential school, and one of them actually asked me, “Why are we here?” And I said, “Because this is also part of Canada's history.”

This practice was implemented to provide a more accurate portrayal of Canada’s history, particularly in terms of education, and specifically in terms of Brookville’s history as a location of a residential school. Jennifer pushed against just a transactional exchange of knowledge, grounding the learning in the place where WMU sits. In this example, structural change of the objectives and participants of the exchange were not addressed, but an individual implemented a programmatic or curricular change in an effort to give space to Indigenous voices.

The organizational alignment of offices at WMU, each with their own specific strategies, may also impose an artificial binary of international and domestic and Indigenous and non-Indigenous that can obscure the other facets of identity inhabited by the incoming international students. Jillian describes how traditional internationalization organizationally limits the conversations around international student experiences:
I would never say that internationalization is anything to do with Indigenization . . although there are opportunities if internationalization would pull its head out of the market model, I think there are more opportunities. We probably have many international students who consider themselves Indigenous in their home context.

Christopher further explained that “some of the students are Indigenous students from around the world,” and so working together was important. Charlotte noted, “I’m one of those weirdos who is an international Indigenous person. I have come from somewhere else to someone else’s land, where I am considered Indigenous through that lens, but I’m also international.” It is important to amplify the understanding of what international might mean when discussing the larger student population, particularly their intersections with other identities, to create more opportunities to understand student experiences and challenges. These identities might also shape understanding of how offices and faculties across campus might partner.

Katie, a nursing faculty member who describes herself as being both Indigenous and settler, described a class she created that resulted in greater engagement across student identities. Katie designed the class following protocol with local Indigenous community leaders, a process that took 15 months as she continuously met to discuss desired objectives, content, and pedagogy. The course was attended by international students in addition to Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadian students. Katie describes an unexpected result from that experience:

I did have international students in that course, in the Indigenous health course for the university, and they said they liked the fact that it offered a platform where they could finally share their perspective in a safe way, share their culture and
their experience and compare and contrast how that was with local Indigenous peoples.

Katie pushed beyond inclusion, describing how Indigenous pedagogy and methodology had created a classroom that promoted greater sharing of experiences and belongingness for students from different identities.

When removing internationalization from the parlance of higher education strategy and focusing on international as a site where learning can happen, some staff and faculty discussed connections between international and Indigenous as simply the movement and interaction between peoples, unconnected to the concept of nation–states. Bill, an administrator in Indigenous student services, powerfully described the historical practices between Indigenous communities:

Yeah, we've been dealing with international, internationalization for many, many years . . . We've shared borders with a number of different Indigenous peoples. We've had to deal with each other for a long time . . . when we travel and we're in a different country for us, a different, a different place . . . we have to acknowledge that we're on traditional territory that's not our own, that we come there as a visitor . . . back in the day, you know . . . when you left your home community, you were at risk, you had to follow protocol . . . having people in your life and your family that spoke five different languages wasn't uncommon. As Bill noted, this concept of movement and crossing borders and cultures was not bound just to countries in the modern sense. According to Bill, many peoples have practices in place to move between communities, language, and land, and a responsibility to follow protocol when leaving one’s home.
Individuals on campus are purposefully engaging and making those priorities known on their teams, but interest among staff and faculty in connecting between these strategic priorities is not enough. Charlotte acknowledged the need for additional staffing to bring together internationalization and Indigenization: “It’s the why, the how. Particularly when there’s nobody dedicated here to Indigenous internationalization, so it’s something that the institution is excited about, but who’s doing the work?” It is then up to the institution to find resources to support the initiatives for comprehensive change rather than depending on one-off programmatic changes.

WMU has recently pursued institutional relationships with two universities that have strong Indigenous grounding, one in the United States and a second in Australia. During interviews, Christopher and Megan, from the Office of Indigenous Education and the Global Office respectively, discussed the development of these early relationships in New Zealand. Each of these universities is also located in a settler nation and have strong programming for Indigenous students. Christopher explained the process of creating these relationships:

So, we put ideas, the elders and the faculty and the students . . . the knowledge makers are going to be important. So, the agreements get into place, and here's the common interests. So, this kind of shows an international Indigenous type of activity. Partnership activities can be scaled, up and down. And there's partnership happening. I just did the Indigenization with our elder from Northern Arizona [University], I did the workshops, he did storytelling last night, I did too. So that's our partnership. We don't say it, we live it.
David, a former director in the Global Office, was involved in discussions to bring Indigenization work into the Global Office and send a student and an elder from WMU to Northern Arizona University. The process of developing these institutional relationships and the stakeholders becomes more intentional as learners and knowledge makers are involved and the value of partnership is examined.

For those working with Indigenous students and the Indigenization efforts of the university, the benefits of internationalizing the curriculum was not necessarily to facilitate intercultural learning but rather to facilitate more of a global Indigenous perspective. Charlotte explains:

And if we think about these, these Indigenous exchanges, there's a difference when it's Indigenous to Indigenous exchange. Usually we're strategizing about how to exist . . . as Indigenous populations of the colonized world, and how do we strategically shift government policy, shift university policy. And at a lot of Indigenous conferences, that's what people are talking about. But I don't think that's why WMU wants to send Indigenous students to Mexico. I think that they know that Indigenization is important now.

Simply fitting Indigenous students into study abroad programs, or increasing inclusion, is not necessarily Indigenization. As Charlotte notes, “There needs to be a reason beyond student mobility is good” to Indigenize study abroad.

The desire to disrupt rather than replicate a Western interpretation of the strategic priorities and their outcomes was important when discussing the possible intersections between internationalization and interculturalization and the work of Indigenization. Interculturalization—while valuable for greater understanding of promoting deeper
understanding of difference—when grounded in an institution can be perceived as a threat or as minimizing to the work of Indigenization. There are clear possibilities for transformational change between Indigenization and the international movement of ideas and peoples, but internationalization strategies primarily focused on recruitment and funding will continue to undermine efforts for a more expansive understanding. Comprehensive internationalization, as an ethos that informs greater engagement and comparative learning within the areas of knowledge, teaching, and service, may create space for Indigenization efforts, so long as the Eurocentric institution does not maintain the center. However, a comprehensive internationalization designed as a reaction to global forces, rather than a vision to how the forces must change, will ultimately uphold a neoliberal world order. Some participants of this study appeared to be aware of these complexities and threats.

In summary, this chapter provided an overview of internationalization, interculturalization, and Indigenization at WMU. Participants indicated that the historic and contemporary conceptualization of internationalization was focused on international student recruitment and enrollment. Interculturalization was first framed as a response to challenges faced by instructors in the newly “internationalized” WMU to develop “competency” in understanding and communicating across difference, but later as a focus for professionals and students to develop deeper learning to influence programming and curriculum. As Indigenization became a powerful movement on campus, there was debate about the appropriateness of interculturalization as a way of describing the work of Indigenizing scholars and students. For most of these scholars and students, while intercultural learning was important, interculturalization was not an appropriate
grounding of the work that was self-determined and aimed to contest Canadian conceptualizations of multiculturalism. In the midst of these debates and tensions, a few actors on campus found ways for internationalization and Indigenization agendas to develop programs and partnerships. The partnerships required a reframing of internationalization at WMU, but, in relation to internationalization literature, the process may have addressed critiques of market-based internationalization (Stein & Andreotti) and may have made internationalization more “comprehensive” at WMU (Knight). The implications for these findings are outlined in Chapter Five.
Chapter Five: Implications

This study examined how faculty and staff conceptualized internationalization, interculturalization, and Indigenization at a Canadian higher education institution. The study also examined the inter-relationships and tensions between the three movements on campus. The overall purpose of the study was to understand internationalization as either a subset or stand-alone initiative as it related to other initiatives on campus, specifically in the context of a settler university. Such an understanding informs a broader conceptualization of “comprehensive internationalization” (Knight, 2015) in higher education institutions.

As is common in qualitative research, the aim of the study emerged as my own understanding of the research purpose evolved. This evolution occurred as a result of co-creation of understanding with research participants about the dynamics of WMU. Originally, the study set out to better understand how university employees working in the international education programs at WMU understand the university’s efforts to Indigenize, the potential tensions and synergies of this intersection, the relationship between these efforts, and the possibility for decolonization efforts. It became evident, however, that intercultural understanding was an important theme to include, given its place in the literature as an element of internationalization (see Knight, Deardorff, & de Wit) and its inclusion in the strategic priorities of WMU as tied to Indigenization and internationalization. The research questions this study set out to engage were: 1) How do faculty and staff conceptualize the university’s international and intercultural understanding efforts and motivations? 2) How does the institutional priority of increasing intercultural understanding interplay with internationalization and
Indigenization efforts of a university? and 3) How do staff and faculty across the university understand the intersection of Indigenization and internationalization?

**Discussion on Findings**

Internationalization at WMU was conceptualized primarily as an economic and business-motivated effort, reflected by the focus on recruitment of international students, borne out of higher education’s funding challenges across Canadian provinces. The financial gain from international student recruitment aligns with early models of internationalization connections to economic and political motivations (de Wit, 2002; Knight, 2004). Stein and Andreotti (2016) critique these motivations, highlighting the ubiquity of international student recruitment across Canada and the perception of international students as “cash” both in their tuition fees and expenditures in local economies. In spite of their desirability, international students experience instances of racism and marginalization (Lee, 2007; Stein & Andreotti, 2016). At WMU, there has been substantial growth of international student enrollment resulting in full classrooms and limited housing availability, testing the preparedness of staff and faculty to teach diverse constituencies. These issues have exacerbated concerns about meeting the needs of international students and whether WMU has focused solely on recruitment numbers for its internationalization efforts (similar to Andreotti and Stein’s assertion).

The business model and economic motivations of internationalization were not enough to address the complexities presented by international student recruitment, and the university turned to “interculturalization” and the development of intercultural sensitivity as a mechanism for addressing tensions on campus between constituencies. WMU set out to find ways to enhance the experience of international students and
potentially leverage them as a source of learning for non-international students through a process called “interculturalization.” Through a series of professional development opportunities, many professors and staff began to re-examine teaching methods, interpersonal communication skills, and support systems to best serve incoming international students. This turn toward intercultural understanding reflects Deardorff’s (2006) study in which international officers highlight the cultivation of intercultural competence as a desired outcome of internationalization, although the staff and faculty centered Bennet’s (2009) focus on intercultural sensitivity. As “interculturalization” became a campus-wide initiative at WMU, it soon became organized on its own by a team outside of the Global Office. The broader intercultural movement on campus, then, subsumed the international student experience but also focused on preparing all faculty, staff, and students to manage intercultural communication in a “competent” way.

These efforts were developed and encouraged through a small but burgeoning interculturalist staff that recognized the gaps in between the skillsets of staff and faculty and the needs of international students. The intercultural team that managed initiatives on campus frequently noted that the responsibility of curriculum lies with faculty, not with the Global Office and other administrative sites where the operational efforts of international student recruitment, study abroad programming, and establishing institutional partnerships are realized. Interculturalization became an organizational term to describe this strategy at WMU. Thus, interculturalization efforts of WMU centered around increasing knowledge and changing behaviors and attitudes to more positively and intentionally engage with international students signaling efforts to change the environment of the institution. Workshops were offered for faculty choosing to opt-in to
interculturalize their curriculum.

The natural way in which interculturalization informed internationalization to improve the experience of international students on campus established a logic that interculturalization could be a framework in which other university initiatives could find value, particularly in their implementation. However, this was not necessarily the case for WMU in its attempts to Indigenize. Although the institution placed Indigenization and internationalization under the university’s strategic priority of increasing intercultural understanding, data from this study indicates that there were concerns that interculturalization might co-opt the Indigenization efforts, specifically by minimizing elements of self-determination.

Interculturalization specialists grappled with the challenges and potential incursions of their work, recognizing the challenges and invoking a perspective of interculturalization based in elements of critical theory. While they were careful to not privilege interculturalization over Indigenization efforts, they also shared concerns that Indigenization might be overshadowed or even consumed by strategies to interculturalize, as well internationalize, given the positioning of the three as connected in WMU’s strategic priorities. At the time of this writing, the working relationships between Indigenous researchers and the Indigenous Education Center and the Interculturalization unit were still in flux. All participants were navigating within the structures of the university system and managing the many interpretations and conceptualizations of how to best go about their work. Much of this process was informed by faculty and staff who were working toward Indigenization. These advocates noted that self-determination meant that the timing, curricular focus, and communication norms of relationship-
building could not take place within the structures already developed by the Intercultural unit, but that new agreements needed to be made that reflected the desires of both units.

A third relationship that was beginning to develop at the time of writing was the relationship between internationalization and Indigenization. This relationship was informed by but not directly influenced by interculturalization. Rather, some international staff, through connections with their Indigenization-focused colleagues, began to rethink their understanding of internationalization. The connections between Indigenization and student mobility programming, for example, were reconsidered in order to be grounded in relationship-building and knowledge-sharing within more expansive understanding of community, not necessarily a “Canadian-other” dichotomy, as similar work had previously been framed by various offices. Additionally, connections with international student populations on campus were informed by training provided for international students about Indigenous Canada and the local, place-based knowledge. The group activities appeared to have aligned better with “intercultural” modeling on campus. Finally, assumptions about nation–states that are core to international work were reconsidered. Indigenous scholars and administrators noted that relationship-building and crossing of borders did not begin with the nation–state; the First Nations communities have been interacting with each other before colonization, with protocols and practices in place for crossing those borders. Indigenous scholars and administrators pushed back against the organizational and theoretical structures of internationalization and Interculturalization, centering Indigenous knowledge and experiences in international and intercultural contexts, rather than vice versa.
Implications of This Study

This study reports on the inter-relationships, influence, and working dynamics of three “movements” in a higher education institution in Canada. The main implication for the field of Comparative and International Development Education is that internationalization is not a stand-alone activity in higher education institutions. Knight’s CI framework implies that internationalization can influence other activities on campus such as teaching and learning, research, and administration. Findings from WMU, however, also indicate that internationalization is influenced by other activities and movements on campus. In this case, internationalization’s relationship with interculturalization and Indigenization provide important implications for theory and practice.

According to a 2014 survey from the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, a reported 95% of responding institutions identify internationalization as a priority. Internationalization is no longer a peripheral strategy in higher education, bringing a critical spotlight to its motivations and methods and creating major debates about the purpose of internationalization. A first set of scholars have argued that the motivations of internationalization have been connected to the increasing marketization of higher education (Maringe, Foskett, & Woodfield, 2013; Stromquist, 2007) and revenue generation that has ultimately benefited the Global North (Beck, 2013; Vavrus & Pekol, 2015; Stein, 2017). Scholars have discussed internationalization’s practices of promoting and replicating neoliberal models of education (Cantwell, 2015; Guo & Guo, 2017; Stein & Andreotti, 2015), centering the West and its ontologies and values in education systems. Internationalization’s connection to the knowledge economy more
closely connects it to the needs of a nation, which is evident in Canada’s placement of international recruitment in federal policy and its marketization to international students (Stein 2017; Trilokekar, 2010). These market realities are reflected on the WMU campus, where international student recruitment has been a core component of the institution’s strategy and where the international student population has sharply increased.

A second group of scholars argue that intercultural and global learning are the core purpose of internationalization for many universities, one that has been displaced due to corporatization and an increased nationalism (Brandenburg & de Wit, 2011). Altbach and Knight (2007) outlined the importance of cultural understanding as a motivator among some institutions, claiming it is prioritized above the potential financial return. The relationship between intercultural learning and internationalization efforts has long been present in terminology, stated motivations, and objectives. The inclusion of intercultural understanding in definitions of internationalization (Deardorff, 2006; Knight, 2004; Paige & Mestenhauser, 1999) establishes a relationship between the implementation of internationalization and the purported objective of intercultural understanding. This definition of internationalization has endured (de Wit, 2002) and has arguably influenced the research on drivers and objectives of interculturalization (Bennet, 2008; Paige, 1994; Van de Berg, Paige, & Lou, 2012).

The findings of this study indicate that a corporate or, economic-motivated internationalization, and an intercultural, or sociocultural-motivated internationalization, existed simultaneously at WMU. This co-existence was due to staff and faculty’s assumptions that international student recruitment was necessary for the institution to maintain financial solvency and a resignation that international student recruitment would
remain a priority for any university. This resignation was met by an alternative script for internationalization that emphasized intercultural learning, seeking to provide a positive experience for international students and a global learning opportunity for domestic students. In the case of WMU, interculturalization was an antidote for the corporatization of higher education’s internationalization. Interculturalization was further legitimized at WMU by its appointment as an organizational initiative under which internationalization could then participate.

Unlike the increasing critiques of internationalization, there has been less critical engagement with the “intercultural” dimension within the framework of internationalization. Scholars have questioned whether intercultural learning is indeed foundational in the motivations and in the outcomes of programming related to internationalization (Trilokekar, 2016; Beck 2008), but there has been little examination of intercultural understanding through colonial frameworks in the context of Canada. Traditionally, the intercultural concepts championed in the international education field, specifically student learning programming, have focused on concepts of intercultural competence and intercultural sensitivity (Hammer, 2012; Vande Berg, Paige, & Lou, 2012) as well as cultural dimensions often connected with functionalist theory of scholars such as Hofstede. Theoretical frameworks are critiqued for their grounding in Western framing and values, centering the experience of the student and less on the communities as possible sources of knowledge (Asante, Miike, & Yin, 2008). Ogden (2008) notes that intercultural learning continues to be a challenge in international programming, signaling a concern that insistence on intercultural learning objectives in study abroad can translate to a desire for “authentic” experiences. The learner gains intercultural competence from
engaging with these authentic experiences. The development of intercultural understanding is interpreted as positive and desirable for students.

The findings of this study indicate that interculturalization as an organizational strategy walks a path between engendering intercultural understanding and promoting an assimilationist practice. Jillian, from the interculturalization team, was clear that the interculturalization project is not meant to simply fit international students into a Canadian system and frame their differences as a deficit. However, traditional intercultural learning models that dominate the field have not engaged in topics of power as central to intercultural communication (Bennett, 1998; Moon, 1996). While some critical intercultural literature is problematizing issues of personal identity (Yep, 2000), there has been little challenge to the neoliberal classrooms and the power dynamics inherent in succeeding within them. Thus, those working in interculturalization at WMU must imbue this message into the interculturalization programming and training. It is unclear from the data whether this message is consistently received across horizontal and vertical levels of WMU.

This leads to the next implication of this study: the tension between efforts of interculturalization and internationalization in the context of Indigenization. As reflected in the findings of this study, the terms of internationalization and interculturalization are often conflated at WMU, even by those who are committed to the work of developing deeper intercultural learning that moves beyond an international scope. This conflation is introduced in literature and reflected in many higher education institutions where one term is often substituted for another. However, the reported motivations and values that undergird the two strategies are different: one being committed to financial and
institutional motivations while the other being committed to cultural understanding and knowledge. This tension is particularly highlighted when examining international student recruitment at WMU. Additionally, a tendency toward conflation potentially limits the scope of intercultural understanding to only engage in a cultural identity based on country of origin rather than a more expansive perspective of student identity.

The tendency of conflation between internationalization and interculturalization signposts the apprehension of conflating Indigenization and interculturalization. Participants were concerned that Indigenization would be absorbed by Interculturalization, which was perceived as a broad and expansive project that seemingly welcomes all scholars and knowledge, rather than centering Indigenous scholars and knowledge. The traditional literature of intercultural competence is grounded in functionalist and constructivist epistemologies that do not take into account systems of power (Moon, 1996; Ono, 2011) or historical legacies of colonization. Pon (2009) describes cultural competency as a practice of understanding “the other” in which whiteness is centered and culture is neutral and depoliticized. Indigenous peoples and communities are not simply another culture to understand within an intercultural framework without acknowledging the colonialism and its continued role in higher education. A culturally relativistic frame acknowledges Indigenous epistemology and pedagogy without acknowledging the colonization that has caused their marginalization within the academy, one that still continues.

Indigenous scholars have pushed against the assimilative nature of higher education in pursuing in their work (Battiste & Youngblood, 2009). Pidgeon (2008) references Astin, Astin, Green, Kent, McNamara, and Reeves Williams (1984), Deloria
and Harker (1990) in describing the stand against efforts to “fit” Indigenous peoples into the Western academy: “No group should give up their cultural distinctiveness, language or values in the process of gaining full access to higher education” (p. 347). Zuni Cruz (2008), as cited in Sumida Huaman and Brayboy, uses the concept of mental sovereignty to highlight this resistance, explaining, “It represents the idea of being able to maintain an autonomous way of ‘knowing,’ without having that way eradicated or compromised, even in the face of constant bombardment or immersion in another way of thinking” (p. 7). At a time when Indigenization is calling for language education and transformative engagement with Indigenous pedagogy and perspectives in educational intuitions across Canada, there was little desire to forego this scholarship and conceptualization of self-determination in favor of a model of interculturalization. This was also true at WMU.

This is not to say that an element of assimilation and colonialism is not present in the Canadian government’s bid to increase the number of international students as a potential solution to a decreasing population as well as higher education’s use of international recruitment as a funding source. Both populations have been marginalized in the higher education institution. Participants across the university, working in all positions, discussed similarities between international student and Indigenous student experiences. However, while there were shared experiences of marginalization, Indigenization advocates noted it was important to remember the connection to land and concepts of mental sovereignty that undergird the experience of Indigenous students. Equating the experiences of international students and Indigenous students hinted precariously at an equivalency of the motivations and objectives of Indigenization and
internationalization.

The findings in this study indicate several theoretical contributions to the field of comparative and international development education. First, critical debate about neoliberal and intercultural internationalization are not as dichotomous in practice as in theory. The case of WMU demonstrates that faculty and staff, in both strategic and front-line positions, accepted the corporatized model of internationalization as the current reality of universities across Canada. Most interpreted interculturalism as a mechanism for improving the international student experience and for domestic students to engage in a global experience on the home campus. In this model, focusing on intercultural understanding was interpreted as a stopgap for the necessary process of recruitment-defined internationalization, with an opportunity to identify other international projects. Second, interculturalism, through the organizational strategy of interculturalization, provided an opportunity for the Global Office, the center of internationalization efforts, to engage in broader conversations on campus. Interculturalization provided legitimization for the concerns surrounding internationalization, communicated by the larger campus community and by those within the Global Office. Eventually, the interculturalization movement became so central to campus life that a “team” was given the power to facilitate all activities.

Finally, the tensions between interculturalization and Indigenization, even though there were many linkages, may be explained by mental sovereignty and concerns. Advocates of Indigenization were concerned about issues of assimilation and incorporation, so they maintained their autonomy in developing their own priorities and projects. Battiste (2018) explains that with Indigenization efforts at universities often
based on Western academic frameworks, the use of cultural signals can hide the efforts to fit Indigenous students into a system that has not undergone any substantial change. Interculturalization was perceived to potentially be an aggregate power that potentially promoted a universalist stance that made some stakeholders wary.

**Implications for Practice**

The findings in this study are instructive. Internationalization and interculturalization were able to work relatively seamlessly, perhaps because of the narrow focus on international students in the internationalization agenda. This focus was primarily concerned with getting international students into the institution and providing a respectful learning environment for them. Indeed, the creation of a more welcoming and understanding space on campus is an important organizational endeavor. However, power, history, and international student ontology were not issues that were examined within the strategic priorities of internationalization, the Global Office, or interculturalization trainings.

Indigenization, however, is a movement of reclamation rather than a matter of integration. Proponents strove to avoid a performative representation, as has occurred in the diversity work of higher education (Ahmed, 2012). There is a strong buy-in among many of the faculty and staff who do the work, but there is still uncertainty among many who do not identify as Indigenous on how best to move toward change without recreating colonial structures. One proposed solution that emerged from discussions at WMU was that interculturalization, and even internationalization, in their efforts to Indigenize, should center research and efforts of Indigenous scholars, administrators, and staff. While an understanding of cultural difference might be a result of Indigenization, it is not its
objective; Indigenization is not a tool of organizational interculturalization. Indigenization advocates will self-determine their agenda. This, along with the challenges of funding, might mean that internationalization and interculturalization may not be priorities.

An operational definition of how to Indigenize internationalization broadly is impossible, as it ignores issues of self-determination and place-based knowledge; however, it is clear that the business-focused model of internationalization is at odds with the conceptualizations of Indigenization by Indigenous Education leaders on campus. Relationships between the two are just beginning. There are scholars and practitioners who are currently investigating the intersection of Indigenization and internationalization, as Pidgeon (2016) notes in earlier literature, noting both tensions and opportunities. At a 2019 conference on internationalization and Indigenization, Michelle Pidgeon and Kumari Beck discussed these strategies as existing in opposition of each other. Internationalization is an imperial project, a system that is imposed on universities that perpetuates the university model of the West; Indigenization is a decolonial project that supports Indigeneity and Indigenous success through cultural empowerment. A decolonized comprehensive internationalization could not exist at the same time as economically motivated internationalization due to its connectedness to neoliberalism and the colonial university. Internationalization as a strategy and structure would need to be dismantled, pivoting away from the traditional political, economic, and cultural imperatives of internationalization to engage with Indigenization in a meaningful way.

There were, however, opportunities that emerged between the projects of internationalization and Indigenization at WMU that could inform practices. In
describing new institutional partnerships, WMU staff and faculty emphasized the importance of relationship-building at multiple levels of the process. First, in the identification of potential institutions that had similar student populations and discipline offerings. Additionally, the relationship-building was not just between campus international education offices but also between faculty and administrators in Indigenous education offices as well as elders. The partnerships became more expansive—including community members—and to find multiple points of collaboration beyond study exchange for students, it moved into trainings for staff and faculty, storytelling, and knowledge-sharing. These partnerships included exchanges that were not just between students, but also between elders and community members, deemphasizing the individualized approach to student mobility outcomes. A rethinking of the nation–state orientation had begun to influence the discussion of student demographics during student orientations as administrators pushed beyond a simple international and domestic binary.

The international student experience is also an area of greater engagement for students to more deeply understand the place where they are studying. Orientation and programming for international students is a potential space for deeper collaboration, particularly when reflecting on a university holding an orientation to welcome students to an institution on unceded Indigenous lands. There are the immediate realities of arriving to a campus in a new country and having to quickly learn about housing, transportation, immigration, class registration, school policies, and societal mores. However, an educational component about the land where a university is located would be a step toward undoing the making invisible of Indigenous peoples at the hands of a settler community.
There have been protocols when crossing borders for millennia; it would be instructive to continue to ask the questions of what responsibilities universities and students have when they cross into new territory, be it universities in their work in the community, the arrival of international students, or any study abroad programming. These are only first steps, however, and further collaboration would be needed in order to move toward transformation rather than just surface-level change.

**Limitations**

As noted in the methodology, this study does not set out to evaluate internationalization, interculturalization, or Indigenization, but rather to better understand higher education strategies and strategic interrelationships through the experiences and words of the staff and faculty at WMU who are engaging in the work. Further, this study was limited to the experiences of stakeholders at a particular university in Canada and is not meant to make generalized claims about higher education institutions in that country, North America, or anywhere else beyond this institution.

The findings of this research must be understood within the limitations of the study. First, there is the relatively short timeline of Indigenization existing as a strategy in higher education and the transferability of findings beyond this institution. This research was conducted during a time when Canadian higher education institutions at large were grappling with how to define Indigenization and how it was going to be implemented on college and university campuses. Indigenization is still in initial stages on campus, similarly to WMU. A part of Indigenization is reconciliation, which is connected to acknowledgement of the historical relationship between Indigenous and Inuit peoples of Canada as well as an examination of the contemporary structures that continue within
settler Canada. Thus, this will be a phenomenon that requires considerable attention across time. Research is emerging in examining the two strategies; however, the interplay and intersections of these strategies will need to be examined across diverse institutions to better understand how they might be implemented. WMU is uniquely positioned as an institution being relatively new, with an open admissions policy and a wide-range of academic offerings spanning professional and vocational fields. Additionally, as Indigenization is shaped by the local Indigenous communities that are partnering and (hopefully) driving change, efforts and objectives will vary widely.

Second, in the first round of request for interviews, most participants were closely connected to the strategic priorities of increasing intercultural understanding and had experience either with international students or with Indigenous student populations. Some of these were identified through a review of the WMU’s website while others were suggested through a primary contact at WMU. Many of the faculty interviewed had participated in workshops provided by the university to further develop their intercultural learning. As more time was spent on site, I was able to develop relationships that moved beyond the participants of the study and met with instructors and staff in different academic departments. It became evident that it was important to make efforts to better understand the impressions of internationalization and intercultural understanding from faculty and staff whose work had not been as closely connected with these strategic efforts. More time and resources may have helped address this limitation.

Despite the local nature of this study, the findings are intricately connected with the political, historical, and cultural elements of higher education in Canada. Funding models of higher education, the national population demographics, the development of
internationalization and its critique, the history of colonization, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, as well as the arc of Indigenous research, have all shaped the understanding and implementation of the strategic priorities of internationalization, interculturalization, and Indigenization. These may be useful findings for other scholars interested in similar relationships and campus developments. In spite of the cautions of transferability, this study aims to provoke deeper reflection by practitioners and scholars, asking critical questions of how internationalization and intercultural learning are grounded and enacted as terminology of decolonization and Indigenization are increasingly used.

**Areas for Future Research**

This paper captures a moment in time, albeit an important moment, of examining the intersections of a burgeoning Indigenization movement with the interculturalization and internationalization strategies of WMU. This study centered the staff and faculty perspectives and voices to better understand their conceptualization of these strategies and how they describe their engagement and implementation. Indigenization, interculturalization, and internationalization risk being conflated with each other when put into organizational strategies; that conflation can cross beyond the university as conceptualizations of each, and their meaning, can be assumed. To varying degrees, both internationalization and Indigenization strategies are positioned to transform the university both horizontally and vertically, influencing teaching, research, learning, hiring practices, graduate rates, and community engagement. Both can potentially disrupt the hierarchy of the university in which Western or European epistemologies are centered and Indigenous thought has traditionally been marginalized. The potential outcome can
be a transformed university that functions as a space for plurality of knowledge and understanding that can benefit the students, faculty and staff, and the larger community.

Additional research to study students’ understanding of the strategic priorities and the potential outcomes and tensions would further explore the objectives of these strategies from the perspective of the population purporting to benefit from them. Given the intercultural-focused staff members understood connection to Indigenization and internationalization, it would be important to better understand how students understand the concept and its purpose. For instance, do students describe intercultural learning as a skill to be developed to work across difference or as potentially assimilationist for international and Indigenous students to better navigate the academy? Do students, from diverse affinity and identity groups, interpret intercultural understanding to be potentially transformative, leading to deeper engagement with difference and change within the academy? Are these concepts around internationalization and Indigenization furthering the development of intercultural engagement for a specific segment of the student population at the expense of a different segment of students? Engaging with students to better understand their interpretation of strategic priorities as stated by the university could provide more nuance and whether intercultural understanding is indeed the best terminology for critical engagement with international and Indigenous “teaching, learning and research and creative practice.”

Canada has a long and contested relationship with multiculturalism given the legislation passed to promote a multicultural but united Canada in the 1970s. Throughout this study, participants would at times reference the term multicultural, both as a seemingly benign descriptor and as a politically charged effort that resulted in the
silencing of First Nations peoples as well as other historically marginalized identities. For those more critical of interculturalization as a strategy, there was a concern of intercultural understanding being positioned as a new and less tarnished version of multiculturalism. These concerns around multiculturalism and interculturalization appear closely tied with a perceived characterization of Canada by Canadians, including a perceived set of national values that are not similarly understood and experienced by all who live within the borders of the nation. A future study could also examine interculturalization as an institutional strategy specifically within the context of multicultural Canada, examining the tensions between these concepts in higher education programming and how multiculturalism influences practitioners’ and students’ understanding of these terms and their objectives.

**Looking Forward**

The experience of spending significant time on campus at WMU, developing relationships, and talking about the challenges of the interculturalization and Indigenization efforts has left an indelible mark on my own professional life as a researcher, a practitioner, and an educator. It is inspiring to see how individuals dedicated to work can create a network and community of practitioners and academics who come together to grapple with the values and motivations of higher education and question how change might be enacted toward a more just and critical perspective and practice. This environment of critique might challenge the traditional role of higher education and specifically the internationalization efforts to pivot away from a fundamentally financially driven strategy toward one grounded in relationships—in student learning for all students—rather than simply skill-building and economic return. It is a difficult
endeavor, requiring commitment of both time and energy, but it speaks to the belief that Indigenous and international students deserve the best efforts of their institutions in creating a safe and affirming environment for their learning. Finally, it requires all educators to re-examine how relationships are developed between institutions; how issues of colonization are examined in building agreements, objectives, and outcomes in all endeavors that are international in nature; and how self-determination must lead change rather than fit into existing models.
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Appendix A

Staff/Faculty Interview Protocol: International Education
Name (Pseudonym)
Area of work
Date

1. What is your job title?
2. What are your responsibilities here at the university?
3. How long have you worked at the university?
4. How long have you worked in your area? International Education?
5. How would you describe the International Education programming here at the University? What are the primary programs?
   a. Study abroad, international students, research opportunities for faculty, partnerships with international institutions?
6. What would you say the objectives of international education programming are for West Mountain University?
7. How would you explain the learning objectives?
8. How would you describe intercultural work and its objectives?
9. Do you feel the university has made a commitment to Aboriginal education? How so?
   a. Are there connections between this commitment and the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action?
10. How do you think the Truth and Reconciliation has affected higher education?
11. Are there aspects of higher education that have not changed?
12. Do you think that Indigenization work can affect or influence international work? Intercultural work? How so?
Appendix B

**Staff/Faculty Interview Protocol: International Education**

**Name (Pseudonym)**

**Area of work**

**Date**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) What is your job title?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) What are your responsibilities here at the university?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) How is Indigenous engagement or Indigenization implemented at your university?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Is there a particular term that is used?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) How do you think the Truth and Reconciliation has affected higher education?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Are there aspects of higher education that have not changed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) How have you seen Indigenous engagement or Indigenization?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) How do you see Indigenization and Internationalization as similar?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Are there any tensions between international education and intercultural education? Are there any tensions between international education and Indigenization?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Does Indigenization challenge Internationalization efforts?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Partnerships?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Students studying abroad?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) Do you work/meet with anyone who works in the international education efforts?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix C

Participants for Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Number of Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jillian – Administrator, Interculturalization</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John – Student Services Faculty/Staff</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natasha – Global Office Staff</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sally – Administrator in Global Office</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan – Staff in Global Office</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lily – Faculty/Instructor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher – Director of Office of Indigenous Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilary – Administrator in Office of Indigenous Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill – Director Indigenous Student Services</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte – Director of Indigenous Student Research Center</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth – Faculty/Instructor in Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda – Instructor &amp; Administrator</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily – Student Services</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice – Teaching &amp; Learning</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie – Faculty/Instructor in Nursing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer – Faculty/Instructor in ESL</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William – Administrator in Global Office</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherry – Staff in Global Office</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D

Observation Protocol - Example

Event:

Date:

1. Who is supporting the event? Student group? University office?
2. Who is attending as audience members? Who is invited as guests?
3. How many are attending?
4. How is the event introduced to the audience?
5. Is there a presentation? Who is presenting?
6. Where is the event being held?
7. Were the terms Indigenization, International, or Intercultural invoked? How are they talked about and connected to the university?
8. How are people behaving in the audience? Engaging in the presentation?