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**TENSIONS IN INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION:  
SENSE MAKING, DECISION MAKING, AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**

**A Dissertation in**

**Higher Education**

by  
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## ABSTRACT

This study sought to understand faculty and administrator perspectives on international higher education. The focus of the study was on public research universities faculty and administrators, examining their approaches to sense making and decision making around tensions in international education within their organizational culture. The study took place at a large, public research university in the Northeastern region of the United States and encompassed 32 informant interviews, five participant observation, and a document analysis of 47 strategic plans.

The findings indicated that faculty and administrators organize their thinking on university internationalization around five key tensions: global versus local, profit versus engagement, public versus private, quality versus scale, and access versus prestige. In addition, the findings showed that faculty and administrators who frame those tensions in terms of complementary dialectics (Tracy, 2004) are the most motivated to both engage in internationalization and the most likely to construct arguments that motivate their colleagues to support their initiatives. Complementary dialectics, as opposed to simple contradictions and pragmatic paradoxes (Tracy, 2004) were also the most likely to be linked with perceived decisions by resolution, as opposed to decisions by flight or decisions by oversight (Cohen, March & Olson, 1972). The organizational culture of a public research university that roots its decisions in its land-grant mission and strong, global reputation seemed to influence how faculty and administrators made sense of and decisions around tensions in international higher education. The case study approach needed for the exploration of organizational culture limits transferability of findings to other institutions, but future research has an opportunity to build on this study to validate findings via both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

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## **CHAPTER 1: Introduction**

Increased cross-national mobility, emerging global economies, and the strong reputation of U.S. higher education around the world have led to rapid internationalization at American colleges and universities (Altbach, 2015). Internationalization is a broad area with often conflicting goals across diverse areas of activity, such as international student recruitment at the undergraduate and graduate levels, study abroad programs, international research partnerships and faculty collaborations, institutional partnerships, global service outreach, and online learning initiatives that help break down traditional barriers of time and space. Institutional motivations for internationalization at universities include profits, enhancing research and knowledge capacity, curriculum enhancement, and providing cross-cultural perspectives for students (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

Since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, internationalization has manifested as a key strategic priority for numerous universities across the U.S. (Bartell, 2003). The academic literature on international higher education has focused mostly on the external drivers of internationalization, such as demand for U.S. education around the world and other market factors. Yet, the importance of internal factors and culture in higher education is well-established (Kezar & Eckel, 2002; Sporn, 1996; Tierney, 2008. Tierney, 1988). Due to the many tensions and conflicting goals within and across internationalization initiatives, faculty and administrators must contemplate internationalization within a complex decision making environment, which encompasses internal and external pressures related to institutional mission and market demands, individual and collective sense making, decision making norms, and organizational culture. If scholars of international higher education fail to pay attention to the internal processes shaping internationalization at universities, they miss a critical piece of how faculty and administrators

approach this work. In addition, university leaders rely on international higher education scholarship to inform their practices and processes. As such, understanding how sense making, decision making, and organizational culture interact in shaping internationalization helps university leadership optimize their approaches when seeking to influence or implement initiatives.

This qualitative study seeks to contribute to the international higher education literature by investigating tensions in international higher education and examining sense making, decision making, and organizational culture in the context of these tensions. Rooted in a theoretical framework spanning the communication sciences, cognitive psychology, and organizational theory, the study employs the methodological approach of ethnography (Spradley, 1979), via the use of unstructured interviews, participant observations, and content analysis, to better understand how faculty and administrators make sense of tensions in internationalization and how this sense making drives their decisions in the context of their organizational culture.

### **Background of the Problem**

As globalization becomes an unalterable reality, university leaders have little choice but to embrace the internationalization of their campuses. Yet, internationalization involves many choices and requires frequent negotiations between tensions and conflicting goals (Altbach, 2015). Internationalization activities exist on a continuum of market-driven versus mission-driven goals. Market-driven goals emphasize institutional income from international enrollments or other international activities, as well as catering to audiences that seek out a college education with the primary goal to land lucrative and often global jobs upon graduation. Mission-driven goals emphasize global competencies as a key component of well-rounded personalities and

often position internationalization as a critical part of a university's Outreach mission. Tensions between these two dispositions frequently emerge as faculty and administrators engage in internationalization initiatives. However, market-driven and mission-driven goals may also become complementary if an internationalization initiative both increases revenue and increases global competencies, for example. In addition, mission-driven goals may stand in conflict with other mission-driven goals, like when a university pursues campus globalization by decreasing domestic enrollments. This study focuses on understanding how faculty and administrators navigate conflicting goals in their day-to-day work on internationalization initiatives.

Globalization frequently perpetuates privilege rather than promoting global equality. As Altbach & Knight (2007) write, "Globalization tends to concentrate wealth, knowledge, and power in those already possessing these elements. International academic mobility similarly favors well-developed education systems and institutions, thereby compounding existing inequalities" (p. 291). In addition to such hegemonic patterns inherent in conventional thinking around globalization, universities are operating in a changed political context due to reduced government funds, new immigration patterns, weakening local economies, and federal economic initiatives (Agnew, 2012). There is also an increasing sense of urgency to endow students with global competencies due to increasingly global economies and migration patterns (Agnew, 2012). The new economic realities at U.S. colleges and universities may have inspired a bias towards market-driven internationalization initiatives, such as recruiting international students in order to bolster enrollment income, conflicting with mission-focused initiatives, such as the desire to foster global citizenship in students, that promote the exchange of culture for its own sake.

International higher education contains various established and emerging models; however, three models are of particular importance to understanding how organizational culture shapes internationalization initiatives: established internationalization models, such as recruitment of international students to campus and study abroad programs, emerging internationalization models, such as transnational university partnerships and building branch campuses abroad, and innovative internationalization models, such as blended learning and online education. Because these models sit on a continuum from established to relatively new, a comparison among them may not only lead to important insights about faculty and administrator attitudes towards internationalization but towards innovation in general. In addition, each of the three models can emphasize either market-driven or mission-focused goals. Each model is motivated by external market forces in that they are all commonly pursued by colleges and universities across the United States and the world. Within each model, some items may be better positioned for net revenue generation than other items and thus will likely take on a more market-based focus, but the emphasis placed within each model when it comes to market or mission driven objectives may depend on internal factors contingent upon organizational culture and its resulting socialization of its actors.

Many public universities have increased their emphasis on international student recruitment at the same time as facing significant decreases in state funding (Lewin, 2012). As a result, many people now believe that international students are cash cows that provide lucrative revenue to cash-strapped institutions (Cantwell, 2015). International undergraduate students are especially attractive prospects to institutions because they nearly all pay full tuition (Cantwell, 2015). Changes towards seeing international higher education as an export industry were first noticed in the 1980s (Cai & Kivistö, 2013). More recently, the large influx of Chinese students



across U.S. universities has helped administrators keep budgets intact. However, critics of this new trend at public flagship universities point to problematic admissions dynamics as students from abroad are starting to receive spots traditionally taken by in-state residents, whose families pay the taxes that fund those institutions (Lewin, 2012). Faculty and administrators drawn to internationalization out of a desire to provide cultural diversity on campus must reckon with the reality that this may come at the cost of doing their traditional in-state student base a disservice. As such, market and mission goals as well as local mission and global mission goals can stand in direct conflict with each other. At the same time, mission-driven goals can also conflict with other mission-driven goals, with different priorities driving different actors' perspectives. Finally, mission-driven and market-driven goals may be seen as complementary within the larger university context, thus allowing for internationalization initiatives that emphasize both to take hold. Investigating how sense making, decision making, and organizational culture influence faculty and administrator perspectives on tensions in internationalization can help university leaders prioritize internationalization initiatives and devise effective communication strategies to obtain buy-in.

In addition to international student recruitment, partnerships between U.S. universities and academic institutions abroad are becoming increasingly common (Forest & Altbach, 2007). Such partnerships are often referred to as transnational education models. According to Bartell (2003), the global or transnational phase starts when organizations get involved in activities outside of their national origin. This means the U.S. institution enters into an agreement with a global partner institution that is considered mutually beneficial. Such agreements are often structured around blended learning models that combine face-to-face and online instruction. One example consists of a partnership between Arizona State University and Dublin City University,

which involved the establishment of the world's first International School of Biomedical Diagnostics (Keeler, 2013). In addition to international student recruitment to U.S. campuses, transnational models are another area in international higher education shaped by conflicting goals of profit and mission. On the one hand, global partnerships allow universities to access student populations that span beyond their traditional geographic boundaries, opening up new markets for revenue (Francois & Avoseh, 2016). On the other hand, transnational models are often advised specifically to counteract profit-driven international recruitment trends by truly engaging with localized institutions and populations across the world, thus avoiding a hegemonic approach to internationalization (Francois & Avoseh, 2016).

Online education presents a third model of international higher education reflecting the ongoing conflict between profit and mission. Although international students only make up between one and two percent of total online education enrollments in the U.S., 24% of U.S. online education providers consider international students a target audience (Allen et al., 2016). While the current reach of online programs remains mostly domestic, many argue that the growing demand for higher education across the world, combined with the global expansion of technology will lead to an increasing opportunity for universities to recruit international students into online programs (Bartell, 2003; Forest & Altbach, 2007; Sadykova & Dautermann, 2009). Many U.S. universities with robust online program offerings, like Penn State and Arizona State, advertise on their websites that the experience of studying with them at a distance involves meeting peers from all over the world. The name of Penn State's online platform, World Campus, in itself, promises a global experience.

However, due to the low participation by international students in U.S. online programs and the intercultural barriers exacerbated by technology, the marketing rhetoric for online

programs may sharply conflict with the actual experience (Ray et al., 2012). Overall, the potential for online programs to provide deep engagement between U.S. students and international audiences seems limited while the focus on building income takes precedence over nurturing students (Sadykova & Dautermann, 2009). Language barriers and intercultural differences in approaches to learning further exacerbate online education's problems when it comes to facilitating cultural exchange and engagement (Zhang & Ness, 2010). In addition, Sadykova & Dautermann, (2009) point to the "great potential for educational and cultural imperialism" (p. 1) inherent in online education, especially if the host institution is located in a wealthy, industrialized country. Faculty and administrators must navigate the complex dynamics of international student recruitment into online programs and situate conflicting goals in their organizational culture and context in order to prioritize between them.

The tensions across profit-driven and mission-driven objectives in all three of the models presented here, and in international higher education at large, affect how faculty and administrators make sense of internationalization and how they make decisions on proposed initiatives. Administrators will face decisions that relate to whether or not the institution has more of a market-focus, mission-focus, or an explicit effort to try to accomplish both goals at once. Understanding how organizational culture shapes their sense making and decision making processes and priorities may be key to driving successful innovations in the internationalization space. In turn, decision making norms and organizational culture also likely drive how a university measures the success of its internationalization efforts. Examples include the number of international students on campus, the amount of international research grants, the collaborative extent of international research projects, involvement in international partnerships, university- private sector partnerships with international goals, and the degree of international

infusion in curriculum content (Bartell, 2003, p. 57). Perhaps the least clearly defined outcome of international higher education is also the most heavily advertised: global citizenship. Jones et al. (2016) write that “this term suffers from a great diversity of conceptualizations [sic] and a lack of clear understanding of how it can be measured or whether it is even useful as a concept” (p. 3). While a compelling mission-driven goal for many, global citizenship remains too broad of a concept to justify a generous allocation of university resources by faculty and administrators, unless clear priorities around markets and missions have been defined and aligned with the organizational culture.

The examples of various and frequently conflicting market-driven and mission-driven goals provided in this background section illustrate the need for a comprehensive study on sense making and decision making on internationalization in higher education culture.

### **Statement of the Problem**

International higher education has emerged as an area of interest for higher education scholars as a result of the increasing presence of international students on U.S. campuses over recent decades and as an outcome of increasing participation of U.S. students in study abroad programs. As such, most of the scholarship on international higher education has focused on goals and outcomes of internationalization (Agnew, 2012; Altbach & Knight, 2007; Bartell, 2003; Dewey & Duff, 2009; Forest & Altbach, 2007). However, tensions between goals remain poorly understood, particularly when it comes to sense making and decision making of tensions in the context of organizational culture. Despite the “centrality of higher education institutions in the globalized world” (Vaira, 2004, p. 484), little research exists on how universities make sense out of and decisions around tensions in internationalization work. These sense making and

decision making processes matter in shaping both what universities choose to pursue and what they choose to ignore or delay.

Lately, trends in 21<sup>st</sup> century labor market needs have contributed to an increasing demand for international higher education initiatives, which has inspired public policies, encouraging internationalization of educational programs and scientific research (Forest & Altbach, 2007). Considering the ongoing shift from local to global economies, both countries and their institutions have begun to take a proactive rather than a reactive approach to internationalizing higher education, pursuing innovations and fast-paced adaptation to market trends (Bartell, 2003). However, this proactivity around external trends may have distracted scholars from seeking an understanding of organizational patterns and processes that shape internationalization initiatives, preventing effective innovation in the international higher education space. Sense making and decision making hold key roles in shaping organizational processes. In turn, organizational culture may hold a key role in shaping sense making and decision making.

Although faculty and administrators serve as the key decision makers on internationalization initiatives, surprisingly little work has been published that addresses the roles, responsibilities, and problems they face in their daily experiences of making sense of such initiatives and their goals (Dewey & Duff, 2009). When studying sense making and decision making, it is helpful to situate faculty and administrators within the context of their organizational culture because “an organization’s culture mediates globalization” (Tierney & Lanford, 2014, p. 290). Tierney (2008) views organizations “as an interpretive undertaking” rather than “a rationalized structure with clear decision-making processes” ( p. 2). While top-down decision making based on market pressures can happen in certain organizational settings, it

is unlikely to happen in higher education because universities tend to exemplify the natural systems perspective among organizational theorists (Scott & Davis, 2007). Market-driven and mission-driven goals merge into an accumulation of tensions that faculty and administrators must make sense of in their decision making process.

The procedure of negotiating tensions can be disorienting for faculty and administrators, which increases the relevance of organizational culture as a sense making and decision making filter. Tierney's (1997) approach to studying organizational culture at universities is rooted in anthropology and seeks to study the "webs of significance" from the actors' and decision makers' perspectives (Tierney, 1988, p. 4). This methodology allows researchers to understand initiatives' goals and actors' decision making processes. Tierney (1997) writes, "An organization's culture [...] teaches people how to behave, what to hope for, and what it means to succeed or fail" (p. 4). Further, Tierney (1997) places a key emphasis on socialization's role in shaping individuals' participation in the "re-creation rather than merely the discovery of a culture" (p. 16). Socialization may be a key element in how goals and decisions on international initiatives emerge in higher education. Agnew (2012) argues that the ways in which faculty members think about internationalization may influence how faculty members engage in the process of internationalization and, specifically, how to internationalize their curricular content (Agnew, 2012). Given the tensions around market-driven and missions-driven goals in international higher education, it is important to understand how faculty and administrators are socialized within an organizational culture and how their socialization shapes their priorities when making decisions on international initiatives.

A study of international higher education is necessarily also a study of change and innovation. According to Kezar & Eckel (2002), "the current change literature in higher education provides

mostly generalized strategies about what is effective: a willing president or strong leadership, a collaborative process, or providing rewards” (p. 435). In order to understand how change can occur at universities, how faculty and administrators can drive change in their departments and beyond, and how personal goals and attitudes interact with cultural concepts and institutional goals, it is important to place sense making and decision making on international higher education in the context of organizational culture. Yet, there have been few empirical studies examining how institutional culture affects change processes and strategies (Kezar & Eckel, 2002). This lack of research on change in higher education translates into a lack of understanding of change processes in international higher education.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study seeks to contribute to the higher education literature by linking sense making, decision making and organizational culture to better understand how faculty and administrators negotiate tensions, including tensions between market-driven and mission-driven goals as well as mission-driven and other mission-driven goals, when working on internationalization initiatives. The study uses a combination of ethnographic interviewing, participant observations, and document analysis to better understand how faculty and administrators make sense of their own and the university’s work in a global context. The study takes place at a large, public, land-grant university in the United States.

The study asks the following research questions:

R1: What are the key tensions faculty and administrators perceive when working on international higher education initiatives?

R2: How do faculty and administrators make sense of tensions when working on international higher education initiatives?

R3: How do sense making and decision making interact when faculty and administrators encounter tensions in international higher education?

R4: How does organizational culture shape sense making and decision making when faculty and administrators encounter tensions in international higher education?

Research question one will be answered in a first attempt via the literature review. The tensions identified in the literature review will then be coded in the informant data and supporting strategic plan documents. The codes used to frame the analysis for research question two and three will be based on theory in order to facilitate an inquiry into sense making and decision making. Tracy's (2004) framework on organizational tensions is rooted in Baxter's (1988; 1990) dialectical theory on relationship communication, which categorizes tensions into simple contradictions, complementary dialectics, and pragmatic paradoxes. Cohen, March & Olson's (1972) garbage can model of organizational choice categorizes decisions into decisions by resolution, decisions by flight, and decisions by oversight. The analysis for research question four will be structured by Tierney's (1988; 1997) theory of organizational culture in higher education, which encourages an anthropological lens to understand the making of meaning. However, open coding will supplement the theoretical framework for research question four in order to allow for the derivation of original and unique insights when it comes to organizational culture in international higher education. This study is based on 32 informant interviews with faculty and administrators at a public R1 university in the United States. The study builds on pilot interviews conducted during the spring of 2017., which were analyzed according to Spradley's (1979) ethnographic method, which emphasizes the iterative discovery of cultural



terms and themes, to inform a more traditional qualitative inquiry based on theory. In addition to interviews, five participant observations have been conducted, and 47 strategic planning documents have been analyzed.

### **Significance**

This study seeks to fill specific gaps in the international higher education literature and holds significant implications for university leaders and other constituencies seeking to influence university activities. World-wide, universities are using different strategies to facilitate internationalization, innovation and labor market integration (Pfothenauer et al., 2012). These change strategies often have an external focus, but will be infinitely more successful if they are rooted in an understanding of internal sense making and decisions making around tensions and the organizational cultures of the environments they are seeking to influence, particularly because changes in global economies and technologies necessitate proactive approaches rather than merely reactive ones (Bartell, 2003). This study may help university change agents save time and money while also facilitating more relationship-oriented processes that protect individuals' social capital in the workplace.

Internationalization is of critical importance to U.S. universities, who rely on income from international students and have enjoyed immense global prestige since World War II (Geiger, 2007). However, U.S. universities are facing increasing competition, mainly from Europe, Australia, and Canada, when it comes to attracting international students, faculty, and research partnerships (Geiger, 2007). This study can inform strategies at U.S. universities to facilitate more effective and efficient internationalization initiatives that align key decision makers around shared organizational values early in the process.

Internationalization is viewed as an organizational adaptation to external forces, but it requires an alignment of the internal culture with the internationalization objectives and strategies selected by the institution (Bartell, 2003). Faculty and administrators in pursuit of such an alignment tend to encounter numerous barriers. According to Dewey & Duff (2009), “International engagement involves extensive bureaucratic procedures and administrative red tape that is a burden to the faculty member” (p. 497). In addition, faculty often complain that internationalization activities require additional work and often lack appropriate learning outcomes (Jones et al., 2016). Because internationalization must take on the form of an individual-institution partnership and faculty alone do not have the capacity or responsibility to oversee full implementation of internationalization efforts, university administrators must coordinate, in collaboration with faculty, grounded in a mutual understanding of goals, rationales, and objectives (Dewey & Duff, 2009). Setting goals that motivate key actors and align with their beliefs requires a deep understanding of sense making, decision making, and organizational culture and socialization processes.

The study’s findings hold significance for public research universities because that is the setting in which it was conducted. The U.S. has 166 public research universities – 4 % of higher education institutions in the U.S. (Geiger, 2007). While qualitative research does not usually pursue generalizability (Fairweather & Rinne, 2012), this study assumes that decision makers in the study’s setting experience tensions common at other public research universities in the U.S., and that their sense making patterns and organizational influences are similar, as well. As such, the study proposes a roadmap for similar studies at other universities.

This study links tensions, sense making, decision making, and organizational culture to understand the complex processes that shape decision making in higher education, but it also

seeks to reveal more general patterns of human sense making and decision making in organizational and other group settings. The linking of theories, which span communication science, cognitive social psychology, organization science, and anthropology, facilitates an innovative inquiry into what motivates people to engage and withdraw when encountering tensions in personal and professional contexts.

### **Limitations**

Because this specific contribution focuses on one specific organizational setting, it does not pursue generalizability of findings across institutions of higher education. Generalizability, in this case, is limited to the assumed presence of a shared culture (Fairweather & Rinne, 2012) and processes at other public research universities in the United States. Neither does the study seek to establish causation between the organizational culture and perceived tensions, sense making, and decision making. Instead, the potential discovery of a framework for how perceived tensions, sense making, decision making, and organizational culture interact in shaping faculty and administrators' perspectives may inform similar case studies at other institutions or quantitative studies across similar organizational settings.

This study was conducted in the immediate aftermath of the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States, with pilot work occurring in the Spring of 2017 and the remaining data collection occurring in the Fall of 2017. Informants' perspectives on international higher education may have been impacted by federal policy proposals, such as the Immigration Ban on citizens of seven Middle Eastern and African countries, and the global backlash to Donald Trump's America-First rhetoric. Several informants contextualized their perspectives within the current political climate and stated that their work on internationalization has changed as a result

of the 2016 election. This shows that faculty and administrator perspectives on internationalization may substantially change over time, which may impact processes for sense making and decision making, as well.

### **Definition of Key Terms**

The following definitions are based on literature consulted for the purpose of this study. They do not reflect an attempt to provide an exhaustive definition of each term, nor should they be removed from the context of this study and applied to other research contexts.

#### Global Citizenship:

Global citizenship is an emerging objective in international higher education that has received increasing attention in university strategic plans and mission statements across the U.S. Theorized by Nussbaum (1998) as the ability to combine Socratic self-examination, awareness of other cultures, and narrative capability or empathy, the concept promises to equip students for more global careers as well as ethical and altruistic lives.

#### Decision Making:

Decision making refers to the processes faculty and administrator use to advance or halt internationalization initiatives in the university setting. This study relies on Cohen, March & Olson's (1972) garbage can model of organizational choice, which uses the following three categories for decision making: decision by resolution, decision by oversight, and decision by flight.

### Innovation:

For the purpose of this study, innovation refers to activities in higher education that expand the traditional function of the university with regards to teaching, research, and service. Introduced by Christensen (1997), the theory of disruptive innovation was later applied to the higher education context by Christensen & Eyring (2012), predicting that technology-driven, lower-cost, scalable education solutions will outcompete traditional university models over time.

### University Partnerships:

Partnerships between institutions in the U.S. and other countries involve the formal declaration of a partnership that then can encompass a variety of components, such as research exchanges, study abroad agreements, joint degrees, and the establishment of physical centers on the partner institution's campus.

### Transnational Education:

According to Bartell (Bartell, 2003), the transnational phase of globalization starts when organizations get involved in activities outside of their national origin. This means that international initiatives that involve partnerships with institutions located outside the U.S. can be considered transnational. The term "transnational" is often used in juxtaposition to export-oriented models, which seek to recruit students into educational programs without modifying these programs to reflect the needs or preferences of global audiences.

### Blended Learning:

According to the Christensen Institute Website (2016), blended learning facilitates student learning at least partially online and partially in a brick-and-mortar setting. As such,

blended learning often constitutes the basis for transnational university partnerships, allowing for interactions between students in different campus locations in addition to localized face-to-face instruction.

### Branch Campuses:

Branch campuses, a strategy for universities to create a physical presence in international locations, constitute a popular approach to internationalization, which seems to have peaked around 2010 and since declined, with several branch campuses closing. According to Altbach (2011), many branch campuses were established in the Arabian Gulf, where several countries welcomed and paid for branch campuses as part of their educational growth strategies. Academic freedom, intellectual property rights, lower than expected enrollments, and other challenges contributed to the decline in branch campus operations (Altbach, 2011).

### Online Learning:

While distance education has existed for a long time, online learning began via the web in 1994. By the fall of 2010, almost one-third of U.S. postsecondary students were taking at least one course online (Hill, 2012). The emergence of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) has contributed to widespread expectations in academia that online learning can broaden access to higher education worldwide (Jones et al., 2016).

### Internationalization:

The term internationalization, in the higher education context, refers to processes through which universities seek engagement with international constituents, including the recruitment of

international students, the facilitation of study abroad and exchange programs, the establishment and maintenance of partnerships with universities abroad, and the integration of international perspectives into the university curriculum (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Ellingboe, 1998).

### Organizational Culture:

Organizational Culture has emerged as a field of interest in higher education over recent decades. This study, while leaning on key theories of organizational culture (Cohen, March, & Olsen, 1972; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Etzioni, 1964; Hannan & Freeman, 1977; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Scott & Davis, 2007; Weick, 1976; Christensen & Eyring, 2012), uses Tierney's (2008; 1997; 1988) theory of organizational culture to examine culture in the administrative context of higher education. Tierney (1988) writes that, "An organization's culture is reflected in what is done, how it is done, and who is involved in doing it. It concerns decisions, actions, and communication both on an instrumental and a symbolic level (p. 3)." He further writes that, "The culture of an organization is grounded in the shared assumptions of individuals participating in the organization. Often taken for granted by the actors themselves, these assumptions can be identified through stories, special language, norms, institutional ideology, and attitudes that emerge from individual and organizational behavior" (p. 4). This study views culture as the processes that inform the collective making of meaning, which informs decision making in organizations.

### Sense Making:

Sense making in organizational culture has been widely studied and applied to various organizational setting (Weick et al., 2005). For the purpose of this study, sense making refers to

individual sense making within an organizational culture (Harris, 1994). As such, the focus lies on how concepts from the organizational culture manifest in individuals' sense making structure and processes.

### Globalization:

Bartell (2003) presents university globalization as an advanced state of the process of internationalization. In a broader sense, globalization describes the process of transforming key social life facets, such as culture, politics, the economy, and social relations in the context of global trends (Vaira, 2004). Bradley et al. (2000) consider globalization a meta-myth that brings together a constellation of other myths associated with it. This socially constructed meta-myth is used at political, economic, cultural and even every-day-life level to make sense of the occurring social transformation and to undertake actions in accordance with it.



## **CHAPTER 2: Review of the Literature**

### **Introduction**

This chapter provides an overview of five key tensions pervading university internationalization initiatives, as reflected in the higher education literature since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century: global versus local, profit versus engagement, public versus private, quality versus scale, and access versus prestige. Where permitted by sufficient depth in the literature, I organize the discussion around the three internationalization models highlighted in this study: established internationalization models, involving international student recruitment and study abroad initiatives, emerging internationalization models, involving global university partnerships and branch campuses, and innovative internationalization models, such as online education and blended learning.

The second half of this chapter focuses on theory and establishes a framework of theories used in the study. It also provides an overview of my pilot work preceding this study in the spring of 2017. The guiding theory on sense making in organizational settings and the workplace and is derived from Tracy's (2004) framework for classifying employees' sense making of organizational tensions. The guiding theory on decision making leans on Cohen, March & Olson's (1972) Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice. Finally, the guiding theory on organizational culture utilizes Tierney's (1988) essential classifications for organizational culture in higher education.

The sources for this literature review span the past two decades, during which U.S. universities have significantly increased their internationalization activities in the areas of resident instruction, university partnerships, and online learning. The majority of sources constitute peer-reviewed journal articles or books by academics who publish regularly on topics

related to international higher education. On occasion, non-academic sources, such as digital newspaper articles, are cited to provide current data on internationalization activities at U.S. universities.

From the literature, it is evident that little research has been done on how faculty and administrators make sense of tensions in internationalization initiatives and how they make decisions in their context. The lack of focus on sense making and decision making around conflicting goals further builds a case for a more culture-oriented approach to studying international higher education.

## **Tensions in International Higher Education**

### Global vs. Local

Internationalization initiatives in higher education must navigate tensions that can appear mutually exclusive to faculty and administrators in the decision making process. One such tension exists between global and local missions. This tension can refer to the global mission of the university as opposed to its own local mission of serving students in its national and regional context, as well as the global mission of the university as opposed to local missions of potential partner institutions abroad, foreign governments, cities, families, and individuals. While the literature offers substantial perspectives on how global missions of Western universities can undermine local contexts abroad, not much literature exists on how a university's global mission may conflict with its own local objectives. As such, the literature may be missing the perceived risk of withholding resources from local, regional, or national constituents, which holds particular relevance at public land-grant universities in the U.S., who have an explicit commitment to students and families in their own states.

Meanwhile, the literature extensively highlights a heightened focus on global competencies across higher education. According to Bartell (2003), the “increased need for intercultural and international understanding and knowledge” has made university internationalization an urgent priority (p. 49). Ray et al. (2012) write that intercultural exchange constitutes a well-established objective of international education. According to Agnew (2013), reduced public funding, emerging trends in immigration, declining local economies, and federal commercial enterprises have formed a shifting political context for higher education, which emphasizes the need to instill students with global competencies in order to live and work in a globalized world. Tierney & Lanford (2014) write that “the emergence of knowledge-intensive [global] trade makes colleges and universities central to workforce development in the twenty-first century” (p. 285). Jones et al. (2016) write that global citizenship constitutes a frequent goal of internationalization in higher education, but critique the term for its diverse definitions and lack of measurability.

Next to establishing global competencies as a key outcome, the literature also highlights the potential for the inequality that is seemingly inherent in university internationalization. Altbach & Knight (2007) draw parallels between globalization’s tendency to contain wealth, knowledge, and power in already privileged groups and the tendency of international academic mobility to perpetuate inequalities. They also call into question that internationalization initiatives mainly flow from wealthy Northern countries to the developing world without allowing for an equal exchange of cultural values (Altbach & Knight, 2007). In the context of partnerships between institutions from wealthy countries and developing countries, Francois & Avoseh (2016) argue that linguistic imperialism pervades transnational education, with language being the most reliable transmitter of cultural values from one society to another. They further

write that English, as the dominant language in transnational education programs, “helps further western educational diplomacy as a force for western-style democracy in developing countries” (p. 15). As such, the global missions of U.S. universities seem to carry an inherent potential for undermining local missions at partner institutions abroad as well as the local contexts they affect across the world.

In order to mitigate this risk of undermining local contexts, Ramirez (2011) addresses the necessity to acknowledge the local requirements of partner universities abroad in addition to the willingness to help them meet those needs in order to arrive at an equitable education and reduced disparities across institutions. Similarly, Bartell (2003) emphasizes that engagement in international activities no longer constitutes an optional activity for societal elites, but rather a mandatory competency, which requires U.S. universities to take responsibility for a transformative approach to internationalization. These scholarly appeals to U.S. university administrations to carefully navigate internationalization as a necessary but inherently imperialistic endeavor highlights the tension between global and local missions, which is likely to affect sense making and decision making for faculty and administrators working on internationalization initiatives.

The tension between global and local missions also emerges as a key theme in the literature on online education. According to Sadykova & Dautermann (2009), the growing demand for higher education across the world along with the rapidly expanding use of technology permit online education to serve a potentially world-wide market. However, they argue that, the global digital divide and the predominance of host institutions from wealthy, industrialized countries also equip online education with a potential for “educational and cultural imperialism” (Sadykova & Dautermann, 2009, p. 90). Zhang & Ness (2010) write that online

learners are more likely to be exposed to a greater variety of learning experiences than learners confined by geographical limitations, which may allow them to experience different cultural conditions and expectations. However, they critique that “web-based instruction is based on the particular epistemologies, learning theories, and goal orientations” of the host institution, which makes it impossible for the content to remain culturally neutral (Zhang & Ness, 2010, p. 19).

While the tension between global missions of the host institution and the local missions of partner universities and constituencies abroad is well-established, the literature lacks a clear focus on a potential tension between global and local missions within the institution that seeks to internationalize. This study will inquire into such a potential tension and trace how it may affect sense making and decision making for faculty working on internationalization initiatives, as well as how their organizational culture shapes their perspectives in this context.

### Public vs. Private

The growing debate on whether higher education should function as a public good or a private gain is significant for international higher education. In light of shrinking state appropriations combined with escalating costs (Geiger, 2007), public research universities benefit from the enrollment of international students, who almost always self-fund their tuition (Altbach & Knight, 2007), pay out-of-state rates, and often pay additional fees (Cantwell, 2015). However, the revenue potential tied to international students may stand in direct contrast to a responsibility to educate in-state students, whose families pay the taxes that fund public universities. While the literature on international higher education does occasionally address the tensions between public and private missions, it does not address how faculty and administrators make sense out of it, how they negotiate this tension when making decisions, and how

organizational culture may affect their actions and perspectives in this context. As such, this literature review focuses on establishing that a tension between public and private missions exist, while this study seeks to better understand sense making and decision making around it.

Increasing costs, coupled with decreasing state funding, pressure many public universities into seeking alternate funding sources. According to Geiger, (2007) “the idea that public universities would provide service to their communities, states, and the nation as a whole is at the foundation of the land-grant ideal,” but the funding for this idea is now uncertain (p. 5). As a result, “a subtle but detectible shift toward the privatization of public higher education” has occurred (Geiger, 2007, p. 5). Altbach (2002) writes that internationalization trends worldwide now follow market demands. In addition, Altbach & Knight (2007) assert that “current thinking sees international higher education as a commodity to be freely traded and sees higher education as a private good, not a public responsibility” (p. 291). Such a market-driven approach contradicts the traditional idea of public higher education, confronting faculty and administrators working on internationalization initiatives with a seeming paradox.

This paradox only deepens when foreign regulatory barriers affect how a university operates in international markets. Many governments around the world regulate their education markets differently than the U.S., not requiring foreign universities to pursue registration, licensing, and accreditation. According to Altbach & Knight (2007), this lack of regulation puts quality of education offerings at risk because it opens doors for commercial, for-profit providers, who may lack rigor in their programs and pursue profit over solid learning outcomes. This dynamic creates two potential problems for reputable, public U.S. universities seeking to internationalize. One, entering a foreign market without accreditation as a public university contradicts the tradition at the core of the institution: collaboration with governments and the

pursuit of the public good. Two, establishing brand awareness in a market saturated by low-quality for-profit providers may harm the reputation of the university because it may be perceived as low-quality as well. Consequently, public and private missions collide when public universities target international markets.

Concerns about a disproportionate focus on profit also pervade the literature on transnational education and university partnerships. According to Francois & Avoseh (2016), transnational education programs allow institutions in Western countries to produce additional income that can alleviate budget cuts. In addition to university partnerships, many institutions have also responded to fiscal challenges by creating entrepreneurial ventures in collaboration with industry partners. Vaira (2004) calls this the entrepreneurial model, which first and foremost allows universities to “cope with the challenges in their new task environment and constitute the pathway to pursue restructuring processes” (p. 490). Such restructuring processes steer the institutional core away from a focus on a public mission and make a focus on privatization more and more commonplace.

Many perspectives in the international higher education literature voice the concern that the increasing focus on privatization in the sector may ultimately make universities irrelevant. According to Marginson (2011), “If the work of higher education institutions is defined simply as the aggregation of private interests, this evaporates the rationale for higher education institutions as distinctive social foundations with multiple public and private roles” (p. 411). Responding to the argument that public and private missions are reconcilable, Marginson (2011) calls into question who the public good belongs to in this case and whose interests it serves. Faculty and administrators must reckon with the tension between public and private missions, which involves balancing long-term concerns about the survival of their institution with short-

term concerns about fueling the bottom line. However, the current literature on international higher education lacks perspectives on how faculty and administrators think through this challenge and how it affects their decisions. Further, the literature lacks focused material on how organizational culture filters faculty and administrator perspectives with regards to the tension between public and private missions.

### Quality vs. Scale

Another tension faculty and administrators must negotiate when working on internationalization initiatives consists of the perceived contradiction between quality and scale. Online education is especially affected by this tension because online courses can increase the number of students without requiring additional physical space or, potentially, instructor hours. In addition to online education, for-profit institutions often achieve scale by increasing class sizes, establishing learning centers around geographies, and keeping admissions requirements at a low level of rigor. The literature on international higher education and online education shows how the connection between online education and the for-profit sector may cause an instinctive distrust among faculty and administrators when confronted with the goal of scaling student size or the number of instructional locations. However, the literature contains very limited material with a direct focus on how faculty and administrators think through the tension of quality versus scale, and how this tension affects their sense making and decision making in their organizational culture.

Quality and scale are tightly linked in the international higher education literature. According to Altbach & Knight (2007), many so-called accreditation mills sell accreditation without government legitimacy or independent assessment. Even legitimate universities looking



to scale via global partnerships with other universities face quality challenges. Altbach & Knight (2007) emphasize that many higher education institutions have adequate quality-assurance processes for domestic delivery, but encounter challenges inherent in working cross-culturally, in a foreign regulatory environment and, potentially, with a foreign partner. These challenges include academic entry requirements, student examination and assessment procedures, faculty workload, delivery modes, curricular adaptation, ensuring quality teaching, academic and sociocultural support for students, and title and level of award (Altbach & Knight, 2007, p. 302). This list of challenges demonstrates that the pursuit of scale comes at a cost and may diminish educational quality. Faculty and administrators must navigate this tension when working on internationalization initiatives.

McPherson & Bacow (2015) illustrate the link between online education and for-profit institutions, writing that for-profit universities that operate as chains are particularly likely to use online formats and suggesting that economies of scale are important to the economics of online learning. They conclude that use of online learning appears to be inversely proportional to prestige and selectivity (McPherson & Bacow, 2015, p. 138). In addressing faculty attitudes toward online education, McPherson & Bacow (2015) report that some faculty fear that technology may weaken their relationships with their students and worry that they could isolate themselves from students by embedding courses in a digital environment. McPherson & Bacow (2015) also report that many students enjoy face-to-face interaction with their professors, at least at places where such interaction is common and expected. Thus, quality seems to stand in direct contrast to scale because scale is perceived to diminish face-to-face interactions and hinder the development of genuine relationships between instructors and their students.

The emergence of massive open online courses (MOOCs) has further linked online education with scale and has exacerbated concerns about whether quality is possible in an online learning environment. McPherson & Bacow (2015) claim that MOOCs have plateaued after failing to meet the expectations of their advocates in terms of increasing scale and access, lowering cost, and disrupting the traditional model of higher education. Online education has also increased the perception of knowledge as an “economically exchangeable product,” adding to the myth of a knowledge society and its dependence on information technologies (Vaira, 2004, p. 492). While the tension between scale, online education, and quality seems apparent in the literature, more research is needed on how faculty and administrators make sense out of this tension, how it affects their decision making when working on internationalization initiatives, and how organizational culture affects how decision makers negotiate between quality and scale.

#### Profit vs. Engagement

The perception that profit motives may stand in contrast to a desire to engage and nurture students constitutes another tension in international higher education, which is related to the quality versus scale tension, but emphasizes different nuances. While earning profit seems to remain a secondary goal to knowledge exchange, at least in the not-for-profit sector, the profits international students provide for universities as well as their host countries are undeniable. According to Altbach & Knight (2007), many countries, including Australia, Canada, the UK, and the U.S., recruit international students to earn profits by charging high fees for student visas. In addition, international graduate students often deliver research and teaching services for modest payment. Finally, international students spend substantial sums of money in their host countries (Altbach & Knight, 2007, p. 292). According to Pfotenhauer et al. (2012), governments

across the globe are devising strategies to profit from the vast demand for higher education coming from internationally mobile students. This may lead to concerns among faculty and staff that their institutions and government want to exploit international students rather than engage them at a deep level and contribute to their personal and professional growth. How faculty and administrators make sense of this tension, how it influences their decision making, and how organizational culture affects approaches to this tension remains unclear in the literature.

In addition to recruitment into on-campus programs, universities and governments can profit from recruiting students into programs that allow students to earn an international degree without leaving their home countries. According to Altbach & Knight (2007), “Many international higher education services— focused on profits—provide access to students in countries lacking the domestic capacity to meet the demand. Access can take many forms: branch campuses, franchised foreign academic programs or degrees, or independent institutions based on foreign academic models” (p. 293). Francois & Avoseh (2016) write that, despite the market-driven nature of transnational education, it does hold a potential for self-transcendent learning, thus illustrating a reconciliatory perspective on the tension between profit and engagement. When it comes to entrepreneurial partnerships between universities and the private sector, Minola, Donina & Meoli (2016) report that university internationalization increases students’ human capital and deepens the university’s impact on students’ entrepreneurship (p. 566). Again, this illustrates that profit and engagement can go hand in hand, opening up a perspective for faculty and administrators seeking to reconcile the tension between the two goals.

In online education, such a reconciliation may seem more difficult because for-profit schools are crowding the market with a prevalent focus on building income rather than nurturing students (Sadykova & Dautermann, 2009). The literature seems to lack studies that measure how

faculty and administrators navigate the tension between profit and engagement and how organizational culture shapes their decision making and sense making in its context. Such research could also help illuminate whether faculty and administrators approach the tension between profit and engagement differently across more well-established models like on-campus recruitment of international students and study abroad as opposed to more innovative models like branch campuses and recruitment of international students into online programs.

### Prestige vs. Access

Faculty and administrators involved in internationalization plan initiatives that not only affect their institutions' resources and missions, but also its prestige. Many internationalization efforts seek to increase educational access for underserved populations around the world. Online education, in particular, is often seen as a potential equalizer that could open doors to higher education for people in developing countries without requiring them to leave their families, absorb exorbitant travel and living expenses abroad, and face work and income restrictions due to their visa status. However, the more access a university strives to provide, the less selective it becomes about admissions criteria, which is likely to hurt its prestige. This tension between prestige and access is well-reflected in the literature on international higher education, but the literature lacks perspectives on how faculty and administrators make sense of this tension, how their sense making affects their decisions, and how organizational culture shapes their thinking in this context.

Internationalization efforts at elite universities have traditionally focused on recruiting the best and brightest students from around the world to their campuses in order to facilitate the pursuit of knowledge and intercultural exchange. According to Altbach & Knight (2007), top

U.S. colleges and universities internationalize in order to foster cross-cultural perspectives for their students and to enrich their curricula. Consequently, “traditional internationalization is rarely a profit-making activity, though it may enhance the competitiveness, prestige, and strategic alliances of the college” (Altbach & Knight, 2007, p. 293). Campus-based internationalization at prestigious universities involves study-abroad experiences, curriculum enrichment via international studies majors or area studies, an emphasis on foreign-languages, and subsidies for high-achieving international students to study on campus (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Such initiatives focus on the reward of merit and cater to global elites, which makes them prestige-driven.

Access-driven or demand-absorbing internationalization caters to students who could not otherwise attend a postsecondary institution. According to Altbach & Knight (2007), “The less prestigious end of the higher education system offers most demand-absorbing programs” (p. 294). As a result, the market for internationalization initiatives spans students lacking access at home and willing to enter almost any educational setting to “carefully targeted elite students in small, high-quality programs” (Altbach & Knight, 2007, p. 295). The noble intention of increasing international access to a prestigious public research university in the U.S. thus creates an instant tension with the need to preserve the prestige of the institution, which is tied to exclusivity. Faculty and administrators working on internationalization initiatives must reckon with their own principles if they desire to increase access but end up merely endorsing the recruitment of more elite students, who have ample educational opportunities elsewhere and can pay full out-of-state tuition.

The tension of access versus prestige is not new. According to Marginson (2011), “knowledge and ease of mobility have always been largely monopolised by social and scholarly

élites. Modernisation expands the circle of beneficiaries, a process quickened by global convergence. This is the democratising potential of globalisation and global higher education: reflexive human agency spreads outwards within a thickening world society” (p. 417). From this perspective, modernizations, such as technology-based university partnerships and online education, increase educational access beyond elites, but this democratizing trend also makes knowledge and university credentials more ubiquitous. Yet, according to Altbach (2002),

deep inequalities undergird many of the current trends in globalization and internationalization. [...]. A few countries dominate global scientific systems, the new technologies are owned primarily by multinational corporations or academic institutions in the major Western industrialized nations, and the domination of English creates advantages for the countries that use English as the medium of instruction and research. (p. 6)

Faculty and administrators may assert that their institutions’ approach to internationalization perpetuates inequality rather than increase access. According to Altbach & Knight (2007a), internationalization involves choices, such as deciding whether to condone that globalization tends to focus wealth, knowledge, and power in those who already have it. If faculty and administrators actively seek to counteract this trend, they face the difficult task of disrupting international academic mobility, which privileges well-established institutions and sophisticated education systems, thereby exacerbating inequalities” (Altbach & Knight, 2007, p. 291). Bartell (2003) suggests that internationalization initiatives exist on a continuum between symbolic and transformative, with symbolic initiatives emphasizing small, elite groups of international constituents and transformative initiatives emphasizing curricular reform and

impact on all university stakeholders, including domestic students, faculty, administrators, and the broader university community (p. 51-52)

The international higher education literature remains insubstantial on how faculty and administrators navigate the tension of prestige versus access, but it does contain a significant number of perspectives on higher education's imperative to combat inequality. According to Ramirez (2011), "The importance of higher education as a means of combatting social inequalities and fostering the scientific, technological and social growth of a society is an objective that must not be overlooked" (p. 322). When it comes to online education, the tension between prestige and access prevails, despite the potential of online education's reach to level the playing field and deliver elite institutions' educational materials to underserved populations across the world. According to McPherson & Bacow (2015), "more-selective and prestigious colleges and universities make less use of fully online courses than other institutions do" and "it is at the less-selective institutions that innovations in online education that can lower cost, expand availability, and/or increase convenience of access have a good chance of succeeding" (p. 139). In addition, McPherson & Bacow (2015) argue that, at selective institutions, instructional technologies may in fact raise rather than lower costs. Thus, the literature makes it apparent that reconciling the tension between access and prestige is difficult, which suggests that faculty and administrators working on internationalization may feel conflicted about the initiatives' goals and implications for global inequality. More research is needed on how faculty and administrators make sense of this tension, how it affects their decision making when working on internationalization initiatives, and how organizational culture shapes their thinking in this context.

## Conclusion

This literature review described five tensions in international higher education: global versus local, public versus private, quality versus scale, profit versus engagement, and prestige versus access. While these five tensions are evident in the literature, faculty and administrator sense making and decision making in their context are currently not well understood. In addition, the literature lacks substantial perspectives on how organizational culture may facilitate faculty and administrator attitudes towards them.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The following section outlines the preliminary theoretical framework for this study, which emerged from my pilot research in the spring semester of 2017, covering theories on organizational tensions, sense making, decision making, and organizational culture. My data analysis synthesizes these theories into a model specific to tensions in international higher education through the use of ethnographic approach (Spradley, 1979).

## Pilot Work

During the spring of 2017, I conducted pilot research with the goal of gaining an initial understanding of faculty and administrator perspectives on higher education internationalization and global innovation and to refine my research questions. I conducted five pilot interviews, which I then transcribed and coded. My preliminary findings suggested that faculty and administrators organize their thinking about internationalization in dualistic tensions, which are reflected in the literature (Agnew & VanBalkom, 2009; Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009). My findings also suggested that faculty and administrators are socialized within their



organizational cultures to hold preferences for one side of a tension, for example mission over market, rather than intuitively seeking to reconcile seemingly conflicting goals. This finding allowed me to revise my literature review around tensions, demonstrating the effectiveness of an iterative approach (Dey, 1993).

As a result of this pilot research, I began consulting the literature specifically with regards to dualistic or dialectic sense making in organizational settings. While I have not located corresponding studies in the higher education literature, I found a study by Tracy (2004) that builds on Baxter's dialectical theory of communication strategies and contradictions in relationship development (1988; 1990), applying it to reactions to tensions in organizational interaction. Demonstrating the elasticity of Baxter's (1988; 1990) work, Tracy (2004) argues that employees frame organizational contradictions in one of three ways: as simple contradictions (cannot do two actions at once, but can alternate and choose one), as complementary dialectics (not viewing the tension as tension through reframing), or as a pragmatic paradox or double bind (to obey is to disobey and to disobey is to obey). In leaning on literature from organizational psychology (Watzlawick et al., 1967), Tracy argues that framing a tension as a double bind is the most debilitating approach to responding to contradictions in the work place because it leads to burn out and anxiety. Tracey (2004) further argues that contradictions in the work place are natural and are best approached as complementary dialectics, which allow employees to engage tensions with minimal inner conflicts.

Tracy's (2004) work is applicable to my study, which focuses on sense making and decision making around tensions and contradictions in international higher education. Specifically, I use Tracy's (2004) framework for my inquiry into sense making, both in terms of

faculty and administrators' personal sense making of tensions and in terms of applying concepts from organizational culture to sense making. It also lends itself to an inquiry into decision making because it helps reveal how organizational stakeholders evaluate conflicting priorities.

As part of my pilot research, my approach to my interview protocol and questions also evolved. Rather than probing for specific tensions, I found that asking informants to describe their experience with international initiatives tends to organically reveal parts of the work they feel conflicted about or express concerns that others in the organization do not agree with their perspectives. This allowed me to code for tensions without adding my own bias to informants' responses, but I could probe for elaborations when necessary. Tracy's (2004) framework then allowed me to code informant approaches to sense making of the tensions they describe as either simple contradictions, complementary dialectics, or pragmatic paradoxes. There was no need for me to introduce these terms into my interview protocol because I could engage informants by asking them generally about their goals for international initiatives and specifically ask them to provide examples of conflicts they have experienced when working on them. In order to learn about decision making, I then asked informants to give me examples of decisions they have been a part of and describe how they happened.

My pilot research did not involve participant observations or content analysis as I see them as supplementary to interviews for the purpose of my study. I used participant observations and content analysis to validate my findings from the interviews as well as further understand organizational culture and behavior rather than individual accounts of both (Jerolmack & Khan, 2014).

### Theories Framing the Study

In order to frame my preliminary understanding of how faculty and administrators may make sense of tensions when working on internationalization initiatives and how they make decisions in the context of their organizational cultures, I consulted three theories: Tracy's (2004) framework for analysis of organizational tension, Cohen, Olson's & March's (1972) garbage can model of organizational choice, and Tierney's (1988) theory of organizational culture in higher education.

Tracy (2004) adapts Baxter's (1990) theory of dialectical contradictions in relationship development and applies it to organizational settings. Using data gathered at correctional facilities, she categorizes employees' framing of organizational tensions into three categories: simple contradictions, complementary dialectics, and pragmatic paradoxes. Simple contradictions occur when framing the tension as a contradiction, meaning the belief that one cannot do two actions at once, but can alternate and choose one. Complementary dialectics are achieved when reframing the tension as reconcilable. Pragmatic paradoxes are perceived when framing the tension as paradox or double-bind, for example thinking that to obey is to disobey and to disobey is to obey. Tracy (2004) leans on literature from organizational psychology to suggest that viewing a tension as complementary dialectics is the most beneficial approach to employee morale and retention while viewing a tension as a pragmatic paradox or double bind is the most detrimental. I applied this framework to my study by linking it to the five tensions in international higher education identified in the literature review. Further, I created subcategories for the three models of internationalization of particular interest to this study, wondering if faculty and administrator attitudes toward tensions change when they are discussed in different contexts on a continuum from well-established to innovative.

While this theory is not specific to tensions in international higher education or even higher education in general, its strength is evident in Tracy's (2004) ability to adapt it from the field of relationship communications and apply it to an organizational setting. In addition, I am deliberate in my choice to blend theories with and without a specific higher education context in order to account for both individual and cultural sense making and decision making behavior.

The second theory informing this study is Cohen, Olson & March's (1972) Garbage Can Model of organizational choice. Considering universities as organized anarchies "characterized by problematic preferences, unclear technology, and fluid participation," the authors view academia as "collections of choices looking for problems, issues and feelings looking for decision situations in which they might be aired, solutions looking for issues to which they might be an answer, and decision makers looking for work" (p. 1). In this context, the authors argue that decisions are made in three different ways: by resolution, by oversight, or by flight (p. 8). Decisions by resolution "resolve problems after some period of working on them" (p. 8) Decisions by oversight "will be made without any attention to existing problems and with a minimum of time and energy" (p. 8). A decision by flight "resolves no problems; they now having attached themselves to a new choice" (p. 8-9). Coding my informants' accounts of decisions in internationalization according to these three decision styles allowed me to inquire into how their framing of tensions and their sense making processes may affect decision making, or at least perceived style of decision making.

The final framework informing this study is Tierney's (1988, 1997, 2008) theory of organizational culture in higher education. Applying an interpretivist perspective to the organizational environment, Tierney (2008) argues that it is socially constructed rather than objective. As such,

Organizational culture exists [...] through the actor's interpretation of historical and symbolic forms. The culture of an organization is grounded in the shared assumptions of individuals participating in the organization. Often taken for granted by the actors themselves, these assumptions can be identified through stories, special language, norms, institutional ideology, and attitudes that emerge from individual and organizational behavior. (Tierney, 1988, p. 4)

Tierney (1997) argues that socialization of faculty and administrators vis-à-vis communication influences how people behave, what they hope for, and what it means to succeed or fail (p. 4). However, "socialization involves a give-and-take where new individuals make sense of an organization through their own unique backgrounds and the current contexts in which the organization resides" (Tierney, 1997, p. 6). Once an individual is socialized, he or she participates in the recreation of culture rather than the mere discovery of it.

This theory organized my findings around six categories Tierney (1988) proposes: mission, environment, socialization, information, strategy, and leadership (p. 8). It supports my study as a legitimate inquiry into how socialization processes among faculty and administrators create shared beliefs, preferences, and behavior. Due to the interpretive nature of Tierney's (1988, 1997, 2008) work and of the ethnographic approach (Spradley, 1979) in my study, there is no need to isolate which beliefs and behaviors are caused by a shared culture and which are individual. Instead, Tierney's (1988) lens allows me to understand individual perspectives as likely contributors to shared culture as perceived by other individuals, rather than as a rationally observable fact. As such, individual and cultural perspectives blend together into socially constructed perceived realities that inform perceived tensions, sense making, and decision making in the context of internationalization initiatives.

## Conclusion

This section of the Literature Review covered three theories that frame my study and contribute to an iterative building of insights in accordance with Spradley's (1979) approach to ethnographic interviewing. These theories allowed me to develop codes to guide my data analysis. The section also explained how my pilot work in the spring of 2017 has helped me narrow the focus of my study on tensions, sense making, and decision making in the context of organizational culture, thus enabling me to more confidently probe for emerging themes in my data collection.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

This study seeks to understand sense making and decision making processes and arrive at understanding about how organizational culture shapes perceived tensions around internationalization initiatives in higher education. A combination of ethnographic interviewing, participant observation, and content analysis was used to answer the study's research questions.

When conducting the pilot work for this study, I employed Spradley's (1979) method of ethnographic interviewing, which entails the discovery of cultural terms and themes via field work and with a strong emphasis on reflexivity to prevent initial biases on behalf of the researcher. According to Spradley (1979), "Ethnography all begins with the same general problem: what are the cultural meanings people are using to organize their behavior and interpret their experience?" (p. 93). Further, Spradley (1979) writes that "cultural knowledge is ... an intricately patterned system of symbols" (p. 97). The tensions in internationalization examined in this study can be considered as cultural knowledge. The faculty and administrators participating in this study revealed cultural knowledge through expressing their attitudes and beliefs, as well as through observed behavior. Conducting this field work and related analysis alongside the development of my literature review allowed for an iterative approach of using early findings to inform the theoretical framework of the study. Once the theoretical framework was established, my data analysis moved away from Spradley's (1979) method, adopting a more traditional approach to coding based on themes suggested by theory. Content analysis was added to compare individual goals with stated institutional goals. Thus, the study is interested in how individual behaviors and cultural behaviors co-exist and how they may interact in shaping internationalization initiatives. Research question one was answered via the literature

review. The tensions identified in the literature review were then coded in the informant data and supporting strategic plan documents. The codes used to frame the analysis for research question two and three are based on theory in order to facilitate an inquiry into sense making and decision making. Tracy's (2004) framework on organizational tensions is rooted in Baxter's (1988; 1990) dialectical theory on relationship communication, which categorizes tensions into simple contradictions, complementary dialectics, and pragmatic paradoxes. March & Olson's (1972) garbage can model of organizational choice categorizes decisions into decisions by resolution, decisions by flight, and decisions by oversight. The analysis for research question four is structured by Tierney's (1988; 1997) theory of organizational culture in higher education, which encourages an anthropological lens to understand the making of meaning. However, open coding supplements the theoretical framework for research question four in order to allow for the derivation of original and unique insights when it comes to organizational culture in international higher education.

## **Participants**

### Target Population and Sample

This is a single-site case study at a public research university in the Eastern United States. Participants consist of faculty, staff, and administrators who have worked or are currently working on internationalization initiatives, including, but not limited to, international student recruitment, study abroad, institutional partnerships, and online education projects with a global focus. I performed 32 informant interviews and five participant observations, which were conducted during meetings involving internationalization decision makers on campus. I also



conducted a content analysis of 47 strategic planning documents, available to the public via the university's website.

### Demographics

Participants all were over 18 years of age and have been employed by the case study institution in the past or at present. As such, participants tended to fall within the 25-65 age range. Most participants fell in the 45-65 age range by virtue of the requirements of experience usually attached to roles involving decision making on internationalization. I interviewed participants of all genders without discriminating based on gender, race/ethnicity, age, or sexual orientation. If the sample contains more individuals from a certain demographic than others, this has occurred by virtue of who the case study site has placed into international decision making positions. As far as possible, I pursued a sample that contains a diverse set of demographics.

### Procedures for Sampling

I employed a variety of sampling techniques typical for qualitative research design: purposeful sampling, opportunistic sampling, and volunteers in sampling.

My approach to purposeful sampling entailed identifying participants who I believed would be able to share rich information with respect to the purpose of the study. This included administrators directly assigned to the oversight of internationalization divisions, as well as faculty and administrators with global and international labels in their job titles. When it came to selecting occasions for participant observations, I asked to join meetings with a specific internationalization decision making purpose and obtain participants' informed consent. When it

came to selecting documents for content analysis, I sought out strategic plans and other publicly available documents from the case study institution's website.

My approach to opportunistic sampling involved using my findings from one case to inform my selection of another case. This approach also involved the use of snowball sampling, which entailed asking informants for references to other potential participants who they believed may have useful information to share. When it came to selecting occasions for participant observations, this approach was key to identifying meetings at which matters of internationalization would be discussed. When it came to selecting documents for content analysis, I selected all 47 documents that were publicly available from the case study institution's website.

Finally, my approach to volunteers in sampling at times entailed agreeing to interview informants who approached me about participating in the study based on learning about it from someone else. I also attended meetings that were offered up to me for the purpose of participant observations as long as the purpose was promising in terms of relating to my study's research questions.

### Permission

Before conducting any informant interviews or participant observations, I gained permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct the study. Content analysis began before IRB permission was obtained because it does not require IRB approval and does not involve contact with people.

I obtained informed consent from all interview and participant observation informants, in writing, as required by the IRB. I also gained permission to conduct my study from administrators at the research site. I was prepared to provide written information about my study to administrators and other gatekeepers I encountered.

All interviews and participant observations were audio-recorded on two devices and then transcribed for the purpose of coding. All personally-identifiable information was eliminated on transcripts in order to protect participant confidentiality. Audi-recordings will be kept in a locked place in my office and not accessible to anyone other than myself. I will destroy audio-recordings five years after the conclusion of my study to further protect participant privacy.

### Site Selection

Because this study seeks to understand how organizational culture functions and how it facilitates the interplay between institutional goals and individual beliefs, a single-site case study approach provided a valuable environment. Organizational culture refers to the shared beliefs and experiences within a single organizational entity (Tierney, 1988), so this study required a focus on one contained organizational environment. Because the study is taking place at a public research university in the United States, it focused on shared beliefs and perspectives among faculty and administrators within the public research university context.

### **Procedures**

#### Strategies of Inquiry

This study seeks to contribute to the higher education literature by linking sense making, decision making and organizational culture to better understand how faculty and administrators

negotiate tensions, including tensions between market-driven and mission-driven goals as well as mission-driven and other mission-driven goals, when working on internationalization initiatives. The study uses a combination of ethnographic interviewing, participant observations, and document analysis to better understand how faculty and administrators make sense of their own and the university's work in a global context.

The study asks the following research questions: 1) What are the key tensions faculty and administrators perceive when working on international higher education initiatives? 2) How do faculty and administrators make sense of tensions when working on international higher education initiatives? 3) How do sense making and decision making interact when faculty and administrators encounter tensions in international higher education? 4) How does organizational culture shape sense making and decision making when faculty and administrators encounter tensions in international higher education? Tracy's (2004) framework of organizational tensions, Cohen, March & Olson's (1972) Garbage Can Model of organizational choice, and Tierney's (1988) theory of organizational culture in higher education frame the study.

### Data Collection and Analysis

The data collection occurred in three phases: ethnographic interviews with faculty and administrators working on internationalization initiatives, participant observations at meetings regarding internationalization initiatives, and content analysis of strategic documents on university internationalization from the case study site.

Data was collected at the flagship campus of the selected institution for this case study. The data collection process was iterative, occurring simultaneously with data analysis after initial interviews had been conducted and coded for cultural domains and terms, which influenced

subsequent interview questions. Spradley (1979) recommends that the phase of collecting cultural data should begin before any hypotheses are formulated: “Instead of [happening in] discrete stages, ethnographic research requires constant feedback from one stage to another” (p. 93).

As such, the data collection process went hand in hand with an iterative revision of the literature review and the theoretical framework, with hopes of building a theory on organizational sense making and decision making in international higher education.

### **Limitations**

Because this specific contribution focuses on one specific organizational setting, it does not pursue generalizability of findings across institutions of higher education. Generalizability, in this case, is limited to the assumed presence of a shared culture (Fairweather & Rinne, 2012) and processes at other public research universities in the United States. Neither does the study seek to establish causation between the organizational culture and perceived tensions, sense making, and decision making. Instead, the potential discovery of a framework for how perceived tensions, sense making, decision making, and organizational culture interact in shaping faculty and administrators’ perspectives may inform similar case studies at other institutions or quantitative studies across similar organizational settings.

This study was conducted in the immediate aftermath of the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States, with pilot work occurring in the Spring of 2017 and the remaining data collection occurring in the Fall of 2017. Informants’ perspectives on international higher education may have been impacted by federal policy proposals, such as the Immigration Ban on citizens of seven Middle Eastern and African countries, and the global backlash to Donald

Trump's America-First rhetoric. Several informants contextualized their perspectives within the current political climate and stated that their work on internationalization has changed as a result of the 2016 election. This shows that faculty and administrator perspectives on internationalization may substantially change over time, which may impact processes for sense making and decision making, as well.

As a higher education professional working in the field of internationalization for the past four years, I am an insider at the site of my study. Traditional ethnography is often understood as an outsiders' study of an unfamiliar culture. However, more inclusive approaches to ethnography allow for a researcher to identify his or her position on a spectrum from complete participant to complete observer (Gold, 2016). As a complete participant, I had to employ reflexivity to remain aware of how my own experiences within the organizational setting I was studying could lead to biases I may be looking to confirm. I then had to employ a rigorous process to examine my own biases, look to neutralize them, and employ member checking and triangulation (Spradley, 1979) to confirm findings with my informants.

## **CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS**

### **Overview**

The purpose of this study was to understand key tensions faculty and administrators perceive when working on and thinking about university internationalization and to then examine sense making and decision making around those tensions within their organizational culture.

The research questions for the study were 1) What are the key tensions faculty and administrators perceive when working on international higher education initiatives?, 2) How do faculty and administrators make sense of tensions when working on international higher education initiatives?, 3) How do sense making and decision making interact when faculty and administrators encounter tensions in international higher education?, and 4) How does organizational culture shape sense making and decision making when faculty and administrators encounter tensions in international higher education?

For question one, my findings indicate that the five tensions identified in the literature review are all perceived as relevant by faculty and administrators at the study site, with global vs. local being the most prevalent, followed by profit vs. engagement, then public vs. private, then quality vs. scale, and then access vs. prestige. My data suggests a number of additional tensions in the organizational culture that are less specific to internationalization that also seem to influence faculty and administrator sense making and decision making in the international higher education space.

For question two, my findings suggest that faculty and administrators strategically frame their responses based on their attitudes toward the tension being discussed. They did this in three ways, with simple contradictions being the most frequently used one, followed by complementary dialectics, followed by pragmatic paradoxes (Tracy, 2004).

For question three, my findings suggest that faculty and administrator evaluate internationalization decisions in a manner that is consistent with Meyer & Rowen's (1977) Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice, and that their perceptions around the effectiveness of decision making affects how they categorize a decision. Decision by resolution was the most prevalent perceived approach, followed by decision by flight, followed by decision by oversight. This does not mean that decisions by resolution did, in fact, occur. Instead, it means that the majority of informants considered decisions by resolution, such as decision by committee or by inclusion of an initiative in strategic planning documents, the most legitimate and the most effective approach.

For question four, my coding scheme examined organizational culture around international higher education as composed of values, organizational tensions, and personas. All three components affect how faculty and administrators make sense of and decisions about internationalization initiatives.

## **Findings**

In this section, I describe the findings derived from my informant interviews, meeting observations, and document analysis, covering the four themes of tensions, sense making, decision making, and organizational culture. Within each theme, I detail sub-themes by the frequency of their occurrence in my NVivo data, moving from the most dominant sub-themes to the least dominant ones. It is important to note that many of the informant quotes assigned to codes in this chapter could have been assigned to a variety of codes. In fact, many of the quotes illustrate more than one theme and are thus used multiple times in the analysis. However, assignments of quotes to codes are never meant to deny the ambiguity that necessarily



accompanies this type of qualitative analysis. Quotes are meant to illustrate the various codes in the analysis to facilitate linking of tensions, sense making, decision making, and organizational culture.

### **Research Question 1: Tensions in International Higher Education**

My first research question was, What are the key tensions faculty and administrators perceive when working on international higher education initiatives? In my literature review, I identified five tensions that emerged from the international higher education literature: global versus local, public versus private, quality versus scale, profit versus engagement, and access versus prestige. In my interviews, I probed for these tensions, although they tended to emerge organically from the informants' responses. I also coded my observation notes and the strategic plans for these five tensions. Here, I cover them in order of their frequency in my NVivo coding. Tensions can play out as a set of diverse priorities that may or may not be at odds with each other. It is thus important to illustrate the various priorities to enable faculty and administrators to understand them and frame communications around initiatives with them in mind. Looking at these priorities and tensions, I examine the same three categories of international higher education that I use in the literature review – traditional internationalization, consisting of international student recruitment and study abroad, emerging internationalization models, consisting of partnerships with global universities, and innovative internationalization models, consisting of blended and online education.

### Global versus Local

Global versus Local was the most frequently coded tension across my data. In my literature review, I defined this tension as conflicting priorities between serving local and domestic student audiences on the one hand, and global student audiences on the other.

### Traditional Internationalization Models

University State has a long history of enrolling international students on its campus and sending domestic students abroad. The university's strategic plan highlights both areas as continuing priorities when it comes to global engagement. When asked to discuss international student presence and study abroad in general terms, my data does not initially show a strong tension between global and local priorities. Instead, strategic plans and interview informants tended to emphasize the imperative to cater to local and global audiences at the same time. Frequently, strategic plans conceptualize the university's reach as local, national, and global, using a list format, without discussing how local and global priorities might stand in conflict with each other. One strategic plan reads, "As one of the premier research universities in the country, [University State] must conduct research valued at local, national, and international scales." One of the college-specific strategic plans states, "[the college] aspires to be a regional, national, and international leader. These are only two examples of strategic plans that discuss global and local priorities as complementary without offering additional detail on how this complimentary nature plays out when it comes to prioritizing initiatives.

The university's global office, in its unit strategic plan, emphasizes the need to integrate global perspectives across university audiences and initiatives: "transforming [University State] into a truly global University requires a fundamental integration of global perspectives across the

entire University community—faculty, staff and students—and in all components of the University’s mission of teaching, research and service.” When asked about how internationalization fits within the mission of the university, many informants echoed this sentiment that global perspectives should stand at the center of the university’s activities. One informant said, “The whole scope of what we do, you really can’t boil that down to the United States. It’s naturally multi-national, international. If we don’t start thinking about things more on a global scale, we’re kind of missing the whole point.” Another stated, “I think it adds to the diversity and the interest of [University State]. It helps everybody when there is students here from other cultures, from other areas.” These statements illustrate that many faculty and administrators see traditional and established internationalization activities, like international student presence and study abroad, as integral parts of the university and do not question their relevance.

However, when probed on how local and global priorities might stand in conflict with each other, some faculty and administrator informants favored one over the other. A frequent topic of discussion in this context consisted of the public land-grant mission’s imperative to serve state students. One informant said, “I certainly hear the general tension of serving [state] residents versus others.” When informants discussed the topic of serving in-state versus out-of-state students, their comments usually revolved around the different cost structures affecting those students: “my understanding is that there is an additional fee that international students pay.” Another informant said, “You have to balance the needs and the cost increases versus trying to keep particularly in-state tuition reasonable to meet our mission. [...] Out-of-state tuition then becomes more important because that is not part of our land-grant mission.” Other informants emphasized the global nature of the land-grant mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century:

Certainly, as a land-grant institution, we are always very concerned about meeting the needs of [in-state students]. But then we're located in the United States, we want to meet the needs of the nation as well [...]. And really, now, with this global world we live in, where everything is so interconnected, I think we'd be doing our students a disservice if we didn't have a really strong international student presence in our classrooms, whether they're online classrooms or face-to-face. They're not going to live and work in a [this state]-only or a U.S.-only world, most likely.

Interestingly, my NVivo data shows 23 references to the land-grant mission, but the majority of the informants did not mention the land-grant mission as a way of justifying local priorities. Instead, many made the argument that the land-grant mission is global today. However, at the same time, many connect the land-grant mission with the imperative to keep tuition lower for in-state students, which increases the importance of recruiting out-of-state and international students, who pay more. At this university, they pay about twice as much as in-state students, but international students pay an additional fee of \$500 per semester to cover additional expenses in the global office. The dynamics surrounding this difference in tuition cost will be further explored under the profit versus engagement tension.

While faculty and administrator informants agreed that international student presence on campus and study abroad programs are mutually beneficial for local and global students alike, and while strategic plans from across the university emphasize their importance, some informants discussed the need to balance challenging students through global experiences with keeping them comfortable and preserving the authentic experience of an American university. In terms of study abroad, one informant said,

We are always dealing with the fact that we're pushing students beyond their comfort zone. The idea of traveling overseas is something that a large percentage of our students will have never experienced before, and they may not be comfortable with it, so to get them to be willing to go outside of that comfort zone, you have to give them enough information that they feel that's something they can do.

This perspective shows the tension between global and local in that some faculty and administrators associate global experience with a certain level of discomfort. This perspective translates to a large international student presence on campus. One informant said, "The flavor of the program changes pretty dramatically if the fraction of international students exceeds maybe about 40%," and continued, "It's like it's not a [University State] program anymore. It's an international program. Most MBA programs like ours try to target an international composition that's somewhere less than 50%." This perspective suggests a large international student presence as problematic and threatening to the dominance of local and domestic students. Another issue that faculty and administrator informants perceive as problematic and a potential cause of discomfort to local students is the prevalent class divide between domestic and international students. One informant stated, "[A] big issue is the class divide between the minority students, who are often from families under the poverty line and receive lots of financial aid, and the international students, who are wealthy and drive nice cars and have nice things." These statements show that while very few faculty and administrator informants will challenge internationalization activities in general, when probed to discuss more specific dynamics, they do highlight areas of concern that create tensions between global and local priorities, even in the established realms of international student presence on campus and study abroad.

## Emerging Internationalization Models

University State engages in a number of global university partnerships under the direction of the global office. The primary strategy consists of connecting with universities with similar research priorities in order to facilitate research collaborations between faculty. To incentivize research collaborations, University State makes seed funding available. Because the imperative of these partnerships is global by nature, there is no inherent tension between global priorities and preserving the local priorities of University State. However, the global office and several faculty and administrator informants emphasize that this partnership strategy prevents University State from taking an imperialistic approach, which was a concern highlighted in the literature review. Several leaders in the global office juxtaposed the partnership strategy with the popular approach among peer universities to build branch campuses, which they see as imperialistic. One informant said,

[University State] is not interested in building a campus anywhere else [...]. So therefore, we adopt this idea of strategic partnership. So, as partners, we don't come to them and say this is what we want to do, so just do it with us, come on board. No, we go to them, and their faculty and our faculty look at an important problem for their place and for us. So we begin to solve it together.

During a meeting observation conducted with global office staff, one administrator said that it never occurred to her that a branch campus approach would seem imperialistic, and another chimed in saying the partnership approach resonates, especially because partners like it when the U.S. university admits they do not know it all and seek dialog with them. Thus, in the case of global partnerships with universities, the global versus local tension shifts, referring to the local context of the partner university rather than the U.S. university.

### Innovative Internationalization Models

When discussing innovative internationalization models with informants, the tension between global and local priorities was not as evident as it was with traditional and emerging models. However, informants felt strongly about the global imperative in online education and thus illustrated global priorities that may come into conflict with local priorities when weighed against them.

University State has a robust portfolio of undergraduate and graduate online degree programs, but the total percentage of international enrollments in those programs is only 4.3%. For this reason, one informant stated that “the biggest criticism I hear from people at [University State] is that we have this [global] name [for the online campus] but it's not really [global]. There is, however, a perceived opportunity to grow this percentage. The overall university strategic plan states, [the online campus] “will continue to attract place-bound learners from around the globe, ensuring the University has a global footprint.” Some faculty and administrator informants also believe that there is an opportunity to grow international enrollments online. One informant said, “We’re finally in a place where the digital technologies that we use can cross those borders very seamlessly at this point.” Several strategic plans from across the university state the intent to expand online enrollments from across the world, as stated in one plan as a tactic: “expand online and hybrid courses and programs locally and globally.”

In addition to online degree programs, strategic plans also touch on the global opportunities inherent in Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). For example, one college-specific plan states:

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) of the highest caliber can serve several functions for the college as a result of their potentially wide reach and impact. We will

continue to support faculty members who seek to develop high-quality MOOCs for broad delivery that will reach out to and impact learners around the world.

Also, my data includes a handful of references to blended internationalization models, such as two-plus-two and one-plus-one degree programs as well as short-term travel that is embedded in resident courses. One strategic plan states the intent to “develop online/hybrid offerings that address time and travel impediments faced by working adults, athletes, commuters, international students, and others.” Another announces the plan to “look for opportunities for blended learning support.” One informant discussed that “some departments have thought about a model where they might offer some of the degree program at a distance and then bring students to campus for a good portion of the degree. Notably, one campus in University State’s system piloted a model that had students collaborate with students at a global partner university online for the majority of a semester while incorporating a travel experience to have these students spend time together face-to-face. One administrator informant took it even further when ideating about blended learning opportunities, suggesting a degree program built around inherent components of global mobility by requiring students to relocate a set number of times to different countries during their studies:

What if we constructed a program that actually required that they relocate? This isn't going to be for everyone, right? It would be for the few, the adventuresome, those that view globalization in a different way. But the globalization would not be the degree they were getting, it would be the manner in which they're getting the degree. Their degree would be in whatever they chose to get their degree in. So I think if we just stop and think about what online enables us to do, what could it be?

Initially, such opportunities do not present a tension between global and local, but many



informants felt that the global opportunity is not big enough and too complicated to put a lot of resources behind it, which will be discussed in more detail in the decision making and organizational culture sections.

### Profit vs. Engagement

Profit versus Engagement was the second most coded tension across my data. This tension can be defined as prioritizing profit from internationalization activities, like international student tuition revenue, on the one hand and engagement with international audiences, like through the creation of campus resources to facilitate international student success on the other.

### Traditional Internationalization Models

Across my review of the strategic plans, informant interviews, and meeting observations, faculty and administrators acknowledged the financial advantages to enrolling a large number of international students at University State. For example, in a satellite campus strategic plan, revenue from international enrollments is highlighted as a key opportunity: “these [international] students take three times as many courses per year compared to domestic part-time students and pay the higher nonresident tuition rate.” The same plan later states, “The recent growth in full-time international student enrollment at [this campus] has significantly increased annual credit hour production and tuition revenue.” Another satellite campus’ strategic plan contains a tactic on partnering with the university’s global office “and other campuses to support international recruiting, [which] has potential for high returns on investment for the campus.” In the university’s strategic plan on global initiatives, the financial advantages of an international student presence are highlighted in the context of the university and beyond:

From a financial perspective, international students provide a significant source of tuition income to the University and provide significant economic benefits, locally and nationally. International students contributed more than \$22 billion to the US Economy in 2011/2012. [...] This demonstrates that international students and scholars are a significant source of economic development and an engine of economic growth for the [state] and the nation.

The fact that several strategic plans from units and campuses across University State highlight international student revenue as critical demonstrates that profit is a well-accepted motive for engaging in internationalization initiatives.

During my informant interviews, faculty and administrators also acknowledged that international student tuition revenue is a central motivation in internationalization efforts. One informant, who works in the budget office, stated, “They [international students] pay out-of-state tuition, so, as the budget office, one of our prime concerns is tuition income. So we watch out-of-state enrollments and international enrollments very carefully because their rate is so much higher, so a small fluctuation in that population means a big difference in tuition income.” When asked if internationalization is ever controversial when discussed in the various university government bodies, two informants pointed to the Board of Trustees as the entity most concerned with profit from international students. One said, “The Board of Trustees [...] might [...] slip into [...] are we charging them enough?” Another informant stated, “it doesn't really come up very often at Board of Trustees meetings, except as part of a cash cow conversation. And it's like, can we charge international students more to make more money for the university?” Such conversations prioritize the profit the university receives from international students and demonstrate comfort with approaching internationalization through financial motivations.

Another common context in which informants discussed international student profits was threats to state funding. State funding enables University State to charge in-state students about half the tuition as out-of-state and international students, but in recent years, state funding has declined and, at some points, been threatened altogether. One informant said, “If we lose state funding, it's going to become more and more out-of-state and international. I mean just for our own survival and to maintain a quality institution, the dollars have to come from somewhere.” Even without the loss of state funding, one administrator acknowledged that financial motivations do play a role in admissions decisions: “The budget does drive some of the decision making in terms of the mix of in-state and out-of-state students, or could drive some of the decision-making as part of the mix.” When it comes to discussing university funding with state legislators, several informants said that questions about international student tuition tend to arise without considering the broader, competitive context of student recruitment:

To state legislators, they probably would go, ‘great, then charge them more.’ And they don't understand that we're in a global market. [...] For now there is demand, and they believe that the demand is there, so we could do it. As a university, my sense is, you have to worry is the demand always going to be there and how much price elasticity is there in that tuition for international students - I don't know the answer to that.

There was also some concern among informants that top-level administrators may pursue internationalization out of financial motives:

One reason why administrators are probably interested in internationalization because international students pay higher fees, the tuition is higher. I do think that's probably not the only reason, but it is a very highly motivating reason because tuition is fixed, and the only way to grow as an institution is to have a large number of students, which we do, but

a bigger return of investment is getting a higher number of higher paying students, and the higher paying students are the out-of-state.

This illustrates suspicion that University State may use international students as cash cows, which mirrors similar concerns in the academic literature.

When speaking with top administrators at University State, however, the importance of financial revenue from international students was acknowledged but de-emphasized. One informant said, “This is an institution that is mission-oriented. We're here to serve society.” Another one stated, “We don't recruit international students to balance our budget. Never. That is not our goal.” Yet, the financial benefits to the university are significant. One informant stated, “The reason why we're bringing international students here has nothing to do with money. But we still generate \$250 million for the university. That's a lot of million dollars.” Similarly, another informant told me,

We welcome students from out of Pennsylvania and out of the country to be part of our educational environment, but we have not done that really for financial reasons. That said, the extra revenue they bring is vitally important to the institution, but we do not make decisions on admission or admission strategy based on anticipated or additional revenues that are brought by out-of-state students.

These statements suggest that, while faculty and administrators view profit from international student enrollments as a beneficial side effect of internationalization, they do not want it to become its central motivation.

When faculty and administrators find it necessary to discuss the tension between profit and engagement in internationalization initiatives, they tend to emphasize the value international students bring to the university beyond monetary benefits. During a meeting observation at the

global office at University State, one administrator said she only brings up the funding - the fact that international students subsidize domestic students and contribute to the local and national economy - when she receives push-back on the global mission. Otherwise, she always leads with the mutual benefits of global education. When asked whether he had a concern about the university using international students as cash cows, one informant said,

I think it has occurred, I'm not sure that it's purposely driven to do that. But on the other hand, the value that international students bring to our campus is that diversity, and allowing our resident students that are from [the state] - they start interacting with students from different parts of the world and we start to accomplish a little bit of our mission to expose them to the global aspects.

Informants also emphasized that international students pay the same amount of tuition as out-of-state domestic students:

We still don't have a differential on out-of-state versus international. So again, we want international students, no question. International students bring a unique set of challenges to any institution. They also bring a unique value proposition. The nice thing about having tuition set the way we have it is we can really not let other things cloud that judgment about value proposition versus really needing to provide the services that you better provide to international students if you're bringing them in.

These statements suggest that many faculty and administrators value the financial benefits international students bring to the university without being willing to sacrifice quality of instruction or student engagement in return.

Indeed, many of my informants expressed concern that international students are not fully integrated in the campus community and may not receive the support they need. One informant

said, "It's important to bring students here, but we have to make sure they actually interact with our students." Another informant provided an example illustrating this concern: "A group of Turkish students come here and they tend to associate with themselves - you've got the same language, you have the same food, you've got the same engrained experiences, so you tend to group together, and there is a little bit of branching out, but not as much as I think I personally would like for both sides." Another informant echoed the same concern:

They do what we all do. Hang out with each other. So they don't benefit from the U.S. experience, and the resident students don't benefit from the international perspectives because they fall into a comfort zone. So unless the college was really willing to figure out how to foster this and create the environment for those students to have it, it was just going to be a group of students being educated in this country but not really benefitting from that and vice versa.

Concerns about lack of international student integration gave way to concerns about negative effects on retention: "If those students are uncomfortable here and they're not being inclusive in the curriculum, then I think it's a short story for the students to be here because, in today's society, if you don't deliver on the product that you're trying to sell, people are going to catch on to that." These perspectives illustrate that many faculty and administrators prioritize engagement over profit when thinking about dynamics surrounding international student enrollment.

There are many initiatives across University State that seek to improve integration of international students. At a meeting observation at the global office, I learned that an article in a campus newspaper questioning how well the university serves international students several years ago served as the catalyst for the establishment of some international engagement units. As a result, the financial overhead for serving international students has increased, which lead

University State to follow suit with other big public universities in implementing a separate student fee for international undergraduates, which is currently \$500 per semester. When confronted with the potentially problematic nature of charging international students this fee, informants emphasized that this is simply a cost-recovery measure: “that really just offsets direct cost. [...] It's amazing the number of issues that arise that somebody has to deal with day in and day out related to international students, so it's really just a cost recovery thing.” In the university’s global office’s strategic plan, the fee is addressed as follows: “The University Budget Task Force held discussions and consulted [...] about budget priorities and revenue generation to support the programs of [the global office]. This resulted in the levy of a modest fee for all international students to help defray the additional costs associated with advising and engaging this key group of students.” When asked to comment on the fee, an informant from the university’s global office said:

They pay the exact same amount as the out-of-state students, except in the last two or three years, we have now added an additional fee - we call it international student fee. Only for undergraduate students. And the rationale is very simple. Because of the complexity of the processes and the visa issues and especially because for undergraduate students we feel that it's important to do a good job, an excellent job. And to do an excellent job, we need extra money to do that. So therefore, we are charging this very limited amount of fee to use 100% of it to support our international students. We don't spend that international fee to subsidize anything.

These perspectives suggest that the international student fee is not seen as a profit-generating tool, but rather as a means to improve international student engagement at University State.

In addition to funding support services in the global office, the international student fee

supports international initiatives across the University State system. Many college and campus strategic plans outline intended efforts to improve support for international students on campus:

- Support faculty development seminars in order to promote an understanding of and communication with our diverse domestic student body and our growing international student population.
- Increase international student enrollment and expand international students' engagement efforts.
- Explore the creation of an international cultures center
- Continue to leverage opportunities for global and cross-cultural programs that better integrate [...] domestic and international student populations
- Strengthen the college's capability to aid international students with instructional, cultural and language transitions.

One informant explained a model that has been implemented at a satellite campus to facilitate better international student integration:

We have students from, this year I believe, 49 different countries. And each country or region, sometimes we can't do every country, every week, there is a conversation. It's called, coffee with Nigeria, coffee with Turkey, coffee with Brazil, or whatever. And then, the large student bodies - China, India, I think Korea, and a couple of others, they do major programming throughout the year. And they get huge participation from people who are not from that country and everybody enjoys it. And, to me, that is a real cultural exchange now.

They see the culture, the art, the music of these countries through this program.

In addition to programming aimed at international student integration, University State has also introduced an international designation for its satellite campuses to demonstrate sufficient



support for potential international students. Campuses can apply and then go through an evaluation process to get the designation, which they can then use to promote their campus to international prospects. One informant emphasized the importance of this designation “to make sure that they have the capacity to serve students to make sure that they're successful, at the back-end.” Despite a large emphasis on tuition revenue from international enrollments at University State, informants demonstrated a significant concern for the well-being and engagement of these students on campus.

The tension between profit and engagement was much less prevalent on the study abroad side than on the international student recruitment side. However, a comment I heard while observing a meeting between the College of Engineering’s global office and a faculty member interested in taking a student group to China as part of a for-credit course the following summer illustrated that this tension is relevant in study abroad, as well. When discussing how much to charge students for the course and trip, the staff member from the global office said, "You don't want to be too greedy because there is a supply/demand continuum." He then continued to explain that the one way students would be willing to pay more is if they were getting more credits. His comments were solely focused on revenue without concern about affordability or value provided to students, which makes them align with the profit rather than the engagement side of the tension discussed.

### Emerging Internationalization Models

When it comes to emerging internationalization models, the tension between profit and emerged from my data both in terms of partnerships and branch campuses. Profit seems to constitute one motivation for faculty members to engage in research collaborations with faculty

members at global partner universities, but in this context, profit could mean seed funding or grants for research projects or profits in terms of career gains. However, informants were quick to clarify that mission or engagement driven motives are more dominant. One administrator who works on facilitating global research collaborations said:

The people who get involved in doing this tend to do it for two reasons. One is, it's going to help them - purely selfish: if I partner with these people here, I can get more publications and more money here. My CV gets better. You find surprisingly little of that. It's there, but more and more, you find people who simply want to take what they're doing and have more impact with it. So it's selfish - I mean, I can't say ... people doing it for purely altruistic reasons, simply because it's the right thing to do - there's probably some of those. But there is also a lot of, yes, I want to have more impact than my few publications are doing. So, there is a tendency to feel that we should be helping others [...] It has to be reciprocal. Things have to be really collaborative. It can't be one-sided.

Another informant emphasized that many faculty members tend to find motivation in short-term rather than long-term incentives for global collaboration: "For a lot of partners, just if we do work together, they're thrilled. They don't think we're doing this because 15 years from now we can do something extraordinary. They tend to think we're doing this now, so that next year we've got more students or get more money." In the context of global partnerships and research collaborations, financial motivations exist for both the university and individual faculty seeking funding for their research. As such, the tension between profit and engagement exists in this arena, as well, even if it plays out as a set of priorities that may or may not be at odds with each other, depending on how faculty and administrators make sense of them.

University State has not opened branch campuses overseas, and faculty and

administrators remain strongly opposed to this approach taken by many peer institutions. One reason for their opposition is that branch campuses come with financial risks. One informant said, “We should not open campuses overseas - absolutely not. Why not? Because, with many of those, investments are very high, for one thing. Second, the pay-off from them is not guaranteed. And so, making investments of a long-term nature - buildings, campuses - it's really not desirable.” While this statement illustrates concerns aligned with profit or financial considerations, another common concern around branch campuses aligns more with engagement considerations. One informant discussed branch campuses in the context of a Colonial European model, where the Western university approaches the community overseas in an imperialistic manner: “[They say] oh, you have a problem? - or, not even that - we will tell you what your problem is and then we'll tell you how to solve it.” These two perspectives show that positions about branch campuses can be constructed either around profit or engagement concerns, depending on the person providing the perspective.

### Innovative Internationalization Models

On the online education side, financial concerns were often cited as a reason not to pursue a more global audience. At University State, online programs have become a significant revenue generator, and their cash flow keep many departments fiscally healthy. One informant said, “We're very excited about virtual enrollments because that is lucrative.” International enrollments are less financially significant in online programs because in-state and out-of-state tuition differentials do not apply. Currently, the total enrollment in online programs at University State is about four percent. Many faculty and administrators feel that emphasizing a more global audience would put the current revenue stream at risk. As such, discussions and decisions about

international initiatives strongly revolve around financial considerations. During a meeting observation at University State's online campus, the group of staff and administrators decided not to target India with marketing campaigns because the conversion analysis so far shows that Indian prospects enroll at a lower rate than Korean prospects. The team was worried that the investment will not bring the ROI it would in Korea or even in the domestic market. This suggests a prioritization of revenue over engaging new markets to diversify the online student body.

However, many informants working on online initiatives remained reluctant to grow their global audience not because of concerns over smaller revenue but because they believe current courses may not offer a quality experience for international students, due to language constraints, cultural barriers, time zone differences, and other concerns. One informant said, "It has to be markets that we believe what we have to offer is a good match for the citizens of that country, and we have to abide by the regulations and the expectations of that country." Another stated:

If we said everyone has to speak English, but should we do that? I mean we're [University State], so that seems like that would be the language of choice, right? But if we're really going to say we're going to have a large international number, are we really going to do this? I don't know that we've answered those questions, and that, to me, is on the faculty side, the curriculum side. That support side. It's not about whether or not we could market and get them. It's can we deliver what we need to deliver.

Another informant emphasized the need for meaningful student integration: "We would like students to be fully integrated in our social structure here. So, if they're all just kind of talking amongst themselves, it defeats that purpose." Another expressed concern about growing the international student population too fast: "I am not sure we are prepared as an institution to

accept international students in an online space in those kinds of numbers.” These statements show a concern with international students that outweighs the desire to recruit more of them quickly to maximize revenue.

When probed on potential tensions between profit and engagement, several informants made comments seeking to reconcile the tension. When I asked one administrator why her faculty want to internationalize in the online space, she said it was out of both profit and engagement motives: “Quite honestly, both. Absolutely both. [...] For right or for wrong, in the online world, we do need to make sure that we have enough enrollments to make our programs strong and successful. But I think for many of our faculty it is also an interest.” Another informant stated:

You hear us talk all the time about the power of the "and." For us, it's an and, it's not either or. That's why I always say it's a given that we do things with quality, and I don't feel any undue pressure within the university, nor does my voice as a business person get a larger perspective because we're trying to maximize the bottom line. The most important thing is that we're graduating people that actually make an impact and don't water down the brand.

He continued, “I don't feel undue pressure anywhere in the university that we're putting the almighty dollar in front of the experience. I think it's a given every time we talk that we want to do things with quality.”

However, when asked about what it would take for University State to place a larger emphasis on international online experiences, most informants prioritized financial concerns. One administrator said:

I think you won't hear from the top-level academic administrators in public typically about revenue being number one primary motivator, and I get that. I think it's a little bit of an unsaid thing. The reality is the [online portfolio] does provide discretionary revenue and it is one place where the university continues to grow that kind of revenue. So, I think it's kind of more unsaid and implicit that there is a motivation. With the caveat of always doing quality and not trying to do something we can't do well.

Yet, it is not clear whether an international focus would diminish financial return or enhance it. When asked to name a potential game changer to international a bigger part of the thinking, one informant said, "A message from the university that we need to do one of two things - we see this as a critical strategy of internationalization at [University State] or two, it's great the revenue you're providing, but you need to double it. I would think we would prioritize getting into those markets if there was a demand that we had to double our business." These comments suggest that profit is a bigger concern in the context of innovative internationalization models than in the context of emerging and traditional ones.

### Public versus Private

Public versus private was the third most coded tension across my data. This tension can be defined as prioritizing the university's public mission on the one hand and emphasizing solutions that align more with private sector practices on the other.

### Traditional Internationalization Models

University State is a public, land-grant research university. However, the question whether higher education is a public good or a private gain became an explicit topic during

several interviews with faculty and administrator informants. University State is a public institution, but, aside from its federal and state appropriation and tuition dollars, also relies on fundraising to meet its strategic objectives. Threats to the state appropriation further solidify the increasing reliance on private philanthropy. As one informant stated, “In many ways, we are a private institution. As state funding goes away, we rely increasingly on tuition, donations, and research dollars. It's just a reality.” Another informant said: “There is a tension in some places in the university - you're a public institution and everybody should have access to every discipline, no matter what. But there is an economic reality of higher education that suggests that you can no longer do that. [...] There is the economic realities of how much revenue you can actually generate to offset your expenses.” This affects international students because tuition revenue becomes more important. As one informant stated, “If you're no longer a public good, I mean that blows up the model because then we should, if you're just looking at money - money, and there's much more important issues, but then you increase your out-of-state population, you increase your international students, you get people who pay the full fare.” As such, international students and internationalization at large align more with the private dimension of higher education than the public dimension.

However, due to its status as a public university, University State faces a lot of pressure to prioritize the needs of in-state constituents. This dynamic emerged as critical under the global versus local theme, but it is relevant under the public versus private theme, as well, because public universities and state universities go hand-in-hand. One strategic plan explicitly states the intention to balance the need to maintain the in-state student majority while benefitting from out-of-state and international students at the same time: “Maintain a majority of [in-state] undergraduate students at [the main campus] with strong representation of out-of-state students

and a geographically diverse international undergraduate cohort of 10-11 %.” This shows that, while international enrollments are desired and considered beneficial, the university’s public mission requires a stronger emphasis on in-state students. When asked to name a priority that is more important than global engagement and serving international students, the chancellor or a satellite campus responded, “Providing the best possible education to citizens of Pennsylvania.”

One entity exerting significant pressure on the university to prioritize its in-state constituents are state legislators. When asked to discuss examples of push-back that University State faces in terms of internationalization, an administrator in the Government Relations division said, “Because we are a public university, [...] there are probably legislators who would consider the university's role, in terms of priorities, to be more [state] centered.” The key reason behind this pressure is that state taxpayers subsidize University State with an annual appropriation, and this appropriation is meant to enable the reduced in-state tuition rate. As one informant stated, “There is a subsidy that's intended to compensate [in-state] families for the fact that they are paying taxes here, and then the state has an obligation to provide the students with a quality education.” This affects international students because the message from law-makers is that in-state student needs must take priority over the needs of other students. One informant stated, “We are using [state] citizen's tax dollars to offer the academic program of the university. And so, yes, that means that those legislators who appropriate those dollars or vote on those appropriations believe that our mission should be to serve [our state residents] first and foremost.” As such, this informant speculated that:

If the president and the board decided we're going to increase the number of international students by 1,000 and we're going to admit 1,000 less [in-state] students, I would hopefully be involved in that conversation at some point and say ok, I just want you to



understand that makes it harder to get the [state appropriation]. [...] It will make my job much harder, and it will make our job collectively as a university much harder to convince them that that's the case if you admit 1,000 fewer [in-state students]. They [the legislators] believe - many of them believe they're investing in this for [state residents].

This comment shows that the university's public mission suggests a commitment to in-state residents first and foremost, with out-of-state and international students belonging into the private dimension of the institution. In addition, there is a perceived requirement to keep the more lucrative out-of-state and international student segments below 50% of the total student population.

Yet, many informants also see serving global constituents as part of the land-grant and public higher education missions. One informant stated, "As a public university in particular, where our mission is to have impact throughout our research, teaching, and outreach programs, that means it has to be a global reach." In addition, informants recognized the need to reach students outside of the state borders: "[University State], as a large public university, has to be a destination of choice for students outside of [the state]. Interestingly, the tension between the public in-state mission and the perceived public global mission seems to be addressed in how international activities get financed. One informant explained:

International students and out-of-state students subsidize [in-state] resident students. That's how we get only \$3000 per student from the state, but we give them a \$10,000 discount - in-state tuition, we try not to call it a discount. [...] The reason we can do that is because out-of-state students pay well more than the cost of their education. So, [in-state] students are probably actually paying even less than the true cost of their education, and out-of-state and international students are probably paying more than the true cost of their

education because they're subsidizing - we know that, it's pretty simple math. If you pay any attention to it and you have a critical mind, you come to that conclusion. But we really try hard not to talk about it that way.

This comment not only shows that University State uses income from out-of-state and international students to subsidize in-state students, it also reveals a sense that this approach may be considered problematic. This requires not talking about it in explicit terms unless absolutely necessary, further illustrating the prevalent tension between the public mission and the need to rely on private-sector financial approaches at University State.

Because the public higher education mission mandates University State to give priority to in-state students while simultaneously including a perceived requirement to have a global reach, faculty and administrators seem to view international initiatives as most appropriately resourced by private dollars. One informant stated, "I don't think there are many scholarships for international students. [...] We can't use state tax money for that, we can't use many other scholarships for that. And so the only grants and aid we have are for those who are already here. If they get into difficulty, then we can spend some money. But that's about it." Another said, "I think we have the mechanisms we need in place to provide these experiences, to generate some resources outside of the tuition through donations and other Development work to support those activities that then don't compromise our ability to keep tuition at a reasonable level."

The lack of available international student scholarships also translates into a lack of funding to enable financially disadvantaged domestic students to have global experiences. To correct inequity in international opportunities both for international and domestic students, University State has begun to include international items in its fundraising efforts. The strategic plan for the College of Liberal Arts reads, "We anticipate raising significant funding to support

our global initiatives. We have created a Development Council Task Force on Global Liberal Arts that is working to create a comprehensive fundraising strategy around curricular, study abroad, language, and other Global Liberal Arts needs.” Another strategic plan states:

Students participate in annual domestic and international Alternative Spring Break trips that involve service-learning projects in an immersive cultural experience. To assure that these opportunities continue for students, funds have been allocated to cover any short fall in student fund raising that is needed to make the cost affordable for students.

At an observed diversity and inclusion workshop, one administrator announced a global scholarship award, which seeks to help students travel internationally to have a diversity experience. Many informants pointed out emerging efforts to increase fundraising for international initiatives. One stated, “It can be a finance-limiting issue, and so it's an area where scholarship development would help because we want to give that opportunity to students independent of their financial situation. That's a bigger challenge because it's not cheap to go [...] overseas.” Another said, “We've got a lot of efforts underway to build resources through donations through our Development offices to create funds that we can draw on to help students meet the travel costs or other costs.” These statements and comments demonstrate University State’s recognition that global experiences are expensive, along with a commitment to raise funds that enable more students to participate. They also show the attempt to meet the public mission of a global reach via private means.

Due to the lack of international student scholarships at the undergraduate level, University State is required to recruit international students who can afford to pay full tuition. As a result, the international student population is comprised mostly of global elites, which challenges the land-grant mission to educate children of working class families. When asked to

discuss this tension, a global office administrator acknowledged concerns about elitism and discussed emerging approaches to mitigate them:

The international students who come to us, especially on an undergraduate level, are those who can afford to pay the high tuition that we have at [University State]. It is one of the concerns we have and the concern is that could we inadvertently be serving just the upper class in these countries where they are coming from while the lower class cannot afford the same kind of education. And the answer of course is yes, there is no question about it. And that is one of the concerns that we have that we need to find a way to meet. Now how do we do that? Well, we don't have money to give scholarships - we don't give scholarships to international students. But I am happy to report to you that in the last two or three years, we have actually been able to, through the support of an excellent foundation, be able to offer very few scholarships to the underprivileged class who are academically excellent but who otherwise cannot afford to come to [University State]. We have students from Africa who are benefitting from this particular foundation. [...]. We are looking to seek out similar foundations, but also corporate bodies who might say okay look, 20 Chinese students per year who come from poor families but are academically excellent who can study at [University State]. We are looking for those opportunities. So, we can't use that money to do it, we don't have money to do it internationally, but we are looking for those to try to mitigate it.

This comment shows that University State administrators are aware of the problematic nature of recruiting wealthy international undergraduate students in order to charge full tuition, which is relevant to the public versus private tension in that it challenges the public land-grant mission. Aside from fundraising for international scholarships, this informant highlights the opportunity

to work with foundations to pay tuition for a set amount of financially disadvantaged but academically excellent international students each year.

Another aspect of the public versus private tension within traditional internationalization models consists of thinking about full-paying international students as a lucrative marketplace.

This mindset was illustrated by one informant, who stated:

You have to be careful because every university in the country wants the same population of students to come to their university, so you have to be conscious of the tipping point on rates charged to those kids because I have to believe a lot of them would just as gladly go to Ohio State or Michigan State or Michigan - all good educations. And if we think we're somehow special and can charge so much more, I think we'd lose those kids. [...] So as long as they're offsetting that cost, I don't think you can... you can't afford to say they'll just blindly pay whatever we charge because I don't think they will.

This comment shows that faculty and administrators might think of wealthy international students as educated consumers of American higher education, who can take their business elsewhere if tuition prices get too inflated. This private-sector mindset contradicts the public mission to educate children of working class families and to engage global audiences in the most economical and equitable ways possible.

### Emerging Internationalization Models

When it comes to emerging internationalization models, such as global university partnerships, branch campuses, and alumni engagement, the public versus private tension prevails. University State has not only introduced international scholarship pledges as part of its fundraising efforts, but also seeks to support its global engagement network and the various thematic areas this

network plans to address. For the first time, globalization is now part of the university's major fundraising campaign. This involves soliciting donations from University State alumni living abroad. One informant from the Development department stated, "We have a huge number of alumni who are outside the U.S., are very successful, and [...] we never really paid attention to them." The global office's strategic plan also pointed to international alumni as an important resource to advance the university's internationalization efforts:

International and domestic alumni living overseas are a valuable resource for building the Global [University State]. They have local networks and expertise that can enrich education-abroad programs, expand international student recruitment opportunities, facilitate collaboration with international companies, etc. We will develop the Global Ambassador Program, create a database of international alumni, including locations, expertise and activities, and develop mechanisms to encourage international alumni giving.

However, University State's desire to increase international fundraising goes beyond alumni. Recognizing that global wealth has shifted to new regions of the world, an informant from the Development unit stated:

In 2016, for the first time, there is more money in Asia Pacific and more billionaires and millionaires than in North America. That happened in 2016. So where do you go if you're a fundraiser? You go where the money is. And where up to here was the money? It was here. We didn't need to go anywhere. [...] So it's not just policy is changing, it's pure, brutal necessity if you want to get money - the money is there, not here. You have to go there. So that's another parallel reason why attitudes changed because [...] reality changes.

This comment illustrates the need to resource university internationalization in various ways, which includes fundraising for scholarships and broader initiatives from both alumni and broader,

global contacts. Such efforts fall firmly into the private dimension of university activities, although the impacts may be of public consequence.

In addition, faculty members at University State often work directly with foundations to obtain funding for research partnerships with faculty from international universities. One faculty informant stated:

There is some very successful collaborations that are well-funded by international organizations, including NGOs, like the Gates Foundation. [...] They typically are super star faculty, who are absolutely the best in the world in particular areas that are real strengths for us. There are usually not too many of them and they are rarely things that the university administration actually initiates. It's usually faculty figuring out, this is something that's going to work well for me. I'm the best in my field - maybe they get some help making connections. But I don't think as an administrator, you can take a whole lot of credit for that.

This comment shows that it can become the responsibility of individual faculty members to obtain funding for desired international research collaborations. This funding can come from both public and private sources, but the manner in which the funding is solicited is only partially representative of the overarching university's philosophy. Another example of the public versus private tension at play when it comes to emerging internationalization models consists of university partnerships in need of resourcing. When discussing a specific example of a partnership with a university in Eastern Europe that has led to a shared Chemistry class involving an embedded travel experience, an informant stated: "We got it off the ground with a grant that was made available through [University State] for units that are interested in engaging with the University [in Eastern Europe]." However, this grant did not include travel funds for students wishing to participate. The

administrator in charge of the experience explained that this has been addressed through fundraising efforts: “We provide intentionally sought funds from donors to make this possible for our students, so we have large scholarships. This has been already the case. So, we have a fund. Really, we try to make it so that our students pay as little as possible for these short-term abroad, embedded trips.” When asked to discuss any push-back that has occurred around this embedded travel approach, the informant stated: “There was a faculty member, who is not the most open person, who muttered that tax-payer money was going for the trip [...] which kind of shocked me because it was a [University State] grant. But in that person's mind, [University State] is funded by tax payers although less than 10 percent of the budget comes from them.” This example demonstrates that public and private dimensions are often blurred when faculty and administrators consider internationalization initiatives. In this case, the funding for the course itself came from the university’s global office, which is funded by the international student fee. The funding for the travel came from donations. Neither of these sources require tax-payers to subsidize an international experience. However, these nuances may be difficult to understand for constituents with limited information, which demonstrates a need for faculty and administrators to constantly navigate and clarify the tension between public and private when engaging in internationalization activities.

### Innovative Internationalization Models

When it comes to innovative internationalization models, the tension of public versus private approaches was less relevant than in the established and emerging domains. However, online education business models constituted one area where the tension mattered. When discussing disruptive trends in higher education, one informant addressed the approach of privatizing online education content to ensure that people continue to be willing to pay for degrees.



This informant stated, “We still think that we should privatize the content also as the only way we can force people to pay for the other aspects, but I think that's a failed mission.” This comment demonstrates an awareness on the informant’s part that the public higher education mission opposes privatization of educational content, but it also shows an awareness that current business models are threatened, which may require an increasing reliance on private sector approaches to stay sustainable.

### Quality versus Scale

Quality versus scale was the fourth most coded tension across my data. This tension can be defined as prioritizing the university’s commitment to a high-quality education on the one hand and the ability to scale its educational offerings on the other.

### Established Internationalization Models

One of the prevalent arguments in terms of the quality versus scale tension asserts that the presence of international students on campus enables a global experience for domestic students, especially those who do not choose or cannot afford to study abroad. The quality of those international students is of concern, as evidenced by this stated objective in a strategic plan: “Strategically target out-of-area, out-of-state, and international markets to ensure successful efforts leading to quality recruitment.” Many informants used the argument that international students bring the world to University State as an argument against the claim that international students take up spots that should go to in-state or domestic students. One informant said, “One of the reasons that we actually want international students is to help us internationalize our campuses. Because we know that even with the best of our efforts, we would never be able to

send every American student abroad to get this global experience.” This suggests that faculty and administrators may view international student recruitment as a strategic approach to scaling global experiences for domestic students.

However, some are concerned that the large number of international students, particularly the significant and growing segment from China, may diminish the quality of the educational experience, both for domestic and international students. One informant said, “China is sending so many, it can kind of overwhelm the system.” Instead of further wanting to grow the Chinese student body, many informants preferred a focus on diversity that balances enrollments from countries across the world. One informant stated, “If they are all from China, what value does that bring to the campus? But if they're from 15 or 20 countries, then that is a lot more valuable.” When asked if this preference for diversity leads to a de-facto cap on Chinese enrollments, which may be problematic if Chinese students present stronger credentials and test scores than other applicants, no informant conceded that this may be the case. One said, “The one area where we have elevated the standards for Chinese students, for instance, is on the TOEFL. And that's mainly motivated not by trying to control numbers, but by making sure that the students have appropriate competency in order to be successful.” As such, informants see a large presence of international students on campus as beneficial because it scales global educational experiences for all, as long as the international students who come in can maintain and enhance the quality of a University State education.

Informants acknowledge that a large international student presence can lead to concerning trends, such as self-sequestering of students from one country or region due to language barriers and cultural differences. University State has sought to address such concerns by implementing targeted programs that bring international students and domestic students

together to facilitate cultural exchange and foster leadership skills. However, these programs currently happen on a fairly small scale. As one administrator from the global office stated:

The program started of course very small [...]. About 20 students a year we train. Now we have proliferated it to the campuses. So now, the campuses have their own [program], and the colleges want to develop their own because part of my challenge with that is how do we scale it up? We don't have the money to scale it up. But the colleges are taking it up because [the program] is so successful.

This shows that, while cultural exchange programs are successful and are perceived to enhance the quality of international education programs, their scale is, by nature, small and resource-restricted. Accordingly, informants acknowledged that, while University State is a global university, becoming truly global and enabling a quality global experience at scale for most or all students requires more work. One informant said, "I think we were successful before we started, so there are a lot of people who are successful like that, but people who want to move this to a whole new level, help you become a global university, that's tough." Another informant, an instructor who seeks to incorporate interactive global experiences in his Sociology course, asked, "How do you roll it out for 30 or 40 thousand students at the same time? You don't. That's very difficult to introduce." These perspectives show that faculty and administrators view it as difficult to unite quality and scale, and that this tension exists within internationalization initiatives.

#### Emerging Internationalization Models

University State currently holds memoranda of understanding with several universities across the world that are part of its global engagement network. These partnerships focus mostly on faculty research collaborations and research exchanges, but the vision is to grow them to also

include more student exchanges as well as staff exchanges, among other things. One of the objectives of the global engagement network is to amplify the quality of University State's faculty research through collaboration with global leaders in their fields. Simultaneously, the global office administration envisions that the scale of these partnerships will grow organically over time:

I'm not actually concerned that the impact will be too small. Because once you plant that seed right, once it grows, it grows into other things. [...] We've been doing this for maybe five to six years. Now that that's taken off, it requires little of my time because the faculty member in this department is reaching out to that faculty member and saying oh by the way, you're working in this area here, have you thought about collaborating with somebody in [town in Western Europe], they have something going in that area. So instead of me having to reach out to any of their faculty, by word of mouth and the network, faculty are reaching out to others. So, all of a sudden, instead of me reaching out to ten people, all of a sudden, we have 50 people.

As such, while scale is not a primary motive of global university partnerships, it is an anticipated, organic outcome.

When it comes to blended international education initiatives, discussions remain hypothetical due to the current absence of concrete examples, but the tension between quality and scale is of concern nonetheless. One informant addressed the opportunity to use technology to enhance in-person collaboration with global research partners: "I think the ability to use technology to take advantage of the fact that we do have collaborators in many parts of the world is an opportunity for graduate education we are still needing to pursue more." This comment suggests the idea that technology can scale existing research collaborations because it increases

the amount of time collaborators can spend communicating. On the student experience side, one informant suggested a blended degree program that enables students to live in different parts of the world throughout their studies:

“The degree program is the degree program, right? But why not position them throughout the course of their studies in five different parts of the world. And when they're there, we line up their ability to interact with different agencies. Or they do it. We teach them how to do it. But it's not going to be for thousands of people, right? It's going to be about really thinking about globalization of the education.”

This idea promises enhanced quality in their experience for a select number of students due to enhanced global mobility. Interestingly, the informant points out herself that such a model would only be attainable for a small number of students, which demonstrates that quality and scale are rarely perceived to go hand in hand.

#### Innovative Internationalization Models

The area in which the tension between quality and scale was most relevant was innovative internationalization models. Due to online education's promise to provide scale to campus activities, many strategic plans include goals to grow efforts in this area. One plan states the intention to “aggressively, responsibly, and sustainably grow high quality online degree programs with [University State's online campus]. Another addresses the potential to use online education to “expand graduate education beyond residential instruction to a global audience.” One college strategic plan included a nod to online education using a tagline format: “One College, Geographically Distributed.” In the few instances that Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) were mentioned in strategic plans, they were named as an example of the scalability of

online education: “Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) of the highest caliber can serve several functions for the college as a result of their potentially wide reach and impact.” Another plan alluded to the tension between quality and scale in online education: “While we remain convinced that the on-campus experience is essential for rigorous education and training of the next generation of scientists and a scientifically literate population, online offerings can expand our reach and provide learning opportunities for students who are not able to spend four years on campus.” As such, online education is seen as an enhancement to on-campus offerings rather than a substitution of equal quality.

Despite common characterization of technology as a tool for scalability, some informants voiced concerns about the quality of online education. One top-level administrator asked rhetorically, “Do you ever hear someone from an online course saying that was life-changing for them? That it was transformative? So that tells us that this vehicle is not at a point where it delivers something that is residential.” He then continued to say, “I actually think the advent of online is not being disruptive the way people think it's being, it's being disruptive by driving residential experiences. [...] I think the disruption is actually causing a campus like this to do better.” This shows that, despite University State’s strong online degree portfolio, some university leaders remain critical of online education due to quality concerns. Another administrator informant said, “I think there are absolutely things that technology can bring to help and to extend our reach and to enrich the educational process, but will it completely substitute... [...]? Individuals learn very differently.” Similarly, another informant stated, “There are certain experiences that you simply can't do unless the student is here, if you want to call here a university campus.” These statements demonstrate doubts about the quality of online education and its inherent promise, or threat, to disrupt residential experiences, despite its ability to scale

them.

When it comes to international education, however, many informants emphasized the opportunities provided by online education. One informant argued that online education can bring global perspectives to more students than on-campus experiences:

Having never been involved in study abroad or those kinds of things, I can say that my sense of it is that those are a good way to give a small number of students a unique experience. Because it can only be done on a small scale. Internationalized online learning, where you can go into a course and there might be students from five different countries in that course or six different countries in that course, and you're interacting with them on a day-to-day basis, is a very different experience. It's not a travel abroad experience that only a few people can afford - it's almost a laboratory experience - it's a way of showing, here is how the world works and here is the kind of ideas you're going to be experiencing when you get into the work place or when you expand your work place and your profession.

Another informant speculated that online education may take some of the intimidation out of cross-cultural interactions: "I think probably the biggest thing that we need to think about is how can we use differentiating technologies that can help us get to that scale faster and make it less intimidating for folks of different races and nationalities to interact with some of our programs." These perspectives show that some faculty and administrators view the scalability of online education as an opportunity to scale internationalization at the same time.

Yet, some informants remained concerned that University State's current online campus remains ill-equipped to serve a larger number of international students. One informant stated:

We could easily move into international markets, purposefully, but I think we would create so much demand at that point - maybe we wouldn't actually be ready to do that or deliver on

it. So, the scalability of our processes and our practices we use here, even if you look at [University State] in general, our processes hold us back from scaling quickly. When you start talking about the idea of broadening that to an international scope, I think that idea gets really complex because we don't accurately know how to offer services to the domestic audience in the way that I believe we would all want to. I think there is a lot of improvement that needs to happen. And the money is still coming in, right?

This statement illustrates that the idea of broadening online offerings to a larger global audience may be intimidating, and that the pressure to do so is currently lacking due to sufficient income from domestic students. Another informant linked the lack of desire to grow internationally to insufficient support services: "We're going to keep growing, but I think our growth is now going to be controlled by what we can accept, not who is out there that wants us. So, I think as long as we are challenged by those increasing pressures on our services and our support, it limits some of the other things we could do." This informant continued to say, "I am not sure we are prepared as an institution to accept international students in an online space in those kinds of numbers." Legal barriers were also named as a potential barrier to scaling online education to international audiences: "As much as one would think because of the delivery mechanism we would have a global reach, it's much more complicated than that because, dependent on the country, online education may not be accepted." Finally, informants cited concerns about organizational commitment as a barrier to scaling online offerings globally:

It's just a matter of us saying, if we do this, is everybody on board with this because that is going to take a lot for us to scale things and really get more efficient with what we're doing. Not because we're trying to be all business-y - Higher Ed doesn't like to think of it that way, but if we don't do that, we're going to bring a lot of people to the door and



they're going to fall on the floor. We're not going to be able to serve them.

This concern illustrates the perceived tension between quality and scale in international online education in that scale, even if perceived as desirable, is challenging for large universities to achieve due to significant organizational barriers to achieve change in processes and procedures..

Finally, informants discussed more specific, logistical reasons why scaling online education offerings to global audiences would hurt quality, one of them being the importance of class size to a quality student experience. One informant commented on a specific example that would require University State to offer degree programs at half the current tuition cost to twice as large of an audience of graduate students to meet a partnership proposal from an Indian university:

The reason courses can only handle so many students has to do with instructional design. And if you want a course to have a certain quality of learning experience and if you want students to meet the specified learning outcomes, unless it is a very intro-level and kind of general class, you usually are not going to help those students be successful if it's all multiple choice tests and automated exams and minimal talking to one another and so forth. It's no mystery that grad courses tend to be like maximum 10-15 students. They're not 300 in a lecture hall because they are a different learning design. And so when we talk about these giant, 3000 students at half the tuition, you can't have small sections with lots of faculty and so forth, and lots of sections with lots of faculty or even TAs mean money. And the more expensive it is to run the program, the less likely you're going to be able to charge half tuition. So they have to be, unless you're going to lose money on the proposition, large enrolling courses, and we have some. We have some 600-1,000 student online courses, but they're Gen Ed, they're heavily automated, they're not probably the kind of thing that this

corporation in India is looking for.

This informant then further explained the barriers to scaling online courses due to cost and personnel requirements:

Historically, we thought of online offerings the way we think of face-to-face offerings, which is, you have a certain number of students and that's a section. And so what do you do if you have more students than that? You add more sections. Well, we learned the hard way that scaling by adding sections doesn't necessarily do what you want it to do. If the sections you are adding are all being taught by one person, you're just spreading one person over more students. That's not what we want to do. So, we've learned that what we need to do in scaling online sections is adding instructional support, not giving a bigger burden to an individual. And so, in the online MBA for example, we did cap enrollment in this first go-around, at 100 in the intake.

This comment illustrates that scaling online degree programs is not as simple as merely recruiting more students. University State is not willing to spread more students over the same amount of instructors due to quality concerns. On the other hand, adding more instructors increases expenses, thus hindering scaling with adequate return on investment. It may also prove difficult to scale the number of instructors who are able to maintain the university's established standards of quality due to a shortage in talent.

### Access versus Prestige

Access versus Prestige was the fifth and least coded tension across my data. This tension can be defined as prioritizing global access to higher education on the one hand and the prestige of the university brand, which requires a sense of exclusivity, on the other.

## Established Internationalization Models

Because University State is a public land-grant university, it has been defined by a commitment to access since its founding. As suggested by my literature review, such a commitment to access may clash with a pursuit of prestige, which requires a certain degree of exclusivity. Official University statements suggest a prioritization of access. One strategic plan reads: “We are deeply committed to the belief that all human beings can learn and that we have a responsibility as a College for alleviating whatever impediments or barriers might interfere with a particular learner’s ability to make progress.” This statement suggests a commitment to accommodate learners’ abilities, even if their abilities do not reflect the standards of the higher education elite. At an observed diversity event, an administrator explained a new diversity initiative in the context that “universities didn’t use to be about the elite.” One informant, when discussing barriers to studying abroad, emphasized the need to enhancing access to global experiences: “The students who come from higher income families can afford to do that, but we’d like to make it possible for our students who come from lower-income families.”

However, informants also displayed an awareness that University State needs to mind its reputation as an elite institution. One informant perceived full-paying international students as central to enhancing the university’s prestige: “Elitism [...] is lucrative because of the ability to pay. They don’t have alternatives in their country but they have money. I think the United States is still the envy of higher education. We have the greatest number of elite institutions.” While one informant clarified that “providing the best possible education to citizens of [the state]” is of higher priority than growing global engagement, another asked, “If we just stopped the flow of external students, I just wonder, if we had that ability, could we really fill all the seats in the

institution? Probably not without going way down the quality ladder.” These two statements demonstrate the need to balance sufficient service to in-state constituents, which enhances access, with sufficient recruitment of academically strong international students, which enhances the overall prestige of the institution. They also suggest that international activities occur in the domain of prestige-enhancing.

The rapidly growing number of Chinese enrollments holds relevance to the access versus prestige tension as well. Informants expressed concerns that admitting too many Chinese students may not only decrease access for domestic students and other international students, they also worried that the university’s prestige may suffer as a result of too little international diversity. One informant stated: “We have made a conscious effort to increase the diversity of the countries from which the students come because China is sending so many, it can kind of overwhelm the system.” Another comment emphasized the need to create balance to achieve the perceived right mix of enrollments:

We feel very strongly that by bringing international students, they will at least get some exposure to international culture. And at the same time, if every international student is Chinese, it means that all the American students get to do is just get exposure to the American students. So, we happen to have students from 140 different countries. So, the logic is not to limit them, it is to balance them.

As such, efforts to create balance between domestic, out-of-state, Chinese, and other international enrollments are perceived to both enhance access and prestige.

When it comes to study abroad, concerns about access and cost prevailed among informants. One stated, “One concern I have is that the ability to engage in study abroad or in all the different kinds of faculty-embedded trips for students - it costs extra for students.” Another

emphasized that many of the students who benefit most from University State's access-oriented mission may not have awareness of global opportunities: "Still, about 30% of our students are first generation students, whose families have no experience with higher education, so this is a new thing for them, and they're not necessarily coming to [University State] thinking, well I'm going to spend a summer abroad or I'm going to do a semester's worth of study somewhere outside [of the state]." These statements show that study abroad is perceived as an experience reserved for privileged students, enhancing the prestige of their degree, while financially disadvantaged students lack access to international involvement.

#### Emerging Internationalization Models

The access versus prestige tension is relevant to emerging internationalization models, as well. When discussing the opportunity to partner with universities around the world to offer joint degree programs, one informant stated:

If [University State's] name is going to be on it, then I think [University State] has to contribute something in particular to it that distinguishes it, right? And what is that thing? [...] This is Higher Ed. We are the creators of new knowledge by virtue of our research. We are the creators of content because we have the expertise to package things in ways that are a curriculum. We have the ability to disseminate that, we have the ability to evaluate it. All of those things - create new knowledge, create content from that, disseminate it, and evaluate it. The question is, of those things, which ones should the institution be responsible for and solely responsible for. You're putting your name behind something. So, in higher education, this is a question I think about.

This comment shows a concern with prestige in that it suggests adding another university's name

to a University State credential may diminish its value by emphasizing that the university needs to be solely responsible for certain aspects of the education it provides rather than allowing new players in the field to reshape its core activities. As such, while a global partnership may increase access, it may also decrease prestige.

### Innovative Internationalization Models

Many informants view online education as a powerful tool for increasing global access to higher education. When discussing the size and opportunity of the Indian online education market, one informant said, “[There is] a tremendous market there. Tremendous need. Access is the primary thing holding India back. And online learning is a fast and a better way to provide that access.” While this comment does not imply a de-prioritization of prestige, other informants suggested more radical approaches to increasing access that would require a branching out from the degree-focused activities of University State’s online portfolio, potentially affecting prestige:

The time is coming to say, how do we take that content that we have developed and find some of it, not all of it - what of it might be used in high schools, what of it might be used for home schooling, what of it might be used for improving the quality of community college education, so that more people can come in, what of it might be used to help a partner institution in another country better prepare students to come to the U.S. for graduate study. I mean, we need to look at the strategic issues facing us and our society, and say, how can we take this content and repurpose it?

This comment could imply a prioritization of access over prestige because non-traditional audiences, like high school students and community college students are not typically a target audience for University State’s prestige-oriented offerings. On the other hand, if a university

simply repurposes content without expanding access to its credentials, prestige may remain intact. Another informant comment demonstrates a desire among faculty and administrators to leverage online and distance education to reach under-served audiences, thus increasing access: "We had such a successful correspondence study program that people who were involved in that were truly concerned about the fact that we would not be able to serve some of the people we used to serve. And we just had to help them along with that and try to minimize the losses. There were some." If access is a primary motivator, faculty and administrators may be willing to compromise when it comes to prestige.

However, some informants emphasize prestige as a primary factor in online education initiatives. One saw prestige as a barrier to University State's ability to recruit international students into online programs: "Especially when the international students are supported by their governments, they're interested in the students being in the U.S. as opposed to staying in their country accessing the education because they're not having that fully immersive experience." This comment implies that the key value in international study lies in the immersive experience of relocating to a foreign country. Another informant pointed out that Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) have a limited impact on access because many of their users already have multiple degrees: "Even if you provide all the courses for free, the people that tend to finish are already educated. They're amplifying their experience." While this comment may seem unrelated to prestige, it does suggest that online education that focuses on access, such as MOOCs, does not enhance the prestige of a university because students often do not complete their courses or do not need further higher education credentials. Another informant did not think that the tension between access and prestige applies to recruitment of international students, suggesting University State's position in the market allows it to pursue both:

I have not heard the prestige argument. Because there is a difference between opening to more international and open. The Open University concept is let everybody in, education for all, if you need remediation, we'll help you. That's not what I think you're talking about. Opening up to international students, who are just as qualified as any other [University State] student - yeah, so I've not heard that.

Yet, in comparing University State to the Open University, this comment shows the perception that the ability to reconcile access and prestige depends on a university's prestige itself.

### **Research Question 2: Sense Making in International Higher Education**

My second research question was, How do faculty and administrators make sense of tensions when working on international higher education initiatives? In my theoretical framework, I identified Tracy's (2004) categorization of organizational tensions as my main tool for inquiry into faculty and administrator sense making around tensions in international higher education. Tracy (2004) adapts Baxter's (1990) theory of dialectical contradictions in relationship development and applies it to organizational settings. Using data gathered at correctional facilities, she categorizes employees' framing of organizational tensions into three categories: simple contradictions, complementary dialectics, and pragmatic paradoxes. Simple contradictions occur when framing the tension as a contradiction, meaning the belief that one cannot do two actions at once, but can alternate and choose one. Complementary dialectics are achieved when reframing the tension as reconcilable. Pragmatic paradoxes are perceived when framing the tension as paradox or double-bind, for example thinking that to obey is to disobey and to disobey is to obey. Tracy (2004) leans on literature from organizational psychology to suggest that viewing a tension as complementary dialectics is the most beneficial approach to



employee morale and retention while viewing a tension as a pragmatic paradox or double bind is the most detrimental. I applied this framework to my study by linking it to the five tensions in international higher education identified in the literature review.

This section provides examples of each of the three approaches to sense making (simple contradiction, complementary dialectic, and pragmatic paradox). By nature, my categorizations of informant quotes into one of the three codes remain subjective, especially when it comes to distinguishing simple contradictions and pragmatic paradoxes. In some cases, the argument could be made that a quote could be coded for as multiple sense making styles at once. Similarly, some quotes will resonate more clearly as one sense making style, while others remain more ambiguous in terms of their persuasive intent. The purpose of using Tracey's (2004) classifications for sense making around organizational tensions is to illustrate how informants discuss conflicting university priorities in order to influence how initiatives compete for resources in the university environment.

Simple contradiction was the most coded approach to sense making, followed by complimentary dialectic, followed by pragmatic paradox. My findings suggest that faculty and administrator attitudes toward internationalization initiatives are reflected in their approaches to making sense of them: simple contradictions are used to justify action or inaction, complementary dialectics are used to sell strategic priorities by dissolving tensions and creating win-wins, and pragmatic paradoxes are used to explain why a particular tension in internationalization requires a compromise on mission.

### Simple Contradictions

Faculty and administrator informants framed tensions in terms of a simple contradiction when trying to justify action or inaction in the context of the tension. A common argument in the context of the global versus local tension was that a university cannot fulfill its public and land-grant missions if it does not have a global reach. While this framing could be seen as complementary, several informants used it to argue for a larger emphasis on global than currently exists at University State. One informant said, “The whole scope of what we do, you really can't boil that down to the United States. It's naturally multi-national, international. If we don't start thinking about things more on a global scale, we're kind of missing the whole point of what we're up to and the mix of cultures and things like that.” This rhetorical approach allows faculty and administrators to dissolve a tension by arguing that one side of it cannot exist without the other. Another informant stated, “[University State], as one of this country's land-grant universities [...] has a responsibility to look at itself as a land-grant to the world. While this statement does not contain an explicit contradiction, it holds the implicit implication that a university cannot fulfill its land-grant mission without being global in reach.

Meanwhile, informants also constructed simple contradictions to explain why their departments remain complacent when it comes to pursuing internationalization. When asked to comment on the statements of colleagues that the land-grant mission is now global, one informant responded: “the land-grant mission was to educate the children of the working class in [this state]. This is an example of an informant choosing one side of the global versus local tension while opposing the other, using a simple contradiction to argue for his side. He further went on to say, “You have to balance the needs and the cost increases versus trying to keep particularly in-state tuition reasonable to meet our mission. [...] Out-of-state tuition then becomes more important because that is not part of our land-grant mission.” This statement shows how

this informant uses his simple contradiction between which stakeholders do and do not fall under the land-grant mission to justify prioritizing cost-saving measures for local students. Another example of a simple contradiction in the global versus local context happened when an informant explained why he opposes programs with a majority international student population. He said, “The flavor of the program changes pretty dramatically if the fraction of international students exceeds maybe about 40%,” and continued, “It's like it's not a [University State] program anymore. It's an international program.” Again, this statement illustrates an informant leaning towards one side of the global versus local tension and using a simple contradiction to justify his stance.

In the context of the tension between profit and engagement, informants used simple contradictions to explain why the two sides are incompatible with each other. One informant made the following statement to show that profit and engagement cannot co-exist: “We don't recruit international students to balance our budget. Never. That is not our goal.” At a meeting observation in the global programs office, when discussing the common sentiment that international students are cash cows to the university, one administrator said she emphasizes that international students make significant contributions to the local and national economies and subsidize domestic students only when she receives direct push-back on the global mission. In other words, she demonstrates a simple contradiction between the priorities of those providing the push-back – an emphasis on local and national goals – and the state objective to limit international students, which would harm those goals. Both statements show how a simple contradiction is used to de-prioritize revenue for the university.

On the other hand, some informants explained why they believe the university harms engagement goals by recruiting too many international students out of a profit motive. One

informant stated, “We're just bringing those students in to say we have international students, but they're not truly integrated within the university as a whole.” Another said, “We would like [international] students to be fully integrated in our social structure here. So, if they're all just kind of talking amongst themselves, it defeats that purpose.” Both statements show a clear concern with prioritizing engagement over profit, using simple contradictions to criticize current practices at the university and to state a need for change. Other simple contradictions in the context of the profit versus engagement tension were more implicit. One informant said, “I appreciate very much countries that support their citizens getting an education someplace else. That, to me, is part of that affordability picture. But my guess is, many of those students come from wealthier families. I think we stand a better chance in the U.S. of reaching U.S. citizens that truly would not have access to higher education.” This statement contains a simple contradiction between the idea of serving international elites versus domestic working-class students, aligning with the priority of engagement as opposed to profit.

Informants also used simple contradictions when aligning themselves with profit motives while de-prioritizing engagement. When explaining why University State has not opened and does not plan to open branch campuses overseas, one informant stated, “We should not open campuses overseas - absolutely not. Why not? Because, with many of those, investments are very high, for one thing. Second, the pay-off from them is not guaranteed. And so, making investments of a long-term nature - buildings, campuses - it's really not desirable.” This statement implies that common practices in operating branch campuses conflicts with University State's ROI-driven financial goals. Another informant spoke to the current lack of financial incentive to scale online programs to international audiences: “I think some of it is that we don't feel a need to scale internationally because there is enough domestic demand for our supply. So,

if there is really no economic reason for us to scale immediately to an international market, then I think that it doesn't drive the conversation as quickly as it potentially could to a solution.” This statement prioritizes profit over international engagement vis-à-vis a simple contradiction – we do not need to scale internationally because the domestic supply of students is sufficient-justifying inaction with regards to internationalization initiatives.

In the context of the public versus private tension, many informants juxtaposed the university's public mission with the approaches of private-sector institutions. One informant stated, “Our goal is not to maximize revenue. Higher Ed is not a for-profit business where that would be the driver.” Another informant, when discussing options for monetizing global online education in the future, stated, “We still think that we should privatize the content as the only way we can force people to pay for the other aspects, but I think that's a failed mission.” This statement shows that this informant believes the public higher education mission places a priority on access as opposed to monetization, stating that the university's mission stands in direct contrast to privatization practices, thus creating a contradiction that becomes the basis for withholding support for an initiative.

Informants used the public mission as a justification for prioritizing service to in-state students over other constituents. When discussing the expectations of the state legislature toward the university, one informant stated, “Many of them believe they're investing in this for [citizens of this state]. Another said, “There are probably legislators who would consider the university's role in terms of priorities, to be more [state]-centered.” Both statements imply a simple contradiction between serving in-state and out-of-state students, thus justifying prioritizing the former over the latter. Informants also used simple contradictions to explain why in-state students must take priority over international students when it comes to financial aid and

scholarships. One informant stated, “The out-of-state students get some internal funds. International students can get private scholarships.” This simple contradiction indicates that public dollars are ear-marked for in-state students while international students can benefit from private dollars only and, thus, justifies the university’s inability to give federal or state financial aid to international students.

In the context of the quality versus scale tension, informants constructed similar contradictions to align themselves with one side of the tension versus the other. In arguing for a higher emphasis on quality than on scale, one informant stated, “I am not sure we are prepared as an institution to accept international students in an online space in those kinds of numbers.” Another one prioritized quality over the attempt to scale quickly via online technologies to international markets when asking, “Do you ever hear someone from an online course saying that was life-changing for them? That was transformative. So that tells us that this vehicle is not at a point where it delivers something that is [comparable to] residential.” A third informant mirrored this attitude when stating, “There are certain experiences that you simply can't do unless the student is here, if you want to call here a university campus.” These three statements demonstrate how informants used simple contradictions to set up a juxtaposition between scaling via online technologies on the one hand and ensuring a quality student experience on the other. All three informants aligned themselves with the quality side of this tension to justify their opposition to scaling global online education efforts.

Another example of how simple contradictions helped informants align themselves with quality versus scale based arguments consist of discussions around the size of the Chinese undergraduate student population at University State. One informant said, “China is sending so many, it can kind of overwhelm the system.” Another echoed this concern: “If they are all from

China, what value does that bring to the campus? But if they're from 15 or 20 countries, then that is a lot more valuable.” Both statements contain simple contradictions that suggest a tension between seeking scale on the one hand and quality on the other. Framing the tension in this manner allows faculty and administrators to justify a focus on quality without simultaneously advancing scale.

In the context of the access versus prestige tension, informants argued that enhancing access does not harm prestige. One stated, “I have not heard the prestige argument. Because there is a difference between opening to more international and open. The Open University concept is let everybody in, education for all, if you need remediation, we'll help you. That's not what I think you're talking about.” This simple contradiction, unlike others discussed above, serves to unify a tension via the suggestion that both sides of it are attainable. However, it accomplishes this by more specifically defining the approach that University State takes – in this case, in the context of online education – and comparing it to common approaches elsewhere that are deemed less desirable. Other informants offered arguments that fell in line with prestige-centered attitudes. One stated, “My guess would be [we will pursue] more elitism because it is lucrative and because of the ability to pay. They don't have alternatives in their country but they have money. I think the United States is still the envy of higher education. We have the greatest number of elite institutions.” The simple contradiction in this statement juxtaposes the prestige of American universities with the lack of comparable alternatives in other countries. The statement serves as a justification of why University State can continue pursuing full-paying international students as opposed to paying more attention to creating access for international students with lesser financial ability.

On the other hand, informants also constructed simple contradictions to make arguments in favor of a higher emphasis on access. One informant stated, “One concern I have is that the ability to engage in study abroad or in all the different kinds of faculty-embedded trips for students - it costs extra for students.” The contradiction in this statement is between creating study abroad opportunities that are only attainable to wealthier students as opposed to finding paths for all students to enhance access. This statement shows how simple contradictions can be used to critique existing internationalization models and initiatives while illustrating a need for change. When discussing online education, one informant stated, “Especially when the international students are supported by their governments, they're interested in the students being in the U.S. as opposed to staying in their country accessing the education because they're not having that fully immersive experience.” The simple contradiction between the immersive experience on residential campuses and non-immersive experience in online programs serves to justify complacency in terms of pursuing international student audiences online.

### Complementary Dialectics

Informants constructed complementary dialectics to propose win-win solutions that dissolve tensions in international higher education. This helps faculty and administrators sell internationalization initiatives to others in the university environment and beyond. In the context of the global versus local tension, informants tended to argue that both domestic and international students benefit from a more global environment on campus. One informant stated, “With this global world we live in, where everything is so interconnected, I think we'd be doing our students a disservice if we didn't have a really strong international student presence in our classrooms, whether they're online classrooms or face-to-face.” Another said, “I think it adds to



the diversity and the interest of [University State]. It helps everybody when there is students here from other cultures, from other areas.” Both perspectives present a complimentary dialectic between the local and global missions of the university to deliver a persuasive argument in favor of more internationalization.

In fact, the complementary dialectic between global and local is so pervasive at University State that numerous strategic plans list them together as planned areas of impact without discussing any potential conflicts between the two. One plan states the objective of “improving the lives of people in [the state], the nation, and the world.” Another reads, “[University State]’s College of Agricultural Sciences aspires to be a regional, national, and international leader,” and continues, “The College of Agricultural Sciences is addressing complex societal issues that transcend disciplines to improve people’s lives on scales ranging from local to global.” A third plan states, “Researchers in the college are improving the outlook for people in [the state], the nation, and the world. These are just a few examples of the perceived complementary dialectic between University State’s global and local mission. Portraying the two as interdependent and non-conflicting can help faculty and administrators obtain buy-in for initiatives with a global focus rather than encountering push-back based on the notion that they will take away from local or national priorities.

In the context of the tension between profit and engagement, informants emphasized the need to pursue internationalization initiatives that enhance goals on both ends of the spectrum. In discussing online education, one strategic plan reads:

Over the past ten years, we have become financially dependent on the success of the [online degree portfolio] and this has challenged us to be both creative and disciplined in initiating new curricula and programs. Although our [online program] strategy began as

an entrepreneurial attempt to generate revenue to support the residential mission of the College, enhancing our academic profile in online learning has become a strategic priority of its own.

This plan explicitly states a profit motive in pursuing online education as a strategic priority. However, it also emphasizes that efforts in this space now go beyond revenue generation, falling in line with the mission of the university and, thus, the value of engagement. When asked whether faculty pursue global online education initiatives out of profit or engagement motives, an administrator informant answered:

Quite honestly, both. Absolutely both. Most people want to make sure their [online] programs are successful, the metrics are often very different than they are for a residential program. [...] For right or for wrong, in the online world, we do need to make sure that we have enough enrollments to make our programs strong and successful. But, I think, for many of our faculty, it is also an interest.

This statement portrays profit and engagement motives as complementary. Instead of providing a critique of existing global online education efforts, this allows the informant to support the approaches taken by her faculty.

Outside of the context of online education, informants also constructed complementary dialectics when it comes to merging profit and engagement objectives in the context of international students paying full tuition plus an extra student fee. One informant stated, “The reason why we're bringing international students here has nothing to do with money. But we still generate \$250 million for the university. That's a lot of million dollars.” Another said, “The nice thing about having tuition set the way we have it is we can really not let other things cloud that judgment about value proposition versus really needing to provide the services that you better

provide to international students if you're bringing them in.” A third informant echoed these perspectives:

We welcome students from [outside of the state] and out of the country to be part of our educational environment, but we have not done that really for financial reasons. That said, the extra revenue they bring is vitally important to the institution, but we do not make decisions on admission or admission strategy based on anticipated or additional revenues that are brought by out-of-state students.

All three statements show that informants constructed complementary dialectics to create a win-win scenario between profit-driven and engagement-driven aspects of internationalization initiatives. Acknowledging that the university makes money from international tuition dollars while stating that this does not compromise the organization’s focus on quality and engagement allows faculty and administrators to advance both financial and ethical objectives.

In the context of the public versus private tension, informants portrayed University State’s public mission as complementary with private-sector approaches and priorities. One informant stated, “[University State], as a large public university, has to be a destination of choice for students outside of [the state]. This statement implies the need to remain competitive with other large public universities. Competition is typically a private-sector value, but it cannot be discarded in the public context because it increases institutional viability and long-term sustainability. Another informant said, “In many ways, we are a private institution. As state funding goes away, we rely increasingly on tuition, donations, and research dollars. It's just a reality.” This statement shows that University State is mutually dependent on public and private funding and thus cannot survive without either. International students then become a means to

protecting the university's public viability by providing private dollars through high tuition income.

In the context of the quality versus scale tension, several strategic plans state intentions to pursue both at the same time. One promises to "Aggressively, responsibly, and sustainably grow high-quality online degree programs with [the online campus]." This objective advances the idea of scaling with quality. Another plan states that "Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) of the highest caliber can serve several functions for the college as a result of their potentially wide reach and impact. Of particular interest is supporting the use of the material developed for MOOCs in innovative ways such that they positively impact, engage, and augment student learning in resident instruction." This objective contains the idea that MOOCs can serve the university in order to scale reach while also advancing the quality of resident instruction offerings. Both examples show attempts to construct a complementary dialectic between scale and quality to advance global online education initiatives.

One informant advocated for the perspective that online education, a method for scaling university impact, can drive up the quality of residential education. He stated, "I actually think the advent of online is not being disruptive the way people think it's being, it's being disruptive by driving residential experiences." He continued, "I think the disruption is actually causing a campus like this to do better." This complementary dialectic stands in contrast to simple contradictions that argue against online education due to quality concerns. This informant's perspective allows him to support University State's online education initiatives without concern that they may disrupt residential activities. On the university partnership side, one informant argued that even quality-focused, small pilot partnerships can eventually reach a scale that facilitates a bigger impact:

I'm not actually concerned that the impact will be too small. Because once you plant that seed right, once it grows, it grows into other things. [...] So, all of a sudden, instead of me reaching out to ten people, all of a sudden we have 50 people. [...] There are unintended consequences. We didn't think of this one before, and all of a sudden it's happening.

He had a similar vision for a program that facilitates cultural exchange between international and domestic students, which is currently limited to a small cohort each year:

The program started of course very small. [...] About 20 students a year we train. Now we have proliferated it to the campuses. So now, the campuses have their own [program], and the colleges want to develop their own because part of my challenge with that is how do we scale it up? We don't have the money to scale it up. But the colleges are taking it up because [it] is so successful, they are creating their own [...] programs.

Both statements reveal the belief that high-quality programs with limited reach can scale organically once they have proven their worth, thus creating a complementary dialectic that sells small internationalization programs to faculty and administrators without causing concerns about scale.

In the context of the access versus prestige tension, one informant stated that it is not usually a concern that faculty and administrators voice because it is generally understood that affordability and high-quality student experiences must go hand in hand:

I think you want to make sure that you're offering an affordable experience that's high in quality. And international students, there are a number of fees associated with making sure that you can offer the right level of support services, both on the student side and the

academic side. I didn't observe or hear any concerns or complaints specifically surrounding those issues.

This statement demonstrates another approach to constructing a complementary dialectic by refusing to acknowledge that a tension exists or may be perceived to exist by others. This allows faculty and administrators to subscribe to current internationalization practices without having to critically evaluate competing priorities against each other.

### Pragmatic Paradoxes

Tracy (2004) also refers to pragmatic paradoxes as double binds and shows that they are the most demotivating approach for framing tensions because they solidify the belief that one cannot enhance one priority without diminishing the other, even if both priorities are considered important. The key distinction between pragmatic paradoxes and simple contradiction is that pragmatic paradoxes value both sides of a tension while simple contradiction clearly prioritize one over the other. My data reflects the demotivating effect of pragmatic paradoxes in that informants constructed them to explain how their hands are tied when it comes to internationalization initiatives. In the context of the global versus local tension, one informant stated, "I will be honest with you, I do think for [University State], we have an obligation to the citizens of the [state] and to the U.S. Not to say I would exclude international, but I do think it challenges us a bit when we think about what does it mean to think about affordability for international." This informant values international students and considers it important to identify sources of financial aid for them, but the obligation towards in-state students in light of the university's public mission requires that resources and energy are invested into them. This is demotivating to the informant and justifies inaction.

In the context of the profit versus engagement tension, informants who valued both priorities often explained why internationalization efforts still remain cost-prohibitive, even if a big emphasis on engagement is desired. When asked if the university would fund mission-driven priority initiatives, one top-level administrator stated, “[Assume] I've got a proposal that [...] requires a match. We'd go, absolutely. We'll do the match. But to say from centrally, here is a pile of money to go off and go do something like that, we're not in a position to do it.” This shows that even initiatives that have broad buy-in from a mission perspective may not receive funding due to financial concerns. Another informant discussed how even a pure profit motive would not allow University State to charge international students too much in relation with how much they would pay elsewhere: “If we think we're somehow special and can charge so much more, I think we'd lose those kids. [...] So as long as they're offsetting that cost, I don't think you can... you can't afford to say they'll just blindly pay whatever we charge because I don't think they will.” This statement shows that engagement still must remain a priority by necessity even if profit is the key motive, thus constructing a double bind between the two priorities, which has a demotivating effect.

In the context of the public versus private tension, one informant explained why the university depends on its out-of-state and international students, who do not receive the in-state tuition discount, to meet its public mission:

International students and out-of-state students subsidize [state] resident students. That's how we get only \$3000 per student from the state, but we give them a \$10,000 discount - in-state tuition, we try not to call it a discount. [...] The reason we can do that is because out-of-state students pay well more than the cost of their education. So, [in-state] students are probably actually paying even less than the true cost of their education, and out-of-

state and international students are probably paying more than the true cost of their education because they're subsidizing - we know that, it's pretty simple math. If you pay any attention to it and you have a critical mind, you come to that conclusion. But we really try hard not to talk about it that way.

This informant constructs a pragmatic paradox to argue that University State could not meet its public mission without the private dollars from out-of-state and international students. This pragmatic paradox enables the argument that the university could not lower tuition costs for international students even if affordability for this group was a priority. Thus, the pragmatic paradox becomes a justification for inaction, even if the inaction is considered problematic by faculty and administrators.

While my data lacked examples of informants constructed pragmatic paradoxes in the context of the quality versus scale tension, it showed one example in the context of access versus prestige. When asked to evaluate the potential of MOOCs to advance global access to higher education, one informant stated, "Even if you provide all the courses for free, the people that tend to finish are already educated. They're amplifying their experience. If I'm just cold going into it, you tend to have a very low completion rate." The argument here is that MOOCs, while enhancing access, diminish prestige because of their low completion rate in light of the fact that many MOOC users already hold advanced university degrees. As such, this informant argued that MOOCs present a pragmatic paradox and are thus an inappropriate path to pursue access and prestige together.

### **Research Question 3: Decision Making in International Higher Education**

My third research question was, "How do sense making and decision making interact



when faculty and administrators encounter tensions in international higher education?” In my theoretical framework, I identified Cohen, March & Olson’s (1972) garbage can model of organizational choice as my tool for inquiry into decision making. My research borrows their three types of decisions styles to link them to sense making approaches in international higher education. The first decision style, decision by resolution, are decisions that resolve problems after some period of time working on them. The second style, decisions by oversight, are decisions made with the investment of very little time and energy. The third style, decision by flight, are decisions that are made with such little investment of time and energy that, often, no resolution is reached at all (p. 8).

Because my research question asks how sense making and decision making interact, I created overlays in my NVivo data that link my sense making codes (simple contradiction, complementary dialectic, and pragmatic paradox) with my decision making codes (decision by resolution, decision by flight, and decision by oversight). As is the case with my classifications of sense making styles, my codes for decision making styles are, by nature, subjective and may appear ambiguous. However, linking sense making and decision making provided further insight into how informants evaluate and advocate for internationalization initiatives. Thus, my codes are less an attempt to define decision making styles via Cohen, March & Olson’s (1972) strict definitions, but rather to address perceived decision making styles among informants. As such, I define perceived decisions by resolutions as those linked with elaborate decision making processes, such as committee work, inclusion of an initiative in a strategic planning document, or hiring designated staff to solve problems. Perceived decisions by oversight are decisions that were made haphazardly. Perceived decisions by flight are decisions that have been avoided due to factors like lacking motivation among decision makers or insufficient clarity and resources.

My data shows that decisions by resolution are most often linked with complementary dialectics while also linking frequently with simple contradictions, decisions by flight are most often linked with simple contradictions while occasionally linking with pragmatic paradoxes and decisions by oversight are also linked with simple contradictions. It is important to emphasize again that the informant statements assigned to the three decision making codes represent perceived rather than factual approaches to decision making. As such, the links between approaches to sense making and perceived approaches to decision making demonstrate how faculty and administrators seek to persuade others of their attitudes towards and decisions about internationalization initiatives.

#### Decision by Resolution

Decisions by resolution were the most frequently coded decision style across my data. Cohen, March & Olson (1972) define decisions by resolution as decisions that resolve problems after some period of time of working on them (p. 8). As such, decision makers invest the energy needed to reach a resolution. For the purpose of my study, I coded descriptions of decisions as decisions by resolution if informants talked about them in the context of the strategic plan, if they discussed administrative positions that were created to resolve a tension, or if they announced plans to invest substantial time and energy into resolving a tension, for example via the formation of a dedicated committee.

Informants constructed complementary dialectics to explain why certain internationalization initiatives have become key university priorities through decisions by resolution. One informant stated, "I'm well-acquainted with the educational imperatives as they are laid out by the president, and in those imperatives, he was pretty explicit that we have a

responsibility to serve the constituents not only at [University State], the country, but also increasingly the world.” This informant suggests that the university’s president constructed a complementary dialectic between University State’s local and global missions in the creation of institutional imperatives, which represent a decision by resolution. At a meeting observation at the university’s global programs office, one informant explained her role of working with faculty on establishing a sustainability initiative in West Africa within the context of University State’s strategic theme of sustainability. As such, she placed her international initiatives within the context of a decision by resolution. She also explained that what is commonly perceived as global brain drain could be conceptualized as a positive trend of global mobility, thus constructing a complementary dialectic that lends further credibility to her initiative. Both examples demonstrate that informants link their perspectives on internationalization with university-wide strategic priorities, which represent decisions by resolution, while simultaneously constructing complementary dialectics to further advocate for internationalization.

The global programs office at University State positions its global engagement network, which encompasses several partnerships with universities abroad, as a decision by resolution while highlighting the complementary dialectics it enables. One informant who works on the global partnership initiative stated:

The thing that's emerging more and more now is not having the, okay are we doing a student exchange or a student visit or a research thing - we're actually trying to do the full portfolio, so have a deeper relationship with a partner rather than just the one type or the other. So, we should try to figure out research collaborations, credit students both ways, maybe have grad students come.

This statement creates a complementary dialectic between quality and scale because it shows that the network allows University State to both broaden its global impact and the depth of the partner relationships. Similarly, one informant explained how the resolution-driven engagement network helps dissolve the tension between global and local: “It is a strategic imperative because [...] the [global] partners constitute a link for us to the local communities.” This informant argues that local communities across the world can be impacted in ways that are appropriate for them, rooted in their own cultural contexts, because University State has taken the time to build relationships with universities in their area. This stands in juxtaposition to global initiatives that disregard local cultures, showing how a resolution-driven approach that facilitates complementary dialectics is preferable.

My data also contains examples of how simple contradictions facilitate decisions by resolution. One strategic plan states:

International engagement can be enriching for our faculty and students and a way for us to gain the visibility needed to attract the very best international students and industry partners, or it can be a costly distraction. To ensure that our efforts enrich the college community, we will continue to focus on high-quality student study abroad and internship experiences that add value for students, and will seek high-quality sponsored research collaborations.

The simple contradiction lies between distracting, low-impact internationalization initiatives and those that enable the university to better meet its mission. The decision by resolution consists of incorporating in the strategic plan a commitment to prioritizing only the most impactful internationalization endeavors. Similarly, one informant, in referring to his college’s strategic plan, stated, “It’s explicitly in there that we want to spend our resources on getting our students

abroad as opposed to engaging in other kinds of activities.” Again, the strategic plan functions as the perceived decision by resolution while the simple contradiction lies in what the college deems worthy of doing versus not worthy of doing when it comes to internationalization.

In explaining why a department may prefer recruiting domestic students over international students, one informant created a simple contradiction between global and local priorities within the context of a decision by resolution: “Usually the approach is trying to get as many strong domestic students as possible and then filling in with outstanding international students. When push comes to shove, people would rather have a domestic than foreign, if they can. There are certainly some aspects that are easier.” This statement suggests that faculty and admissions staff resolve to give priority to domestic students in the admissions process. It states an assumed resolution rather than an official university policy, but it still serves as a justification to an approach to internationalization and could have implications for how other faculty and administrators make sense of and decisions around tensions in international higher education. Meanwhile, one informant stated, “We don't recruit international students to balance our budget. Never. That is not our goal.” This comment creates a simple contradiction between profit and engagement to explain an official university position on internationalization, which reflects a perceived decision by resolution.

Perceived decisions by resolution in the context of pragmatic paradoxes were less common but did occur. One informant, in an observed meeting between global office staff and a faculty member interested in facilitating a new global university partnership, explained why internationalization initiatives require faculty champions to thrive but cannot be led by faculty long-term due to workload issues. He stated that, five years from now, the plan is to hire staff members whose job it is to manage these partnerships while keeping the faculty member on as a

champion. The perceived decision by resolution lies in the intended hiring of support staff to solve the pragmatic paradox between the need for faculty leadership and the simultaneous need to free faculty up from the administrative burdens of global partnerships. Another example of a pragmatic paradox tied to a decision by resolution also revolved around faculty involvement.

One informant stated:

If indeed [University State] wants to make this a global university, then we have to provide some motivation for the faculty to get involved in it. So that's one of the biggest impediments in my assessment of where we are right now. There is no reward for the faculty to take on the pet project to do that. Nowhere, when they fill out their annual evaluation of what they've done is there even a category that fits those activities. They can find their way in there, and if they have an astute supervisor, they'll pick up on that.

[...] And in that regard, it can become a detriment to taking on international initiatives.

Domestic funding is very challenging. Then, when you bring in the international aspect, it takes a whole higher level of difficulty.

The pragmatic paradox in this statement exists between the university's dependence on faculty to lead internationalization initiatives and the simultaneous lack of incentives for faculty to get involved. The informant thus asserts that a decision by resolution, such as a commitment to rewarding faculty for international work, is required to solve this pragmatic paradox.

### Decision by Flight

Decisions by flight were the second-most coded perceived decision style in my data. Cohen, March & Olson (1972) define decisions by flight as those that do not resolve problems because decision makers do not invest enough time to reach a solution, thus abandoning the

problem (p. 8). This is different from decisions by oversight, which do not fully resolve the problem at hand. For the purpose of my study, I coded decisions as decisions by flight if informants stated a problem that has been abandoned due to high complexity. My data does not contain any examples of complementary dialectics tied to decisions by flight because informants were inherently critical of decisions by flight while they held inherently positive attitudes toward complementary dialectics.

When it comes to simple contradictions driving decisions by flight, my data contains numerous examples. When discussing why University State does not pursue international enrollments online through substantial, strategic efforts, one informant stated, “I think some of it is that we don't feel a need to scale internationally because there is enough domestic demand for our supply. So, if there is really no economic reason for us to scale immediately to an international market, then I think that it doesn't drive the conversation as quickly as it potentially could to a solution.” This statement constructs a simple contradiction between global and local in order to justify inaction – a decision by flight. Another informant tied to the university's online programs stated:

We could easily move into international markets, purposefully, but I think we would create so much demand at that point - maybe we wouldn't actually be ready to do that or deliver on it. [...] I think that idea gets really complex because we don't accurately know how to offer services to the domestic audience in the way that I believe we would all want to. I think there is a lot of improvement that needs to happen. And the money is still coming in, right?

This statement contains simple contradictions between global and local, quality and scale, and profit versus engagement, which are offered as an explanation why University State does not

seek to expand online programs to international students in a strategic manner.

Another informant created a simple contradiction between fundamental activities that need to happen to keep the university functioning and activities that are merely enhancements, and thus optional, to explain a limited focus on internationalization initiatives:

When you've got [...] a lot of competing priorities and limited resources, and you've got things which are fundamental to the existence of the unit and its success, and you've got things that would be a really nice enhancement - and I think that is a key distinction for us, is that the first priority of things that we have to do, the next level are things that we would like to do, which would make it a better experience, but if we don't do them, it won't break things. And I can say that because the vast majority of our undergraduates don't say... when we have meetings with undergraduates to talk about what are the issues, it's extremely uncommon that students will say, I wish I could do more study abroad. I do hear it occasionally, but it's a relatively rare comment.

The simple contradiction between enhancement and fundamental activities ties to the tension between profit and engagement because the definitions of both are tied to student demand, and thus profit, rather than mission. The decision by flight is reflected in the notion that a college does not see the need to increase global opportunities for students if the students do not demand them. While not every simple contradiction served to justify opposition to internationalization, other informants followed the pattern of linking simple contradictions to the description of decisions by flight. One stated,

Having been involved with trying to get a program running that turned out not to be very lucrative, I'm just not enamored with taking us abroad. We have enough to do here. We are the largest of the top 20 business schools and we are in a constant state of excess



demand despite our large size, so people are very focused on managing the enrollment we have here - we don't need any enrollment anywhere else.

This informant uses simple contradictions between global and local and profit and engagement to justify his opposition to focusing on internationalization as a strategic imperative, thus invoking decision by flight.

The link between pragmatic paradoxes and decisions by flight was also prevalent in my data. When discussing the mission-driven imperative to internationalize online courses at University State, one informant said, “I want to do it, but the frank reality is, with limited resources and having to provide focus to that and the realities of penetrating those markets - it's a limited portion of what we do.” This statement differs from a simple contradiction because, instead of dismissing one side of a tension, the informant values both but still cannot choose to enhance both at the same time. He says he wants to internationalize for mission-driven reasons, but economic realities hold him back. As such, he sees himself as subject to a pragmatic paradox, which justifies a decision by flight not to pursue internationalization. Another informant stated:

I mean, if you think about it, there is really nothing that stops international students from taking [an online] course. They may have to put up with more headaches because we don't really function on international clocks. It's maybe more difficult for them to do it, but there is really nothing that stops them. I think the awareness is really the thing that stops us from making more progress in the international market.

This statement contains a pragmatic paradox because the informant values both global and local enrollments as well as profit and engagement-driven motives, but he argues that the fact that international students can enroll in online classes without being served in any special way does not necessitate focused resources, thus justifying decision by flight.

Another pragmatic paradox emerged from the dynamic between in-state and out-of-state tuition, which affects the global versus local tension. Because out-of-state and international students pay more than the cost of their education, the university can charge in-state students less than the cost of theirs. As such, seeking to lower costs for international students may benefit them but hurt in-state students at the same time. One informant stated: “It’s one of those things - you state it as fact, and it is - that international students and out-of-state students subsidize Pennsylvania resident students. We know that, it’s pretty simple math. If you pay any attention to it and you have a critical mind, you come to that conclusion. But we really try hard not to talk about it that way.” The statement that the university attempts to avoid talking openly about this dynamic indicates a decision by flight not to address the problem. It also demonstrates the demotivating nature of pragmatic paradoxes; because there is no solution that does not diminish a priority – in this case, global or local affordability – the university prefers not to address it in explicit terms.

### Decision by Oversight

Decisions by oversight were the least frequently coded decision style across my data. Cohen, March & Olson (1972) define decisions by oversight as decisions that will happen before sufficient time has been invested to evaluate all the factors and options. This is different from decisions by flight, which resolve no problems because they happen after problems have attached themselves to new choices (Cohen, March & Olson, 1972, p. 8). For the purpose of my study, I coded decisions as perceived decisions by oversight if informants acknowledged that they do not know enough to fully comprehend the implications of an internationalization initiative or if informants identify new problems attached to a decision that only solved a problem partially.

Informants constructed complementary dialectics in the context of decisions by oversight. When asked to discuss whether University State may rely on international student tuition to such an extent that international students are recruited out of profit motives, one informant acknowledged that this may be the case, but not on purpose. In other words, it may be a decision by oversight. He then added that international students add diversity to the campus, in addition to bringing in needed revenue:

If you look at the number of international full fee-paying students that are coming into the university, absolutely. I mean, are we at the stage that we're reliant on that? I would say, probably not. [Is] that an objective? I guess I can't answer that. I think it has occurred, I'm not sure that it's purposely driven to do that. But on the other hand, the value that international students bring to our campus is that diversity, and allowing our resident students that are from [the state] - they start interacting with students from different parts of the world and we start to accomplish a little bit of our mission to expose them to the global aspects.

This statement demonstrates how a complementary dialectic can serve to excuse a decision by oversight: International students may accidentally have become cash cows, but this is not problematic because they also add diversity to the campus, which means the university has reason to continue with the current financial model. Another informant made practically the same argument:

We welcome students from out of [the state] and out of the country to be part of our educational environment, but we have not done that really for financial reasons. That said, the extra revenue they bring is vitally important to the institution, but we do not make decisions on admission or admission strategy based on anticipated or additional

revenues that are brought by out-of-state students.

This informant constructs a complimentary dialectic in stating that international students are lucrative in terms of tuition while also adding to the educational environment. The perceived decision by oversight lies in not purposefully pursuing international enrollments to increase revenue, which serves as a justification for the status quo, even if the oversight has led to problematic side-effects. As such, links between complementary dialectics and decisions by oversight seem to occur in the context of making excuses about non-ideal organizational dynamics.

On the other hand, simple contradictions were often linked with decisions by oversight when informants expressed criticism of existing university practices. One informant stated, "I was involved in the strategic planning process, and I will tell you, one of my chief concerns is there was lack of outside perspective. So, we're bringing in students, companies, government representatives - at the end of the day, if you're not doing what your dollar stream is coming from, that dollar stream will eventually walk someplace else." The simple contradiction in this statement juxtaposes seeking insider input into the strategic plan with seeking outsider input. Because this informant believes outsider input was not sought, he perceives a decision by oversight that may harm the university's financial future. Another informant perceived a decision by oversight in the context of a simple contradiction between quality and scale:

They [international students] do what we all do. Hang out with each other. So, they don't benefit from the U.S. experience, and the resident students don't benefit from the international perspectives because they fall into a comfort zone. So, unless the college was really willing to figure out how to foster this and create the environment for those students to have it, it was just going to be a group of students being educated in this

country, but not really benefitting from that and vice versa.

The simple contradiction between quality and scale exists in the observation that international students tend to sequester themselves, which impedes the quality of their experience, if they possess the ability to do so due to a critical mass of international peers, which represents scale. The informant also observes that colleagues have not been willing to engage with this problematic dynamic enough to create a solution, thus suggesting a decision by oversight.

Informants also linked simple contradictions and decisions by oversight in the context of faculty attitudes toward internationalization. One informant stated, “Some of the reason why globalization hasn't really taken hold is because when you look at the promotion and tenure dossier that junior faculty are expected to prepare, the research, the teaching, and their service - nowhere in there is there anything that really speaks to what have you done in internationalization or international activities.” The absence of faculty incentives to internationalize stands in contradiction to the university’s state desire to facilitate global engagement. The oversight of needed incentives leads faculty to disregard internationalization and set different priorities for how to spend their time. When asked to discuss whether faculty work globally despite his college’s de-prioritization of internationalization in its administrative strategy, one informant said, “They're certainly doing things globally. Very little of that goes through [the global office]. People have acquaintances from graduate school or people they've met at research conferences - that sort of thing. So very little collaboration that results from any kind of cold-calling - it's more organic relationship-building. But there is a lot of it.” This statement constructs a simple contradiction between strategic internationalization efforts put forth by the university’s global programs office and organic internationalization that occurs due to faculty’s global relationships. As such, decisions by oversight happen when the university

lacks awareness of individual faculty relationships that could be leveraged for higher-level internationalization efforts. These examples show how the link between simple contradictions and perceived decisions by oversight tends to indicate informants' discontent with current internationalization approaches at the university, thus criticizing the status quo.

My data only contains one example of how an informant linked a pragmatic paradox with a perceived decision by oversight. I asked one informant, who leads an internationalization office at one of University State's colleges, whether his office's responsibilities include making sure internationalization activities actually occur after having been approved. He stated:

We should. Global Programs sends out a report every year. They address it to the Dean, they cc the people in the international offices, and you're supposed to report on whether this is a continuing or ongoing activity, what's happening, should we discontinue the MoU, should we renew it if it's about to expire? So, what we do is we reach out to every single faculty member who is listed as a contact on those. In some cases, the contact has left [...] My position is relatively new. Sometimes we don't even know who the contact was, and we have to try to determine it. If we can't find one, we tell Global Programs that they should terminate the agreement.

The pragmatic paradox in this statement lies in the suggestion that this informant should have responsibility for and awareness of assessment of internationalization activities while also acknowledging that this is impossible due to incomplete information. Thus, perceived decisions by oversight occur as a result of this incomplete information. As such, links between pragmatic paradoxes and decisions by oversight may indicate attempts to justify, excuse, or criticize the status quo.

#### **Research Question Four: Organizational Culture in International Higher Education**

My fourth and final research question was, How does organizational culture shape sense making and decision making when faculty and administrators encounter tensions in international higher education? Tierney's (1988) theory of organizational culture in higher education encourages an anthropological lens to understand the making of meaning. Tierney (1988) writes, "The culture of an organization is grounded in the shared assumptions of individuals participating in the organization. Often taken for granted by the actors themselves, these assumptions can be identified through stories, special language, norms, institutional ideology, and attitudes that emerge from individual and organizational behavior (p. 4)." Tierney (1988) suggests six components to a framework of organizational culture in higher education: environment, mission, socialization, information, strategy, and leadership. This section provides an analysis of University State's organizational culture based on this framework while showing how organizational culture, sense making, and decision making interact in the context of tensions in international higher education.

#### Environment

In order to generate an analysis of an organizational culture's environment in higher education, Tierney (1988) recommends asking, "How does the organization define its environment?" and, "What is the attitude toward the environment?" (Tierney, 1988, p. 8). My data includes four codes that capture key determinants of University State's environment and informants' attitudes towards them: Shared governance, political environment, the university's strategic plan, and philanthropy. All four are discussed here in the context of sense making and decision making around tensions in international higher education.

Faculty and administrators at University State must navigate Shared Governance when making sense of and decisions about internationalization. Informants often highlighted the different perspectives and roles of faculty versus administrators versus Board of Trustees members. One informant stated:

I hope that [...] faculty can be a catalyst for change and can showcase to less international colleagues how they take advantage using the international connections they have. From an administrative perspective, it always comes back to money there. I know the Provost is our Chief Academic Officer, but I think most of his time is spent looking at balance sheets. I think at the end of the day, in this multi-billion-dollar industry, it needs to be run accordingly.

Interestingly, this informant distinguishes between faculty and administrator roles in the context of the profit versus engagement tension, arguing that faculty are responsible for engaging each other on internationalization activities while administrators have responsibility for ensuring financial soundness of initiatives. This simple contradiction could also be considered a complementary dialectic if informants view shared governance as a system of checks and balances, in which the various actors' priorities balance each other out. When asked to comment on Board of Trustees perspectives on internationalization, one informant said, "It doesn't really come up very often at Board of Trustees meetings, except as part of a cash cow conversation. And it's like, can we charge international students more to make more money for the university?" Again, this statement illustrates the profit versus engagement tension, suggesting that Board of Trustees are more aligned with the profit priority. As such, faculty, administrators, and trustee members each hold different roles in navigating tensions in international higher education.



The political environment also shapes sense making and decision making around tensions in internationalization at University State. With my interviews happening around the one-year-anniversary of the election of the Trump administration, many informants voiced concerns about the impact that a potential refocusing on national priorities may have on international higher education. One informant stated, “The concern was that we would lose international enrollments when the current administration made so much noise about cracking down on visas and so on. Luckily, we haven't really seen that major of an effect from that, but there was significant concern.” This statement shows that federal policies and attitudes may shape how faculty and administrators make sense of tensions in international higher education, such as the global versus local tension in the context of a potential travel ban affecting select countries. An informant in the global office discussed how the Trump election shifted his role from a strategic to a reactive one:

My God. My life in the last year has been just incredibly challenging. The last year has given me pause to think, I never thought my job would be like this. Now, we are managing unpredictable policies. And it's not just the policy that changes, it is the atmosphere, the discourse, the rhetoric. So, all of a sudden, the faculty and students are worried. Am I going to be able to travel to see my grandma who is sick, am I going to be able to get back to the country. All of a sudden, we have students crying and all of that. That is the most challenging part. [...] Now they will deny visas without a reason. The last year, I can tell you, my focus, instead of being on strategy, has been on putting fires out - that's what I've been doing. And sometimes I think, I'm not a firefighter.

This informant constructs a simple contradiction between strategic and reactive internationalization issues in the context of the Trump election, which he perceives as moving

him away from decisions by resolution. These concerns about impacts of federal policies emerged in addition to comments about state politics that often entail legislators questioning a large number of out-of-state enrollments, as discussed in the context of Research Question 1.

University State's strategic plan also constitutes part of its environment. Informants referred to it when discussing perceived decisions by resolution. One informant stated, "Internationalization - globalization, as we put it in the strategic plan - is a very important strategic initiative in our strategic plan. There are actually nine strategic goals, and globalization is one of them. As part of that plan, we named what I think is the first Associate Dean for International Programs at any college at [University State]." This statement indicates that the strategic plan lends importance to international initiatives, and that this allows ample allocation of resources to solving problems in internationalization, thus reflecting a perceived decision by resolution. Another informant said:

If we look at the mission and strategic plan of the university, it is very global in its scope. They're not saying we want to be the best in Pennsylvania or the best in the U.S., we want to be the best. So, our goals do not have any regional boundaries. So, if we really want to address the goals that the university set forward, then to look globally is the only way to really do it. So, whether it is written in the strategic plan or not specifically, we want to be the best in the world - that might sound a little bit pretentious, but that is definitely what we are aiming towards. So, I do feel that is an important part of the mission of the university.

This statement constructs a complementary dialectic between global and local because the informant sees the two as intertwined when it comes to providing the best possible education to

students. He ties this complementary dialectic to a decision by resolution by emphasizing that it is captured in the university's strategic plan.

Philanthropy constitutes a fourth component of University State's organizational culture environment because it drives decision making without falling into the realm of shared governance. Informants frequently highlighted the absence of international scholarship money as a limiting factor to resolving the prestige versus access tension in international higher education: "It can be a finance-limiting issue, and so it's an area where scholarship development would help because we want to give that opportunity to students independent of their financial situation. That's a bigger challenge because it's not cheap to go spend two months overseas." This statement illustrates a perceived decision by flight in the context of the university's philanthropy barriers; informants made it clear that the university cannot pursue funding for international scholarships because financial aid for domestic students must be prioritized. It also illustrates the public versus private tension because University State is limited in its ability to fund out-of-state students due to its public, state-bound mission. Another informant highlighted the opportunity to engage global alumni in fundraising for internationalization initiatives: "We have a huge number of alumni who are outside the U.S., are very successful, and again considering that Development has mostly been focused on undergraduate alumni, we never really paid attention to them. We have always wanted more attention paid to our graduate alumni that reside outside of the U.S. because we know there are so many of them." Alumni constitute part of the organizational culture environment at University State in that they contribute to the university's philanthropy goals.

### Mission

Tierney (1988) recommends organizational culture researchers ask the following questions with regard to mission: “How is it defined?” “How is it articulated?,” “Is it used as a basis for decisions?,” and, “How much agreement is there?” (p. 8). I used four codes to capture informant’s definitions of and attitudes toward University State’s mission: research university, research/teaching/service, land-grant university, and public university. All four are discussed here in the context of sense making and decision making around tensions in international higher education.

Informants frequently linked the mission of a research university with the obligation to serve a global audience. One informant stated, “I think internationalization fits within [University State] because [University State] is an R1 institution.” Another said, “I think [being global is] increasingly more and more central to the fabric of any American institution of higher education, particularly research institutions like ours.” A third informant echoed this perspective: “We can't really propose to be a research world class university if we don't interact with scholars around the globe.” These statements use both complementary dialectics and simple contradictions to argue that University State must make a decision by resolution to pursue a global mission and global impact. Other informants argued more specifically for global engagement within the contexts of their fields: “I consider [University State] to be one of the best universities in the U.S. We are definitely a leader in some of the topics we investigate. My particular field, geo-informatics, has historically been dominated in Europe.” This informant argues that global collaboration is required for University State to remain a top university, proposing a complementary dialectic: even if the university wants to focus on being a leader on the local and national levels, global engagement is necessary. Thus, a decision by resolution to foster and enhance global engagement is desired.

Informants linked research, teaching, and service as the three key components of University State's mission and the mission of comparable institutions. One stated, "Teaching, Research, Service, and essentially, to do good around the world, not just [this state] or the United States- we should do good around the world." Similarly, another informant said, "As a public university, in particular, where our mission is to have impact throughout our research, teaching, and outreach programs, that means it has to be a global reach." These statements construct a complementary dialectic in the context of the global and local tension, suggesting research, teaching, and service as the three areas in which decisions by resolution to advance global engagement should be focused. Another informant stated, "It [global engagement] is absolutely necessary because the underlying student body, teachers, faculty, research questions, are all global, so having a general policy to embrace internationalization and globalization is absolutely necessary because the parts that make up the university and higher education in general are totally global to begin with." This statement further illustrates that informants consider teaching and research as pillars of the university's mission. The argument that both pillars are already inherently global fosters a complementary dialectic between global and local, demanding decisions by resolution around internationalization initiatives.

University State's land-grant constituted another frequently-referenced part of the mission. Most informants argued that, while the land-grant started out as a state-based obligation, it now needs to transcend state and national borders to stay relevant. One informant said:

Certainly, as a land-grant institution, we are always very concerned about meeting the needs of [state residents]. But we're located in the United States, we want to meet the needs of the nation as well. And really, now, with this global world we live in, where everything is so interconnected, I think we'd be doing our students a disservice if we

didn't have a really strong international student presence in our classrooms, whether they're online classrooms or face-to-face. They're not going to live and work in a [this state]-only or U.S.-only world, most likely.

This statement shows that faculty and administrators may now interpret the land-grant as a global obligation, which reflects a resolution-driven complementary dialectic between local and global. Another informant echoed this perspective: “[Global engagement] fits perfectly well into the mission of the university. When you think back to our land-grant mission... in my mind, the land-grant mission is simply to make lives better. To make lives better for society.” Yet, informants occasionally referenced the land-grant mission to justify a priority focus on in-state constituents: “You have to balance the needs and the cost increases versus trying to keep particularly in-state tuition reasonable to meet our mission. [...] Out-of-state tuition then becomes more important because that is not part of our land-grant mission.”

Finally, informants also referred to University State’s public mission when discussing internationalization initiatives. One informant articulated the university’s mission as follows: “taking the knowledge that we create to benefit society is the final critical step to close that loop, to make us, I would say, really live the mission of a public research university and a land-grant university as well.” Implied in this statement is a complementary dialectic between global and local that enables the argument that University State must pursue resolution-driven initiatives that benefit all of society in light of its public and land-grant mission. Another informant said:

I think [global engagement] fits very strongly within the mission. We're a land-grant and a large public research university. It's hard for me to imagine that educating the citizens of \_\_\_\_ - and you can fill in the of \_\_\_\_, of the [state], of the United States, or of the world, would not be a responsibility that this university should contribute to.

Like above, this statement constructs a complementary dialectic between global and local in the context of the public higher education mission, arguing that this mission must transcend state borders via resolution-driven initiatives.

On the other hand, informants also invoked the public higher education mission to justify giving priority to in-state students. One informant stated, “I will be honest with you, I do think for [University State], we have an obligation to the citizens of the [state] and to the U.S. not to say I would exclude international, but I do think it challenges us a bit when we think about what does it mean to think about affordability for international.” Another administrator informant discussed the attitude of a faculty member who was critical of an international trip that received university funding: “There was a faculty member who is not the most open person who muttered that tax-payer money was going for the trip to [international location], which kind of shocked me because it was a [University State] grant. But in that person's mind, [University State] is funded by tax payers, although less than 10 percent of the budget comes from them.” These examples demonstrates how the university’s mission influences actors’ sense making and decision making approaches in an organizational culture that must navigate scarcity and competing priorities.

### Socialization

Tierney (1988) recommends organizational culture researchers ask the following questions with regard to socialization: “How do members become socialized?,” “How is it articulated?,” and, “What do we need to survive/excel in this organization?” (p. 8). To answer these questions, I created codes for three personas in the context of internationalization initiatives at University State, which I discuss here moving from most to least frequently coded: agents, champions, and resisters. These personas emerged from both personal and environmental contexts, and coding

for them enables a more holistic analysis of how informants made sense of and decisions around tensions in international higher education.

I coded informants' comments as representative of the agent persona when informants appeared ideologically neutral about internationalization activities. Their attitudes towards and decisions about tensions and specific internationalization initiatives depend on institutional priorities, like the strategic plan, and institutional incentives, like availability of grant money. When one informant, who displayed an ideologically neutral attitude about the internationalization of University State's online programs, was asked what it would take to motivate him and the rest of the leadership to pursue internationalization with more resolve, he responded: "A message from the university that we need to do one of two things - we see this as a critical strategy of internationalization at [University State], or two, it's great the revenue you're providing, but you need to double it. I would think we would prioritize getting into those markets if there was a demand that we had to double our business." This statement illustrates the informant's value of organizational hierarchies as well as a clear emphasis on revenue. As such, the informant constructs simple contradictions between organic versus deliberate internationalization as well as between profit and engagement. In the absence of a clear organizational directive or a clear monetary incentive, this informant will not pursue a decision by resolution to pursue internationalization. Another informant, a tenure-track faculty member, explained how grant money may incentivize him to focus his global research collaborations on specific geographical areas:

To say, well, the university is going to put a lot of resources in geographical region x, we're working on y. That is quite a convincing argument. Research follows the funding. It is very hard to do un-funded research. I mean it's possible to do for a short period of time,



because of internal money, because of passion, and so on. But I don't think it's possible to have a multi-year long research program without having a steady source of funding. So, if they told me that, again, if there is money attached to it, I would definitely look at it.

This informant values organizational incentives and is willing to let research funding drive his internationalization efforts to some extent, which illustrates the agent mindset in international higher education.

I coded informant's comments as representative of the champion persona if they discussed their personal affinity for international higher education, often due to international experiences during their own student years, or if they displayed a strong ideological conviction that global engagement should be central to the university's activities. Many informants referred to their personal experiences with international study. One stated:

I think being an international person aids me in just trying to ask those additional questions when we're looking at an international strategy or an international approach to something. On the other side, it's also sometimes bringing that experience as a foreigner and say in other places this was handled a different way or the process was different - is that something we can apply here, which might spur some new thinking or a new approach.

Another informant stated, "Because of what I have done and how internationalization has shaped my life, I feel global learning is one of the best skills that we can bring to our students." A third informant spoke to the personal satisfaction he derives when seeing colleagues or students engage in internationalization:

With me, when a faculty member gets excited about an idea, there's a new initiative, or even meeting with a student who is really excited about how internationalization has

changed their life and is going to inform their future career and send them in a direction they thought they were never going to do, have a major impact on society, that is just euphoria and it's the opposite of being taxed, it's being encouraged and motivated that you need to do it.

These comments illustrate the champion mindset in the context of personal passion for global engagement, which influences informants' sense making of and decision making around tensions in international higher education.

The other key indicator of a champion mindset regarding international higher education, besides personal passion, was ideological affinity for global engagement. One informant said she specifically sought out to become the chancellor of one of University State's satellite campuses in order to advance global engagement because she considers the Chief International Officer role a dead-end: "I was ready to bring the importance of global learning into a more central place in an institution, and that's why I really felt that being head of a campus was the next step." Another informant makes global learning the keystone of his intro-level sociology class. He stated, "In my work, the students who work with us and the students who are in my classes get as much of a global experience as I can possibly give them, only because I am interested. So, I'm skypeing with people in other countries, my partners come in and talk to my class." He then explained that he does not need support from the university to advance global engagement for his students. Both statements illustrate the more individualistic mindset that champions brought to internationalization activities as opposed to the more collective mindset typical of agents, who look for incentives and administrative buy-in before advocating for global engagement. As such, champions depended less on persuasive sense making of tensions, nor did they pursue collective decision making styles to the same extent that agents did.

I coded informants' comments as representative of the resister mindset if they explicitly opposed internationalization, which often occurred by use of simple contradictions that justified decisions by flight. Resisters typically de-prioritized internationalization in the context of other university activities, and had little personal affinity for global matters. One informant stated, "I think some of it is that we don't feel a need to scale internationally because there is enough domestic demand for our supply. So, if there is really no economic reason for us to scale immediately to an international market, then I think that it doesn't drive the conversation as quickly as it potentially could to a solution." This statement constructs a simple contradiction in the context of the profit versus engagement tension, arguing that international students would only be desirable if they brought significant monetary gain to the university. As such, this informant argues for a decision by flight, which would entail neglecting international recruitment until international enrollments become financially necessary. Another informant created a simple contradiction between global and local in the context of the land-grant mission, which argues for a decision by flight to focus away from international initiatives: "The land-grant mission was to educate the children of the working class in [this state]." Another informant constructed a simple contradiction between global and local when explaining his opposition to international minorities in University State's MBA program: "The flavor of the program changes pretty dramatically if the fraction of international students exceeds maybe about 40%." A fourth informant displayed an ideological preference for serving local versus global constituents in the context of the Trump administration and the current political climate: "There is more and more people in the United States, and I may fall into that category... it's time to worry more about our own problems than others', and I think that's what we're seeing." Interestingly, all four of these statements combine

simple contradictions, either around profit versus engagement or global versus local, to argue for decisions by flight not to pursue deliberate internationalization strategies at University State.

Agents, champions, and resisters all co-exist in the sense making and decision making environment around internationalization and must negotiate in a context of resource scarcity and uncertainty. My data shows that each group of actors is motivated by different incentives. Agents focus on collective incentives, such as advancing the strategic plan and serving multiple university priorities at once. Champions are driven by an innate and often personal motivation to internationalize, which creates a more individualistic mindset that may alienate agents. Resisters are unlikely to support any internationalization activities because they always emphasize other university priorities, which makes them difficult for both agents and champions to bring on board.

### Information

In order to generate an analysis of an organizational culture's information in higher education, Tierney (1988) recommends asking, "What constitutes information?", "Who has it?," and "How is it disseminated?" (Tierney, 1988, p. 8). I focused my analysis of University State's information in the context of internationalization on the five most frequently coded values evident in informants' statements: global citizenship, return-on-investment, student success, collaboration, and incentives. This approach asserts that values act as key influencers on how actors in an organizational culture acquire, process, and disseminate information, which influences their sense making and decision making around tensions in international higher education.

Global citizenship, along with diversity, was a value frequently expressed across my data. Many of University State's strategic plans state global citizenship as a desired outcome for all students. Because global engagement and diversity are both foundational elements in University State's strategic plan, the supporting plans are required to speak to both with specific strategies and tactics. Beyond the strategic plans, many informants referred to global citizenship as a desired educational outcome in my interviews. One stated, "Most of the parents understand that the only way their student is going to become globally competitive in terms of the job market and graduate is to actually have a global mindset." Another said, "The world is a global community today in every respect." A third informant said:

I think that internationalization has become increasingly important as we live in a world which has more and more globalization, both economic and social. I think increasingly national politics are taking a direction the other way, but over the long run, globalization is going to continue to happen. In my particular administrative area, which is the College of Medicine, I think it's absolutely essential that we have health care providers that understand other approaches to health care around the world as we struggle to change our health care system to one which makes sure that we're able to deliver care to all citizens.

These statements constitute just a few examples of informants valuing global citizenship. This value becomes information around which informants construct their sense making of and decision making around internationalization initiatives. Particularly, the prevalent value of global citizenship might affect informants' attitudes toward the global versus local tension, predisposing them to favor global over local priorities when making sense of and decisions around internationalization initiatives,.

Informants also valued return-on-investment (ROI) when discussing tensions in

international higher education. When asked to comment on opportunities to grow international online enrollments, one informant stated, “We're very excited about virtual enrollments because that is lucrative.” This shows the priority of generating revenue, which is relevant to the profit versus engagement tension. Also in the context of online education, one informant said, “Where I feel pressure and sometimes I think we get pressure is in trying to serve a market that really is not there - we do market research and there is just not a big audience. So, it's trying to put up a program that has a very limited audience.” This statement also prioritizes profit over global engagement, arguing for a decision by flight not to pursue global markets. In the context of resident instruction, one informant said, “[International students] pay out-of-state tuition, so, as the budget office, one of our prime concerns is tuition income. So, we watch out-of-state enrollments and international enrollments very carefully because their rate is so much higher, so a small fluctuation in that population means a big difference in tuition income.” This statement demonstrates a strong focus on revenue and a prioritization of profit over engagement, which motivates informants to pursue international students for financial reasons.

The third most frequently expressed value informants displayed was student success. This is interesting because student success aligns with a prioritization of engagement as opposed to ROI, which aligns with profit. It is telling that informants expressed values that can be mapped onto tensions in international higher education. In displaying a concern for student success in international higher education, one informant stated, “The one area where we have elevated the standards for Chinese students, for instance, is on the TOEFL. And that's mainly motivated not by trying to control numbers, but by making sure that the students have appropriate competency in order to be successful.” This statement contains the implicit argument that University State should prioritize quality over scale and engagement over profit in an effort to ensure that

international students can succeed in the classroom. Another informant placed the international student fee in the context of a concern with student success:

Because of the complexity of the processes and the visa issues and especially because for undergraduate students we feel that it's important to do a good job, an excellent job. And to do an excellent job, we need extra money to do that. So therefore, we are charging this very limited amount of fee to use 100% of it to support our international students. We don't spend that international fee to subsidize anything.

This statement constructs a simple contradiction between charging fees out of a profit motive and charging fees to improve international student engagement. It thus depicts the international student fee as a resolution-driven solution that addresses the problem of lacking resources to facilitate student success.

Collaboration was another frequently-expressed value among informants. This includes collaboration between faculty at University State, collaboration between faculty from University State and other universities around the world, and collaboration between administrative units. One informant stated, "It is extremely important in my field to collaborate with those who are the leaders of this particular field. Having a very strong collaboration with those other groups will help us advance." This statement creates a complementary dialectic between global and local because global collaboration will enhance the local success of a university department. It thus calls for resolution-driven decisions to enhance global faculty collaborations. When asked how he would approach leading a new internationalization initiative at University State, another informant said, "I would absolutely go unit by unit by unit, looking for interest, expertise, and input. [...] How can we work together to build on all of those various strengths? What do we need to provide centrally?" This comment demonstrates the value of cross-unit administrative

collaboration, which informants perceived to be critical to help an initiative succeed within their organizational culture.

Incentives constituted the fifth most common value expressed by informants. When asked how he influences faculty to follow an administrative direction, an administrator informant stated, "I think it's incentives. I haven't actually told faculty members, you can't go to France." As such, incentives are a low-pressure option for administrators to drive decisions by resolution, creating a complementary dialectic between top-down and bottom-up leadership. Another informant explained how University State's global office influences faculty decisions via incentives: "The idea is that we will actually have multi-faceted, broad kinds of collaborations. In both of those cases, there has been institutional support that has made it a lot easier for faculty and students to travel and to be hosted by a partner institution and for us to host people here." Faculty informants also pointed to incentives for internationalization in tenure and promotion requirements as a motivating factor. When asked where he may be experiencing pressure to internationalize, one informant stated, "I would say there is no pressure, other than that it is one of the criteria for promotion. So, there is a little bit of encouragement. Do I talk to my supervisor and discuss international reputation, yes. International reputation is one of the criteria, not the most important, but one of them." As such, incentives motivate resolution-driven internationalization initiatives for faculty and administrators seeking to maximize their time and resources in the midst of conflicting priorities.

The five values illustrated in this section impact how faculty and administrators make sense of and decisions around internationalization activities because the values act as a filter for how they evaluate tensions. Global citizenship, ROI, student success, collaboration, and incentives are values that actors across the organizational culture of University State recognize



and appeal to when making arguments about internationalization initiatives. Remaining mindful of these values when crafting arguments about internationalization also allows actors to maximize the persuasive effect of their messages to colleagues. Thus, these values constitute a critical piece of the organizational culture's information and how it is processed and disseminated.

### Strategy

In order to generate an analysis of an organizational culture's information in higher education, Tierney (1988) recommends asking, "How are decisions arrived at?", "Which strategy is used?," "Who makes decisions?," and "What is the penalty for a bad decision?" (Tierney, 1988, p. 8). I focused my analysis of University State's approach to strategy in the context of internationalization on the four most frequently coded organizational tensions beyond tensions identified in my literature review and explored in response to my first research question. These tensions are not specific to international higher education, but they shape how informants evaluate priorities within their organizational culture in order to arrive at strategy. Those tensions are: Grass-roots versus top down, mission versus resources, faculty versus administration, and organic versus deliberate. All four are discussed here in the context of sense making and decision making around tensions in international higher education.

The tension between grass-roots and top-down leadership was evident across my interviews when informants discussed tensions in international higher education. When asked how he approaches his work with faculty interested in internationalization, one informant stated, "As much as possible, I leave it up to the faculty member and say, you want to pursue this? These are the requirements to move forward." This shows that administrators are aware of

faculty members' preference for autonomy, and they play to this preference to benefit internationalization at University State. When asked if he needs anything from the university to make global engagement central to his entry-level sociology course, one faculty member said, "No, I don't need anything. I just do what I do. I need an imagination." This statement shows a clear preference for grass-roots leadership and a willingness to make resolution-driven decisions on internationalization without an administrative mandate. An administrator informant discussed international research collaborations in the context of the grass-roots versus top-down leadership tension:

There are some very successful collaborations that are well-funded by international organizations, including NGOs, like the Gates Foundation. So that's one bucket. They typically are super star faculty, who are absolutely the best in the world in particular areas that are real strengths for us. There are usually not too many of them and they are rarely things that the university administration actually initiates. It's usually faculty figuring out, this is something that's going to work well for me. I'm the best in my field - maybe the get some help making connections. But I don't think as an administrator, you can take a whole lot of credit for that.

This comment further illustrates the strong preference faculty feel for autonomy in their work, showing that administrators who want to influence faculty's internationalization initiatives must enable this autonomy rather than squelch it. One informant discussed what she believed to be distinguishing roles of faculty versus administrators when it comes to internationalization decision-making:

The faculty that sit around the table and sort of construct what this would be, they're going to be the primary ones for the connection with the professional organizations. They

probably are members of those associations, they have probably sat on boards, they have been reviewers of their journals. There is that connection. I think when you get to the point where you're talking about which countries and where these are, and as soon as you start to broach any of those ministries, now you're talking the president and you're talking the Vice Provost for International or Global Studies. You're looking at people that are going to be able to have those conversations. And they need to be more than just polite conversations.

This informant believes that top-level administrators are best-suited to have conversations that drive institutional-level decisions, while faculty members are best-suited to drive individual and department-level decisions on internationalization initiatives.

Another tension evident across my data can be described as mission versus resources. While this tension has many parallels to the internationalization-specific tension between profit and engagement, it is important to note that this tension described here is less representative of international higher education and more indicative of University State's organizational culture. One informant stated:

These more institutional relationships that I described - I think the jury is kind of out in terms of whether they're going to really generate financial resources that are sufficient to justify them if that were the only metric. I've already described other metrics that I sincerely not just believe but know and have observed are really important. I would discourage us from assuming that that financial metric should be a priority for us, or should be the sole priority for us. It is *a* [italics added for emphasis] priority.

This comment demonstrates the tension between mission and resources in that it considers resources one of several priorities, thus creating a complementary dialectic that encourages

decisions by resolution to devise internationalization initiatives that balance the tension. Another informant stated:

The challenge, to me, is when there are so many different opportunities, how do you decide which are the right ones, how do you manage all the different demands and interests of faculty members with a relatively small staff? And I think funding is another area that we didn't really go into very much. Some of these things are very expensive to do, so how does that happen? I know for my office that is a big concern. [...] Sometimes, you have to be creative in trying to get things accomplished.

This statement indicates a desire to engage in a large volume of internationalization activities coupled with the awareness that internationalization has to happen within the constraints of available resources. However, unlike the statement above, this informant constructs a simple contradiction between mission and resources that may encourage a decision by flight not to engage in internationalization to save money. Another informant, on the other hand, created a simple contradiction between mission and resources to encourage mission-driven initiatives only:

It should not be a money-making enterprise, it should be fulfilling your mission of a university ready to serve the world. And in order to serve, we don't have to make long-term investments. Because long-term investments in the end means we have to recover our investments. So, it comes into the money angle more and it doesn't become focused on making the world a better place.

This simple contradiction encourages a decision by resolution to narrow internationalization to those activities that enhance the university's mission rather than generating revenue.

The next most frequently coded organizational tension across my data occurred between faculty and administration. Like the tension between grassroots and top-down leadership,

informants emphasized the different priorities they often see among the two stakeholder groups. One informant from University State's global office said, "The [faculty] senate is sometimes suspicious about the intention behind the strategy. But once they realize I didn't decide we're going to work with the University of Timbuktu - faculty did. All of a sudden, oh, ok, now we understand." This comment illustrates the distrust faculty may feel towards administrators seeking to advance internationalization initiatives along with the administration's awareness that initiatives should be presented as faculty-driven to maximize buy-in. However, informants also emphasized their preference for individual versus collective internationalization initiatives. One informant stated, "I don't speak into the wind. I have no interest in coming and meeting the faculty senate or who knows and talk. It would be like me just standing in my window and talking." This comment further illustrates the apprehension that faculty feel about the administrative bodies of the university – the faculty senate included, which further emphasizes the strong value of autonomy in University State's organizational culture. Administrator informants were also intentional in pointing out how decisions about internationalizing the curriculum fall into the faculty domain:

If we said everyone has to speak English, but should we do that? I mean we're [University State], so that seems like that would be the language of choice, right? But if we're really going to say we're going to have a large international number, are we really going to do this? I don't know that we've answered those questions, and that, to me, is on the faculty side, the curriculum side. That support side. It's not about whether or not we could market and get them. It's can we deliver what we need to deliver.

This informant conveys the awareness that administrators alone cannot drive internationalization, meaning it must be a collaborative effort between faculty and administration in order to avoid

decisions by oversight, such as recruiting international students without the ability to serve them well.

The next most frequently coded organizational tension across my data existed between organic and deliberate initiatives. Especially in the context of established internationalization initiatives, like international student recruitment and study abroad, informants tended to emphasize that University State organically developed into a global institution:

I think that a lot of the more deliberate focus on internationalization has now pulled undergraduates into that. So, the idea that it is really important for as many undergraduate students as possible to have an international experience - that was already happening organically for many graduate students for other reasons we talked about earlier and for the fact that many of our faculty come from outside the U.S.

Another informant echoed the long-standing history of global engagement at University State:

I think, at this point, it's fully integrated into the entirety of the values and the mission of the university, where 15-20 years ago, it might have been an objective that sat outside that, that was kind of on its own, and at that point, might have had the potential to run into conflict or to compete for resources, but at this point, I think it is fully integrated into the overall thinking of the plan, and I think it's at the essence of how at least the leadership of the university view that, as a key priority, and so it's something that's very important to them, so it wouldn't be in conflict.

Both statements show that informants consider organically established initiatives as self-evident, which may lead to decisions by flight if the assumption is made that these initiatives will occur whether they receive attention or not. Another informant, when discussing the management of international research collaborations between faculty, expressed a certain comfort-level with

letting initiatives play out organically rather than controlling them fully through deliberate strategy and management:

I also recognize and communicate that I don't expect every interaction to turn into a long-term thing. So, test the waters, if it looks like there is a good interaction, then pursue it, and if not, that's okay. And that's a message that I share internally in our university, too, in any kind of interdisciplinary interaction. It's a contact sport. You need to work together intellectually and also personally, which involves habits and styles, and there are so many different ways those can go wrong. I don't think we should assume that's a bad situation if people don't click. But then to think about how you can minimize those and maximize the successes, I think, is the right thing. Some of that is understanding people's personalities.

Similarly, an administrator informant from the global office explained that the existing global university partners constituted “natural places to expand the [global partnership] approach. These perspectives illustrate the tension between organic and deliberate initiatives in University State’s organizational culture, suggesting that informants see value in allowing individual and institutional relationships to play out without deliberate management. This may lead to an increased occurrence of decisions by flight and oversight when it comes to international higher education initiatives.

### Leadership

In order to generate an analysis of an organizational culture’s information in higher education, Tierney (1988) recommends asking, “What does the organization expect from its leaders?”, “Who are the leaders?,” and “Are there formal and informal leaders?” (Tierney, 1988,

p. 8). I used a code specific to comments about leadership to generate material for this section. Informants' perspectives on leadership are discussed here in the context of sense making and decision making around tensions in international higher education.

Informants tended to refer to both the university's president and provost when discussing leadership. One informant constructed a simple contradiction between profit and engagement, or, in a broader sense, mission and resources, claiming that only the president or the provost could shift the focus from financials to mission-driven initiatives: "I think the economic conversation at [University State] is so real right now to everybody that it's really difficult, without the provost or the president weighing in, to deprioritize the economics of that situation. Another informant also assigned the ability to set mission-driven budget priorities to the provost: "The Chief Academic Officer should be setting budget priorities. So, it makes sense that we report through the provost. [...] That all goes into the budget and we balance the need with resources." Both informants suggested that an economically challenging climate at University State requires a directive from top-level administrators in order to make resolution-driven decisions about internationalization activities that require university resources.

The Vice Provost for Global programs represented another powerful leadership entity in the context of decisions about internationalization. One informant stated, "All of our programs have to be approved through the office of [the Vice Provost for Global Programs]. Most of our programs are from initiatives that we have in the College of Medicine, but we have a couple that we plan to sort of tag on with the university." This suggests that individual colleges and campuses may look towards the university's central global office to approve, coordinate, and resource internationalization initiatives. At University State, the global office awards grant money to departments that establish internationalization initiatives in line with the broader



university mission. One informant, who works on department-specific internationalization efforts, explained the need for validation and funding from the global office:

“A little bit of funding from on high that validated the idea to get people to work together to go after new opportunities that were right there because I knew they were coming, so they were right there, and we were able to build a research and program portfolio that I think will continue to bring in more attention. [...] You need some validation. And something to tell people it's okay to remove some of the risk factor.”

These statements show that, while the global office does not direct all internationalization initiatives at University State, it does lend credibility to faculty and administrators working on internationalization. The approach of resourcing and validating efforts further illustrates the organizational tension between top-down and grass-roots leadership, suggesting an institution-wide preference for a complementary dialectic between the two.

Others emphasized the need for broad, institutional-level support in order to set internationalization initiatives up for success. One informant stated, “I think you have to have the support of the university leadership, from senior leadership, the board of trustees, I think it's important that the Academic Leadership Council and Chancellors - having that support is critical.” Another informant echoed the need for support from top-level administrators: “We would not be in the position that we are without the upper administration's support because they're investing in this, and without that investment, none of these initiatives are going to go anywhere.” This high-level support can then trickle down to the dean level, as suggested by one informant: “I hope most of the deans understand that because the provost promotes it, the president talks about it, it's part of our strategic plan, and I can also tell you, it is an element of every single strategic plan at [University State].” These perspectives illustrate the organizational

belief that internationalization initiatives cannot succeed unless the faculty and administrators in charge of leading them have done due diligence socializing the concepts across multiple leadership entities.

Informants also discussed the importance of leadership at the level of satellite campus chancellors. One chancellor I interviewed, who I coded as a champion for internationalization initiatives, explained that his faculty and staff find it empowering when he funds and supports their initiatives. Another chancellor who champions internationalization said that “the senior international officer is often a dead-end. You don't often go higher in Higher Ed leadership after that position.” As such, she felt that her position as a chancellor uniquely enables her to make global engagement central to her organization’s mission and activities. Informants did not discuss the faculty senate or the Board of Trustees as important to leadership around internationalization initiatives, which suggests that decisions on university internationalization occur in a quadrant between the President’s Council, the Academic Leadership Team, which is lead by the provost and consists of deans and chancellors, the university’s global office, and department-level actors, such as Associate Deans and individual faculty.

This section analyzed the components of organizational culture as proposed by Tierney (1988), illustrating the various invisible forces shaping faculty and administrator attitudes toward internationalization in an intuitive manner. When university actors discuss internationalization initiatives, the values, terminology, and tensions discussed serve as subtle cues for how to evaluate, communicate, about and advocate for internationalization initiatives. Faculty and administrators who have been socialized into these organizational cues are likely to be more successful when seeking to influence the university’s internationalization activities.

## Summary

This chapter answered my four research questions, using codes I developed across my NVivo data derived from University State's strategic plans, informant interviews with faculty and administrators, and meeting observations. The first research question addresses tensions in international higher education that were identified in the academic literature and used as codes for analysis of my data. All five tensions were prevalent in the data and discussed ranging from most frequently-coded to least-frequently coded: global versus local, profit versus engagement, public versus private, quality versus scale, and access versus prestige. The second research question explored how faculty and administrators make sense of internationalization initiatives, using Tracy's (2004) framework for organizational tensions. I discussed Tracy's (2004) three modes of sense making and how they relate to each of the five tensions, moving from most-frequently coded to least-frequently coded: complementary dialectic, simple contradiction, and pragmatic paradox.

Research question three sought to link sense making to decision making, using Cohen, March & Olson's (1972) Garbage Can Model for Organizational Choice. I discussed the three decision styles identified by Cohen, March & Olson (1972) in the context of the three modes of sense making, ranging from most-frequently coded to least frequently coded: decision by resolution, decision by flight, and decision by oversight. Finally, research question four placed the five tensions, the three modes of sense making, and the three decision making styles in the context of University State's organizational culture. Using Tierney's (1988) framework for inquiry into organizational cultures in higher education, I structured my analysis around the six elements he proposes: environment, mission, socialization, information, strategy, and leadership. Posing my four research questions in this order and discussing the codes in relation to each other

enabled me to link sense making and decision making around tensions in internationalization within the context of organizational culture.

## **Conclusion**

International higher education is costly and non-traditional; thus, its advancement demands consistent advocacy in the larger university environment of resource scarcity. University internationalization does not consist of isolated initiatives that stand alone; its objectives, recommendations, and enterprises compete with other university priorities for time, funding, and energy. As such, faculty and administrators seeking to advance internationalization within their university environment benefit from an understanding of the key tensions surrounding internationalization in higher education as well as broader, critical tensions in their organizational culture. This understanding allows them to formulate internationalization initiatives that receive attention and support from a wide range of stakeholders, clearing the proverbial bar required for a university initiative to stand a chance at success. The more innovative and potentially disruptive a proposed internationalization initiative, the more important this understanding of tensions becomes because the perceived threat to other university priorities may increase. Established internationalization initiatives, like hosting international students on campus or sending domestic students abroad for a semester, have proven themselves as compatible with broader imperatives in higher education, thus requiring less advocacy than more innovative initiatives, such as global online education or global non-credit education.

In addition to understanding tensions and prioritizing them based on the level of innovation inherent in a proposed initiative, faculty and administrators seeking to advance internationalization benefit from an understanding of three distinct actors in the

internationalization space: agents, champions, and resisters. Agents will most likely be motivated by incentives, such as tenure requirements, strategic plan priorities, or objectives set by their superiors. Champions will be more likely to pursue individualized internationalization due to personal convictions, which may result in alienation of colleagues. As such, champions may not be motivated by incentives, but they may choose to advocate for the implementation of incentives to make it easier to bring colleagues on board when promoting internationalization initiatives. Resisters will likely only be motivated to internationalize if there is a clear market-driven incentive with reliable revenues attached to it and if no disruption to other university priorities would occur.

These three distinct actors respond differently to the three approaches to framing tensions in international higher education explored in the study. Champions and resisters are more likely to choose polarizing sense making and decision making styles, while agents tend to seek reconciliation of tensions. Faculty and administrators who construct complementary dialectics around tensions in international higher education are likely to be the most persuasive in their efforts to obtain buy-in for their initiatives because such dialectics are useful to both agents and champions. In addition, faculty and administrators benefit from framing tensions within the organizational culture of their university. Finally, the perceived decision style of actors involved in an initiative matters. Decisions tied to strategic plans, committees, or the hiring of designated experts to solve a problem receive the most support within the complex university environment, which is defined by scarcity and fosters competition between objectives vying for resources.

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION**

In this chapter, I interpret the findings presented in chapter four. I also discuss implications of the findings on international higher education research and practice. Finally, I offer a perspective on how the future of internationalization initiatives at universities may play out.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study sought to contribute to the higher education literature by linking sense making, decision making and organizational culture to better understand how faculty and administrators negotiate tensions, including tensions between market-driven and mission-driven goals as well as mission-driven and other mission-driven goals, when working on internationalization initiatives.

### **Research Questions: Analysis and Discussion**

Research Question 1: What are the key tensions faculty and administrators perceive when working on international higher education initiatives?

My study confirmed that the five tensions identified in the literature review are relevant to sense making and decision making within University State's organizational culture. The three most frequently coded tensions – global versus local, profit versus engagement, and public versus private – tended to emerge from informants' comments organically without probing on my part. The two least frequently coded tensions – quality versus scale and access versus prestige – tended to require probing from me before informants discussed them. Each tension had relevance within the context of each of three models discussed: established internationalization models, such as international student recruitment to campus and study

abroad, emerging internationalization models, such as global university partnerships and branch campuses, and innovative internationalization models, such as online education and blended education. However, the tensions between quality and scale as well as access and prestige held more relevance in the space of international online education.

The five tensions are specific to internationalization, but also proved relevant in the context of out-of-state student recruitment because international students and out-of-state students pay the same tuition rate. In addition, my study identified tensions within University State's culture that also shape faculty and administrator sense making and decision making on internationalization, notably tensions between grass-roots and top-down leadership, mission and resources, faculty and administration, and organic versus deliberate decision making. Faculty and administrators at University State often discussed these tensions without explicitly perceiving them as tensions, and they frequently discussed multiple tensions at once when explaining their perspectives on international higher education.

Tensions in international higher education shape how faculty and administrators evaluate initiatives and how they discuss them amongst each other. Awareness of these tensions allows faculty and administrators to craft the most persuasive arguments to maximize buy-in. However, frequently, the arguments constructed do not resolve tensions – instead, they recognize them and potentially emphasize one priority over the other. Due to the global and progressive nature of universities, many faculty and administrators exhibit a strong comfort level with global perspectives and see the goal of fostering global citizenship as inherently valuable. They also tend to view the public mission of a university, which traditionally emphasizes responsibility toward domestic students, as inherently reconcilable with global engagement. However, opposition that emphasizes domestic and economic priorities is persistently present. As such,

champions of internationalization must navigate this opposition and construct arguments that reconcile tensions as much as possible.

Research Question 2: How do faculty and administrators make sense of tensions when working on international higher education initiatives?

Faculty and administrators at University State framed tensions as complementary dialectics, simple contradictions, or pragmatic paradoxes based on their persuasive intent with regards to internationalization initiatives. Complementary dialectics tended to frame two sides of a tension as a win-win; for example, domestic students benefit when international students are present on campus due to the intercultural exchange between the two rather than losing out because international students take up spots meant for domestic students. This sense making style was common among informants that seemed highly motivated to champion internationalization. Simple contradictions tended to juxtapose the two sides of a tension in order to argue for one side over the other. Informants used this style both when arguing for an approach currently used at University State, such as refusing to recruit international students to supplement the university's income, and when opposing an approach and arguing for a different one, such as stating that internationalization should be rewarded by tenure requirements because faculty will not invest their time and resources otherwise. This sense making approach was common among informants who were either highly motivated to internationalize, even at the expense of other priorities, or not motivated to internationalize. Informants tended to construct pragmatic paradoxes when valuing both sides of a tension, such as valuing international student access and the quality of the educational experience, but feeling like one side cannot be pursued without harming the other: providing access harms quality and focusing narrowly on quality



hinders access. This approach to sense making was least common in my data, but tended to indicate informants who were motivated to internationalize but felt obligated to prioritize other university objectives. All three styles served a persuasive purpose, facilitating arguments about internationalization in order to influence the sense making of others and impact decision making.

Sense making styles may not be specific to internationalization and may, in fact, be inherent in faculty and administrators' individual communication styles and preferences. However, my data suggests that university actors choose different sense making styles based on their attitudes toward tensions, which are influenced by personal perspectives and incentives, as well as by the organizational culture. Understanding which sense making style is most effective in persuading others in the university environment may allow faculty and administrators to advance internationalization initiatives more effortlessly than attempting to communicate without this awareness. Because agents constitute the majority of university actors, faculty and administrators interested in advancing internationalization may be most successful when constructing arguments that reconciles tensions and emphasize the university's strategic plan or other collective and strategic priorities.

Research Question 3: How do sense making and decision making interact when faculty and administrators encounter tensions in international higher education?

Sense making and decision making seemed to interact in informants' perceptions when discussing internationalization initiatives at University State. Informants frequently used complementary dialectics to contextualize perceived or planned decisions by resolution, such as a win-win between global and local mission leading to a committee to establish international designations for satellite campuses. Simple contradictions helped justify decisions by resolution,

but they also explained decisions by flight or oversight. Pragmatic paradoxes were never linked to decisions by resolutions; however, they helped informants make sense of decisions by oversight and decisions by flight.

Decision making processes are not always easy to discern or code as one of the three styles proposed by Cohen, March & Olson (1972). However, their framework was useful in coding for perceived decision making styles and the effectiveness informants assigned to each of them. Decisions by resolution, which I classified as decisions linked to strategic planning, committee work, or dedicated hires, were perceived as the most effective and legitimate. Because such collective decision making processes must necessarily take into account larger university priorities beyond internationalization, they were also perceived to resolve tensions in internationalization and create win-wins for university actors.

Research Question 4: How does organizational culture shape sense making and decision making when faculty and administrators encounter tensions in international higher education?

The organizational culture at University State might be representative of other organizational cultures at U.S. land-grant and public research universities because my codes used in the analysis of University State's environment, mission, socialization, information, strategy, and leadership were representative of similar institutions. A key factor in shaping faculty and administrator sense making and decision making around tensions in international higher education was University State's strong, global reputation and its ability to draw international audiences to its programs. This strong reputation allows university stakeholders to construct complementary dialectics around tensions that other, less prestigious institutions could not. For example, because of University State's popularity with domestic in-state and out-of-state

students, the need to recruit international students to balance budgets is lower than it would be at a university with dwindling domestic enrollments, thus diminishing the tension between profits and engagement. This dynamic allows University State to admit international students with strong academic abilities, which allows for the argument that an international student presence brings both global engagement opportunities and academic benefits to domestic students, thus dissolving the tension between global and local priorities. However, because faculty and administrators tend to feel secure in University State's reputation and optimistic about a sustainable future for their institution, this may also lead to complacency, particularly when it comes to investing in innovative internationalization models.

### **Implications for Research and Practice**

The findings presented by this study link faculty and administrator sense making and decision making around tensions in international higher education within their organizational culture, and may offer implications both for research in the higher education field and for practice at higher education institutions.

### Implications for International Higher Education Researchers

This study demonstrates the importance of studying faculty and administrator perspectives on university internationalization and how their perspectives shape decisions on internationalization initiatives as well as the entire field of international higher education. The five tensions identified in the literature review and confirmed by my data collection and analysis could be expanded to encompass more tensions that are of interest to international higher education researchers. Additional sense making and decision making theories could be applied to

understand how informants form, validate, and promote their perspectives on internationalization. Further, research could explore how perspectives on internationalization differ in various organizational cultures, for example comparing large public research universities, like University State, to second-tier research universities, liberal arts colleges, and community colleges. Another approach would be to select several higher education institutions with a similar approach to internationalization to study their faculty and administrator perspectives and compare them to each other.

Quantitative methods could be employed to statistically validate the perception of the five tensions by faculty and administrators, as well as to test correlations between sense making and decision making, such as my suggested link between the construction of complementary dialectics to explain or encourage decisions by resolution. It is important to note that the method of inquiry I developed for this study extends beyond the subject matter of international higher education and could be applied to other topics in the higher education field or beyond. Linking sense making, decision making, and organizational culture in order to understand how organizational stakeholders think, communicate, and act around tensions present in their day-to-day work can help researchers better understand human behavior in the work place.

#### Implications for Organizational Culture Researchers

Placing tensions at the center of an organizational culture and linking them with sense making and decision making can enable researchers to study how people experience motivation and demotivation in the workplace and what barriers present themselves to decision making around the tensions at hand. If of interest, a qualitative discovery study could build the foundation for a quantitative study in order to validate the most commonly perceived tensions

and how employees think about them and make decisions about them. It can also reveal rhetorical approaches that employees find most motivating and test them for validation.

### Implications for International Higher Education Practitioners

This study shows that faculty and administrators do not view internationalization as an isolated area of university activities but rather within the context of competing priorities vying for resources, including money, time, and attention. Faculty and administrators are also mindful and, in some cases, suspicious about the need to balance mission-driven and market-driven factors when engaging in internationalization activities. As such, it is critical for international higher education practitioners to view internationalization in the context of other university priorities and to understand how to promote their objectives among colleagues.

My study suggests that faculty and administrators who construct complementary dialectics around tensions in international higher education are likely to be the most persuasive in their efforts to obtain buy-in for their initiatives. While champions for international higher education also construct simple contradictions to elevate their objectives over others, this approach is more polarizing and alienating than complementary dialectics because it pits one priority against the other. Faculty and administrators who construct pragmatic paradoxes around tensions in internationalization may be difficult to convince of a complementary dialectic, but it may be worthwhile to try reframing a tension for them in this manner. As such, my study is a framework for constructing arguments about international higher education and internationalization initiatives based on the audience's rhetorical predisposition and motivations.

In addition, the agent, champion, and resister personas I present in the organizational culture section about socialization can help faculty and administrators craft arguments about

internationalization that are motivating and convincing to their audience. Agents will most likely be motivated by incentives, such as tenure requirements, strategic plan priorities, or objectives set by their superiors. Champions will be more likely to pursue individualized internationalization, which may result in the alienation of colleagues. As such, champions may not be motivated by incentives, but they may choose to advocate for the implementation of incentives to make it easier to bring colleagues on board when promoting internationalization initiatives. Resisters will likely only be motivated to internationalize if there is a clear market-driven incentive with reliable revenues attached to it.

When it comes to decision making, faculty and administrators are best advised to use complementary dialectics to explain or encourage decisions by resolution. The informants in my study looked favorably toward decisions that have been written into a strategic plan, decisions that are driven by appointed committees, and decisions that have led to designated staff positions to solve problems surrounding tensions in international higher education. While none of these approaches guarantee a full resolution of a tension, the important point is that they are perceived as the most pragmatic approach to collective decision making that is least likely to result in decisions by oversight or decisions by flight.

The champion-agent-resister framework emerged from the open coding part of my analysis within my inquiry into organizational culture. This framework can serve as a helpful tool to guide the discussion of my analysis that is driven by existing theory: sense making and decision making. As such, I present the following chart to illustrate how international higher education practitioners may map out and anticipate conversations around initiatives with the various faculty and administrator stakeholder types:

	<b>Global vs. Local</b>	<b>Profit vs. Engagement</b>	<b>Public vs. Private</b>	<b>Quality vs. Scale</b>	<b>Access vs. Prestige</b>
<b>Champions</b>					
<u>Sense Making:</u> Simple Contradictions  <u>Decision Making:</u> Oversight	“We cannot be a global university unless we challenge every local student to develop a global perspective”	“If the university recruits global students to bolster its bottom line, the focus on fostering true global engagement gets lost”	“The land-grant mission of the 21 <sup>st</sup> century mandates global engagement, no matter what our donors and board members say.”	“Scaling our class sizes and technologies to allow for greater global participation might hurt the quality of students’ global experiences.”	“We must increase access to our university for global audiences, even if lower average test scores are penalized by rankings.”
<b>Agents</b>					
<u>Sense Making:</u> Complementary Dialectics  <u>Decision Making:</u> Resolution	“Internationalization helps both global and local students”	“Internationalization brings in revenue for the university and increases global competencies in students at the same time.”	“Global engagement is important to both the public mission of higher education and to preparing students for the global job market.”	“Online education levels the playing field globally and allows for deeper global engagement for a larger number of students.”	“Investing in global engagement increases access to higher education and simultaneously increases brand awareness for our university world-wide.”
<b>Resisters</b>					
<u>Sense Making:</u> Pragmatic Paradoxes  <u>Decision Making:</u> Flight	“We cannot provide financial aid to global students without taking away resources from the local students who need to be our priority”	“Our emphasis for recruiting international students must be on revenue generation because there are too many obligations we have to our domestic students to focus on anything else.”	“The land-grant mission tells us we have to serve the children of the tax payers in our state, first and foremost, even if we find global engagement valuable.”	“Our priority is scaling our online programs in order to increase revenue, and international students are usually not equipped to succeed in online classrooms.”	“Rankings penalize us for admitting students with low test scores, so increasing access to non-elite students globally would hurt our university’s prestige.”

Organizational culture should always be in the back of the minds of those seeking to promote international higher education initiatives. My study shows the dynamics that shape faculty and administrator attitudes towards tensions in internationalization at a large, public research university in the United States, which defines itself in terms of its land-grant mission, its global reputation, and its strong rankings. The arguments crafted around internationalization must occur with an awareness of organizational culture factors and might look quite different at a smaller institution with a less competitive applicant pool. In addition, international higher education practitioners may wish to begin their assignments at institutions by identifying the most common tensions perceived by faculty and administrators when it comes to internationalization initiatives. This is the first step to crafting complementary dialectics and linking them to decisions by resolution, as demonstrated as the most effective approach for persuasion in this study.

### **Looking Ahead**

Because this study was conducted in the midst of significant political unrest in the United States and within the context of a growing movement toward nationalism on a global scale, its findings may be influenced by factors external to higher education, as discussed in the context of limitations to the study. This political unrest should calm down in the future, but there seems to be a growing trend toward nationalism that may prevail over the long-term and influence internationalization discussions at universities. Meanwhile, the global trend towards credentialing in higher education is likely to continue, which could result in the break-down of barriers in global and online education programs. Within this context, the resister attitude may become increasingly unacceptable within university environments as globalization and



internationalization become more non-negotiable. The trends of growing nationalism, increased acceptance of credentialing, and the evolving non-negotiable nature of globalization all create an urgency for higher education practitioners and researchers to understand how faculty and administrators think about and evaluate internationalization initiatives.

### **Summary**

This study sought to understand faculty and administrator perspectives on international higher education. The focus of the study was on public research universities faculty and administrators, examining their approaches to sense making and decision making around tensions in international education within their organizational culture. The study took place at a large, public research university in the Northeastern region of the United States and encompassed 32 informant interviews, five participant observation, and a document analysis of 47 strategic plans.

The findings indicated that faculty and administrators organize their thinking on university internationalization around five key tensions: global versus local, profit versus engagement, public versus private, quality versus scale, and access versus prestige. In addition, the findings showed that faculty and administrators who frame those tensions in terms of complementary dialectics (Tracy, 2004) are the most motivated to both engage in internationalization and the most likely to construct arguments that motivate their colleagues to support their initiatives. Complementary dialectics, as opposed to simple contradictions and pragmatic paradoxes (Tracy, 2004) were also the most likely to be linked with perceived decisions by resolution, as opposed to decisions by flight or decisions by oversight (Cohen, March & Olson, 1972). The organizational culture of a public research university that roots its decisions in its land-grant mission and strong, global reputation seemed to influence how faculty

and administrators made sense of and decisions around tensions in international higher education. The case study approach needed for the exploration of organizational culture limits transferability of findings to other institutions, but future research has an opportunity to build on this study to validate findings via both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

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## APPENDIX A: Interview Protocol

### Before the Interview:

- Thank the participant for their time and willingness to partake in the research
- Explain the informed consent form, obtain signature, and activate recording devices
- Ask if the participant has any questions before the interview begins

### Interview Questions:

[These questions were often supplemented with probes based on comments from participants that were of interest to the researcher)

1. What comes to mind when you hear the term “international higher education initiatives?”
2. How long and in what capacity have you been involved with work on international higher education?
3. What does university internationalization mean to you? Could you share your perspective on its benefits and drawbacks?
4. When working on internationalization initiatives, is the process usually straightforward or do you usually experience it as complex or difficult to navigate?
5. What are some common tensions you have encountered in working on internationalization initiatives at [University State], particularly when it comes to working with other faculty or administrators in your unit or across the university?
6. How do you usually try to resolve disagreements with colleagues when working on internationalization initiatives?
7. Do you find your approach to resolving tensions reflects the typical approach among your colleagues?
8. Could you walk me through a decision making process you were part of during a recent internationalization initiative?
9. Who was involved in the final decision and how was it announced and communicated?

10. Could you describe an implementation process for a recent internationalization initiative you worked on?
11. Can you share any ideas for making internationalization initiatives more efficient or effective at [University State]?
12. What are shared values among [University State] faculty and administrators that seem to influence internationalization initiatives?
13. How does internationalization fit in with the larger university mission and culture?
14. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your experience with internationalization initiatives at [University State] or in higher education as a whole?

After the Interview:

- Thank the participant again for his/her time and perspective
- Ask if any questions or items of clarification remain
- Ensure the participant has my contact information
- Obtain verbal consent to reach out to participant to ask clarifying questions and perform member checking of findings

## APPENDIX B: Observation Protocol

### Before the Observation:

- Thank the participants for their time and willingness to partake in the research
- Explain the informed consent form, obtain signatures, and activate recording devices
- Ask if the participants have any questions before the observation begins

### Observation Worksheet:

1. How many people are at the meeting?
2. Where is the meeting taking place?
3. What is the mood at the beginning, during, and at the end of the meeting?
4. What are the topics of this meeting?
5. How are participants participating in the meeting? Is there a facilitator? Are they working with an agenda?
6. What tensions or conflicts of opinion are emerging during the meeting?
7. How are these tensions resolved or handled?
8. Are decisions being made in this meeting? If so, how?
9. How are participants making sense of the topic at hand, both individually and collectively?
10. What are organizational rites or rituals noticed during this meeting?

### After the Observation:

- Thank the participants again for their time
- Ask if any questions or items of clarification remain
- Ensure the participants have my contact information
- Obtain verbal consent to reach out to participants to ask clarifying questions and perform member checking of findings

## APPENDIX C: Script for Initial Contact

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is Suzan Brinker and I am a Ph.D. student in Higher Education at [University State]. I am reaching out to you with hopes that you may be willing to participate in my dissertation research. My study focuses on international higher education, specifically in terms of how faculty and administrators navigate common tensions in internationalization initiatives.

For the purpose of this research, I am conducting 30-60 minute interviews with faculty and administrators at [University State], who are involved in internationalization initiatives. I plan to ask a set of prepared questions while also allowing room for discussing anything of particular interest to participants. Interviews will be recorded and transcribed, but all personal identifiable information will be removed and the data will be kept confidential in accordance with the Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocol for human subject-matter research.

It is my intent that this research will help fill gaps in the international higher education literature, which does not currently address faculty and administrator perspectives on university internationalization to a sufficient extent.

Would you be available for an interview? I can meet you at a place and time of your convenience. Your perspectives and expertise would add significant value to my study.

Thank you for considering my inquiry. Please feel free to ask if you have any questions for clarification or simply wish to receive more information on my study.

Sincerely,  
Suzan Brinker

PhD Candidate in Higher Education  
The Pennsylvania State University  
Email: [sxb64@psu.edu](mailto:sxb64@psu.edu)  
Cell Phone: 414-640-4711

## APPENDIX D: Consent Form

### **TITLE OF STUDY**

Tensions in International Higher Education:  
Sense Making, Decision Making, and Organizational Culture

### **PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR**

Suzan Brinker  
The Pennsylvania State University  
Education Policy Studies; Higher Education

411 B, The 329 Building, University Park, PA 16802  
414-640-4711  
sxb64@psu.edu

### **PURPOSE OF STUDY**

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

This study seeks to contribute to the higher education literature by linking sense making, decision making and organizational culture to better understand how faculty and administrators negotiate tensions, including tensions between market-driven and mission-driven goals as well as mission-driven and other mission-driven goals, when working on internationalization initiatives. The study uses a combination of ethnographic interviewing, participant observations, and document analysis to better understand how faculty and administrators make sense of their own and the university's work in a global context.

### **STUDY PROCEDURES**

Please read through this informed consent, and ask any questions you have for the researcher. After you sign and return this form to the researcher, she will start recording of your interview. She will then ask you questions about your involvement with internationalization initiatives at Penn State. You should only answer questions you are comfortable discussing. The interview will likely last 30-60 minutes, and will not exceed two hours or (if applicable) our previously agreed-upon duration.

### **RISKS**

Your responses to this study will be confidential and the audio recordings will be stored on a password-protected recording device. Every effort will be made to keep this information confidential. If, despite these efforts, the privacy of the recorded media is compromised, your participation in this research may become known. You may decline to answer any or all questions and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

### **BENEFITS**

There will be no direct benefit to you for your participation in this study. However, we hope that the information obtained from this study may help international students, domestic students who study abroad, all residential and online students, faculty, staff, and alumni to better understanding how decisions are made about global engagement on behalf of the university and how institutional culture may drive such decisions.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

For the purposes of this research study, your comments will not be anonymous. Every effort will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality including the following:

- Assigning code numbers for participants that will be used on all research notes and documents
- Keeping notes, interview transcriptions, and any other identifying participant information on a password-protected storage device. Any hard-copy documents (including this consent form) will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the personal possession of the researcher.

Participant data will be kept confidential except in cases where the researcher is legally obligated to report specific incidents. These incidents include, but may not be limited to, incidents of abuse and suicide risk.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have questions at any time about this study, or you experience adverse effects as the result of participating in this study, you may contact the researcher whose contact information is provided on the first page. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, or if problems arise which you do not feel you can discuss with the Primary Investigator, please contact the Institutional Review Board at (865) 354-3000, ext. 4822.

### **VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign a consent form. After you sign the consent form, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not affect the relationship you have, if any, with the researcher. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

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### **CONSENT**

I have read and I understand the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without cost. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Participant's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Investigator's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Vita

## Professional Summary

- Strategic, collaborative, and proactive Higher Education leader focused on data-driven, omni-channel marketing to recruit local and global audiences into degree and non-credit programs.
- Marketing expert with proven skills in market research, competitive differentiation, marketing and media planning, lead generation and nurturing, SEO, social media, content marketing, and analytics.
- Effective manager with demonstrated excellence in strategy, relationships, and process optimization.
- Global citizen, born and raised in Germany and Turkey, committed to diversity and inclusion.

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## Education

The Pennsylvania State University	Doctor of Philosophy, Higher Education	2014-2018
Marquette University	Master of Arts, Communication	2010-2012
Norbert College	Bachelor of Arts, English & Media Studies	2006-2009
University of Muenster	English & History (Basic Magister Curriculum)	2004-2006
Helmholtz Gymnasium Hilden	Abitur (German College Preparatory Degree)	1995-2004

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## Work Experience

Penn State University - Division of Outreach & Online Education	(State College, PA)
Director of Marketing	July 2013 - Present
Associate Director of Marketing	July 2014 – March 2017
Assistant Director of Marketing	July 2013 – July 2014

- Direct internal and external resources, including marketing agencies and research vendors, for Penn State's diverse portfolio of professional education and community engagement programs.
- Manage and mentor a team of nine direct and indirect reports.
- Develop comprehensive enrollment plans for Penn State World Campus' international channel. Exceeded aggressive income and revenue targets every year since launching the channel in 2013.
- Evolve marketing campaigns into digital environments to create efficiencies and achieve data-driven approaches with an emphasis on SEO, content marketing, social media, and analytics to increase ROI.
- Oversee implementation of CRM tools, including Campus Nexus and Salesforce, to implement strategic lead nurturing campaigns based on a robust KPI framework.
- Collaborate extensively with other marketing teams across the university.
- Present to and advise senior leaders across the university, including the President's Council, the Academic Leadership Council, the Board of Trustees, and the Faculty Senate.