

VALUABLE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY: THE MYTH OF THE FUNGIBLE
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

By

ERIN MILLER

A thesis submitted to the

Graduate School-Camden

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of Master of Arts

Graduate Program in English

Written under the direction of

Dr. James Brown

And approved by

Dr. James Brown

Dr. William FitzGerald

Camden, New Jersey

May 2021

THESIS ABSTRACT

Valuable Members of the Community: The Myth of the Fungible International Student

By ERIN MILLER

Thesis Director:

Dr. James Brown

With the onset of COVID-19 compounding the anti-immigration rhetoric that comprised much of former President Trump's initiatives from 2016-2020, international students have been placed in a precarious situation within the stratified contexts of the U.S. university, public rhetoric, and a global pandemic. The July 6th ICE directive that threatened international students with deportation if they were not enrolled in face-to-face classes brought these contexts together, and American universities overwhelmingly responded in defense of their international students. While their support is important in preserving the safety and wellbeing of international students during a global pandemic, the public statements, the Harvard-MIT lawsuit filed against ICE, and the university rhetoric available on their websites construct a version of the international student as a fungible commodity: these students are valued because of how they positively impact the university rather than respected for their desire to learn. The value of the international student is determined according to how the university configures them. The resulting myth of international student as fungible describes the international student's utility, their paradoxical construction by the university as outsider and insider, irreplaceable and

interchangeable, diversity clout and homogenous group depending on the university's needs. This thesis uses these documents as an access point to investigate how university rhetoric creates and perpetuates this myth. I examine the rhetoric around international students from Harvard, MIT, UPenn, NYU, Columbia, Northeastern, and Rutgers as these institutions actively recruit and admit international students and led the defense against international students after the July 6th ICE directive. Although these universities protected the wellbeing of international students during this time, they also participate in the continuation of the myth of the fungible international student. By examining the ways in which the rhetorical processes of recruitment, admissions, and sponsorship perpetuate this myth, this thesis outlines the university rhetoric, its motivations, and its flaws to advocate for the reimagining of the systems of recruitment, admissions, and sponsorship.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. James Brown for supervising my thesis and for supporting and guiding my research in equitable access to education. Thanks, too, Dr. William FitzGerald for your guidance in pedagogy, composition, and rhetoric, and for your help in reviewing my thesis. I am also grateful to Dr. Jillian Sayre, whose classes and pedagogy had a transformative impact on my academic self-esteem. I am happy to have had you all as professors, mentors, and role models during my master's degree.

Thank you to my family, who have cared for and cheered me on while having virtually no clue what I've been working on all semester. Special thanks to my mom, who perfectly timed shipments of chocolate to help me get through this semester.

I would not have completed this thesis without the generous love and support of my friends. Wynn, Asmita, Bree, and Kate, thank you for your friendship in the MA program. I love the community we built together—our willingness to help one another and offer encouragement was all that I hoped for and more. I owe a special shout out to Wynn for meeting with me every Friday for guaranteed fun-times and boba. To my friends outside the program—Savannah, Laura, Donna, Alicia, and Daniel—thank you for supporting me from a distance. I'm sorry I haven't texted most of you back in timely manner for the past two years. It means so much to me that you're in my corner, even from across the country.

And finally, I have to thank my best friend, my partner in social justice and in life, Aayush. Thank you for encouraging me every time I doubted myself, lost focus, or felt put down by The Man. As hopeless as writing a thesis can feel, like shouting into the void of academic halls, knowing that my work matters to you makes it all worth it.

Dedication

For Aayush

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iv
Dedication	v
Table of Contents	vi
1. Introduction	1
2. Literature Review	4
3. University as Recruiter	9
3.1 Diversity	11
3.2 Prestige	13
4. University as Mythmaker	18
4.1 Proof of Financial Security or Need	20
4.2 Proof of English Proficiency	26
4.3 Proof of Intention	32
5. University as Sponsor	37
5.1 Public Statements	39
5.2 Harvard-MIT Lawsuit	43
6. Conclusion	47
Works Cited	51

1. Introduction

With the onset of COVID-19 compounding the anti-immigration rhetoric that comprised much of former President Trump's initiatives from 2016-2020, international students have been placed in a precarious situation within the stratified contexts of the U.S. university, public rhetoric, and a global pandemic. The July 6th ICE directive that threatened international students with deportation if they were not enrolled in face-to-face classes brought these contexts together, and American universities overwhelmingly responded in defense of their international students. While their support is important in preserving the safety and wellbeing of international students during a global pandemic, the public statements, the Harvard-MIT lawsuit filed against ICE, and the university rhetoric on their websites construct a version of the international student as a fungible commodity. When Northeastern University's Office of Global Services says that it provides "professional expertise and support you need to maintain compliance through immigration, academic, and your employment experiences—helping you remain a valuable member of the Northeastern community," we have to wonder what the term "valuable" actually means to the institution ("Welcome to the Office of Global Services"). In many instances, these students are "valuable members of the community" because of the multiple ways in which they positively impact the university's bottom line rather than for their contributions to a multicultural, global campus. The resulting myth of international student as fungible describes the international student's utility, their paradoxical construction by the university as outsider and insider, irreplaceable and interchangeable, diversity clout and homogenous group, depending on the university's needs. This thesis uses these documents as an access point to investigate how university

rhetoric creates and perpetuates this myth. Universities put the myth of international student as fungible commodity onto their international students through a cycle of rhetorical processes—recruitment, application screening, and sponsorship.

Beginning with the university as recruiter, I explain how the university seeks to attract international students by touting their prestige and diversity. The university as recruiter is the first interaction between the university and international applicants and the first instance in which international applicants are exposed to the university's international student myth. This engagement primes the international applicant for the next stage of this process: the application. The application is the rhetorical tool through which the university primarily operates as mythmaker, testing international applicants against their myth. It is the outline of the narrative itself, with its additional requirements shaping the field of applicants into the desired characterization. Applicants are admitted not only based on college readiness but also on how well they withstand these additional requirements. Upon enrollment, the university reifies their international student narrative by sponsoring those students in public and legal spaces of discourse. International students are offered a role in the university schema only if they are able to perform this role and conform to the mythological figure of "international student" put forward by the university in its recruiting, admissions, and sponsorship processes, and in some cases, they are legally bound to stay within the parameters of that figure or risk being deported. Each student who is successfully recruited, admitted, and sponsored is then used to attract the next batch of international applicants.

My research investigates leading U.S. universities and their process of writing the international student narrative onto undergraduate international applicants. These

universities are Harvard, MIT, NYU, UPenn, Columbia, Northeastern, and Rutgers. As leaders in higher education, their communications with and about international students are highly visible, establishing a standard for other universities' operations and making it easier for me to address the dominant recruitment, application, and sponsorship rhetoric that creates and perpetuates the myth of the international student. These universities have also been vocal leaders in denouncing and suing ICE regarding the July 6th directive. I limit the scope of the university/international student relationship to the past two academic years, 2019-2021, as COVID-19 and the Trump administration exacerbated the position of international students and rendered the university's myth apparent.

I will explore the process of applying to a U.S. university as an international student by analyzing the rhetoric of university recruitment, information about the online application, additional resources specifically for international applicants, and the public statements and the Harvard-MIT lawsuit that discuss international students, focusing on how content for and about international students shape the rhetorical figure of the international student. Although studying the agency of international students in navigating higher education is also worthy of study, for the purpose of this thesis, I will be focusing on the strategic roles of the university and their rhetorical strategies of creating and maintaining the international student myth. The rhetoric of international student recruitment, admissions, and sponsorship perpetuates the myth of the international student as fungible, effectively transforming this diverse group of students to a collection of fungible units to serve the goals and interests of the institution. The COVID-19 pandemic and the Trump administration's anti-immigrant rhetoric affords us the opportunity to trace the myth of international student as fungible commodity across

institutional rhetorical processes. By outlining this myth, we can then identify the faults in this system and begin to postulate how to improve the university's rhetoric to the benefit of international students.

2. Literature Review

The categorization of immigrants in the United States has been a reductive, moralistic dichotomy since at least President Theodore Roosevelt's rhetoric of immigration at the turn of the twentieth century. Vanessa Beasley, in the introduction to *Who Belongs in America?: Presidents, Rhetoric, and Immigration*, articulates this dichotomy as an effort to divide immigrants between narratives of hope and narratives of fear (7-13). Jay Childers builds on Vanessa Beasley's analysis by framing this division in the contexts of character and economy, to which Roosevelt "[drew] distinctions between the fit and unfit immigrant based on the individual immigrant's ability to adapt to, and productively influence, American identity" (185). The "fit" or desired immigrant possessed intelligence and financial independence (195), qualities that would "[add] value to the country" (189). Undesired immigrants, then, are immigrants that are thought to lack these qualities or would otherwise devalue the country. The dichotomies of fit and unfit as President Roosevelt explained them over a century ago have a striking application to the international student myth. Universities express their preference for what Roosevelt calls "fit" immigrants by maintaining economic barriers to their education and highlighting the human capital of international students.

In addition to Roosevelt's "fit" and "unfit" immigrants, we must also consider the shaping of immigrant narratives according to eugenics, which has historically

manipulated the process of immigration in order to create a “dominant, normative identity” (Dolmage 7) through exclusion, a way to bring the national identity into relief by casting certain immigrants into the shadows. Jay Timothy Dolmage describes the impact of eugenics on immigration from the 1900-1930s as a way to inscribe race, ability, and class onto immigrants through rhetorical practices utilized in immigration processing, such as the “snapshot decision,” in which immigration inspectors would assess the perceived ability (into which race and class was also coded) of an immigrant with a quasi-medical glance (Birn 281, Dolmage 77), and archived photographs of detained and denied immigrants, which served the rhetorical purpose of creating a simultaneous “program of assimilation” and “process of abjection” (Dolmage 83). There are similar rhetorical powers at work in evaluating university applications, in which admissions counselors shape an ideal incoming class based on university goals.

Lisa Flores’ rhetorical history of Mexican immigration in the United States during the twentieth century exemplifies the vulnerability of such rhetorical processes that can trace their motivations back to eugenics and race. Flores claims the making of race “is a paradoxical and continuous project compelled by the cultural, material, and legal needs of political cultures and the ontological insecurities of race” (31). Flores’ work shows us that university mythmaking is a rhetorical process of creating an Other through “vulnerable ontology” (30), by ascribing physicalities to races and nations of people undesired by the United States. This practice is not fixed. Undesirable characteristics shift from race to race throughout history, troubling the processes by which immigrants—and international students—are assessed and the criteria by which they are evaluated.

These evaluations are carried out in part through the rhetorical processes of xenophobia and assimilation. The logics that dictate xenophobia, the process of othering and excluding based on perceived difference, and assimilation, the process by which immigrants “suppress or discard facets of their cultural identity” (Ironside and Corrigan 160, 162), have historically been used to justify exclusionary nationalism in times of economic strife and national uncertainty. Emily Ironside and Lisa Corrigan explain how assimilation and xenophobia are reinforced in contemporary policymaking to “[establish] a hegemonic national identity for the purpose of creating unity and maintaining their position of power” (160). These processes were critically apparent in the Trump administration’s xenophobic rhetoric in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the logics of xenophobia and assimilation in national rhetoric to maintain a national identity can also be evidenced in the shaping of applicants during the admissions process, in which they are subject to similar processes of norming and othering that seek to control the institution’s image.

What the international student myth implies is the power of the university to create and reify these identities. Universities accomplish this by performing the institutional roles institutions of sponsor, actor, and parastate in immigration discourse. In “Documenting Dreams: A Rhetorical Performance of Inclusive Citizenship and Collaborative Expertise,” Yazmin Lazcano-Pry articulates the rhetorical role of sponsor in matters of immigration as “[extending] awareness, acknowledgement, and belief in the expertise of individuals lacking access to the public stage” (137). At first glance, it would appear the universities discussed in this essay fit this role of “sponsor.” Bernhard Streitwieser, Kathryn Duffy-Jaeger, and Jane Roche, in “Comparing the Responses of US

Higher Education Institutions to International and Undocumented Students in the Trump Era,” frame the university as social actors hoping to bring about social change, claiming universities help facilitate social movement to “correct a social injustice and improve the educational welfare of international students” (410). However, they also acknowledge that engaging with international students “may not involve social welfare goals at all but be more self-serving in nature” (410). In “The Uses of the Foreign Student,” Margaret O’Mara nuances the roles of sponsor and actor in social movement theory by defining universities as parastates, institutions capable of influencing immigration policy as it serves to benefit them and their international students. These various definitions for universities construct the university as the agent and the international student as the dependent in the discourse on immigration. With their power, universities are able to perpetuate “master narratives” that marginalize or erase the diverse experiences of international students (Martinez 3). Ultimately, the university, as a “neoliberal [actor] focused on securing their status position and generating economic growth” (Ford and Cate 1195) manipulates the narrative of the international student to serve their multiple institutional goals.

According to Sharon Stein and Vanessa Oliveira de Andreotti, the pervasive narratives circulated by American institutions are instrumental and constitutive, reflecting the global imaginary or the reified power that the Global North has in maintaining its image and in controlling the images of the rest of the world (228). Stein and de Andreotti claim current university rhetoric also operates through and benefits from this global imaginary, specifically through their figuration of the international student as “cash,” or an additional lucrative source of revenue. International students are also evidence of

internationalization, or “the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions, of delivery of post-secondary education” (Garcia and de Lourdes Villarreal 11). Internationalization is increasingly valuable in the global imaginary, gesturing the multiple ways international students are valuable in the university schema.

The perception of international students as “cash” has been documented in economics literature. It is a widely held belief that international students are recruited by universities in part because they can be charged more to attend, thus creating a sustainable source of revenue for the university. Brian Cantwell partially dispels this notion by analyzing U.S. universities’ enrollment from 2000-2009 and concluding that only universities that offer bachelor through doctoral degrees will see a sustained return from enrolling international students. More recently, Kevin Shih and John Bound et al. have found that international students are a crucial element in the university economy because they cross-subsidize domestic student enrollment, meaning the more international students that are enrolled, the more domestic students can also be enrolled at a lower cost. This relationship benefits universities that are facing reduced support from state and federal funding without altering the status quo. There is also economic work that advises universities on improving their marketing to international students so as to keep their edge in the growing knowledge economy (Naidoo). From a purely economic standpoint, it is easy to see why universities want to transform international students into fungible commodities.

Research in education policy has already begun addressing the inequities that international students face while studying abroad. Hugo Garcia and Maria de Lourdes

Villarreal catalogue the many push/pull factors that influence international student mobility, including the value of “American experience” and the availability of universities in the students’ home country, and recommend state and university policy changes to make enrolling in U.S. universities more attractive. J. L. Waters and Tang T. Heng explain that many current international student programs are based on a narrow definition of the “international student experience,” leading to the erasure of international student mobility and diversity and reflecting neocolonial university practices. They recommend the university acknowledge their international students as political, mobile, and complex individuals by decolonizing their international student program practices and by increasing university resources for international students. Indeed, if universities are serious about engaging international students, they must approach their practices from the fundamental understanding of international students as individuals rather than as diversity clout and a wider margin. My analysis is meant to reveal the rhetorical processes that drive the current system and to use that analysis to begin to consider how we might rewrite and redesign these processes.

3. University as Recruiter

Recruiting is the rhetorical process by which universities present a specific image of themselves to attract potential applicants. Universities manifest concepts such as prestige and diversity as rhetorical devices across their websites by relating their rankings according to various metrics and sharing statistics about their student population. The university expands on these measures of prestige and diversity with accompanying text and photographs that shape the university’s image and its relationship with potential

applicants. The goal of recruiting is to persuade potential applicants to apply, the success of which reifies the constructed image of the university and sustains its efforts to continue recruiting.

The international student population is a lucrative market to universities because their association with the university has the potential to increase university prestige and diversity while also increasing university revenue. International students aid in the internationalization of universities by virtue of their mobility, thus improving the university's status in global rankings and boosting diversity efforts. There is also the circulatory power of the international student, who, upon returning to their home country, may recommend their alma mater to other prospective students, which creates more potential applicants for the university. When these international students are enrolled, they are charged a higher rate of tuition—sometimes twice as much as domestic students—which allows the university to invest enroll domestic students at a lower cost, among other things (Shih). In addition to supporting enrollment, we must also consider how international student status is designed be a net-positive for university, local, and national economies because they bring in revenue and are ineligible for most job opportunities.

For these reasons, Stein and de Andreotti argue that international students have historically been recruited by American universities because of their symbolic status as cash, or a “direct financial benefit to their host institution and nation and an indirect benefit to domestic students” (231). They are an important asset because of how they stand to improve the university's image, which in turn attracts more international applicants. They are both the audience and evidence of the university's prestige and

diversity, yet the worth of the international student is commuted to only how they benefit the university rather than how the university can benefit them. The cycle that begins with the recruiting of international students reifies the university-dictated narrative of fungibility—that they are a valuable but replaceable population.

3.1 Prestige

Prestige as a rhetorical device works by its degree of ethos. To people who assign a high value to ethos, the institutions that have the most ethos are very attractive. The universities I analyze represent the highest caliber of ethos— the most knowledgeable, the most reputable, the most resources available— combined with a high degree of exclusivity to the extent that all of this status is often conveyed in public rhetoric through name alone. Prestige maintains its rhetorical power because of how the name circulates and the effect it has on those who hear the name. This is why the name of one's university can influence a job interview and why parents boast about their children's admissions to their friends and family members. Prestige produces a desire for association, a means by which one can add to their own ethos by being affiliated with the institution.

When accessing university websites, it is important to note that prestige affects the international student before they even interact with the information on their websites: their reputation is what motivates international students to seek out their websites in the first place. The value associated with the name implies the exclusivity of their programs, the history and endowment of the institution, the tenure of its faculty, and the research it has produced. The universities I examine— Harvard, MIT, NYU, Columbia,

Northeastern, UPenn, and Rutgers—are globally recognized, to the point where students from every part of the world know their names and are willing to travel and invest their time and money to receive an education from these institutions. The existence of these international student populations gives their host universities the moniker “global university,” which is widely recognized as “a badge of prestige” (Ford and Cate 1203). In this way, the international student is sought after because of their ability to improve the university’s image. However, because these universities already possess a good reputation, they are in a position to choose which international applicants they will admit, allowing them to control their image.

In addition to capitalizing on their own prestige, universities also benefit from the global prestige of American culture. The “American experience” is a form of internationally recognized social and culture capital, the value of which is predominantly dictated by the global imaginary controlled by the Global North (Garcia and de Lourdes Villarreal; Stein and de Andreotti). The global imaginary would claim that “western education is understood to be universally valuable, while education from other traditions is understood to be of limited value” (Stein and de Andreotti 228). The American experience implies many qualities sought after in the global job market: experience in English speaking, an understanding of American culture, and connections to American institutions, American citizens, and other mobile professionals. Although the “American experience” is not an overt recruiting method used on university websites, universities are undoubtedly aware that this is part of their appeal. For example, NYU pitches their student experience opportunities as distinctly “New York City,” a setting that provides the university with access to off-campus events, facilities, and resources that the city has

to offer. This information is complemented by a short list of diversity demographics on the same page, which gives more insight into the university microcosm. On the topic of diversity and campus life, NYU claims they are a:

mosaic of different cultures. At any one moment, in any residence hall, classroom, or student center, people from every corner of the globe are creating together, exchanging ideas, and reinventing what it means to be a citizen of the world. Consider, for example, the abundance of viewpoints you'll learn from at NYU's campus in New York, where students represent every U.S. state and over 90 countries — the highest number of international students in America. (“Life at NYU”)

For all their diversity, the heterogenous campus that NYU describes is still uniquely American, reflecting the privileged narrative of the cultural melting pot for which New York City is historically known. The “American experience” is consequently one that reflects the power of American culture in shaping what it means to be a diverse population or a global citizen and has the rhetorical effect of overshadowing other cultural experiences or ways of experiencing culture, which contradicts the diversity that universities tout on their websites. The homogenizing “American experience” that is meant to reflect the heterogenous cosmopolitan student body reveals the paradoxical categorization of international student fungibility as they exist within and outside of the university.

3.2 Diversity

Institutional diversity is the abstract ideological goal of improving access and opportunity to people with life experiences different from the hegemony and is evidenced by a sufficiently heterogenous population that productively contributes to previously homogenous institutions. Because universities desire diversity, the term is employed as a strategic buzzword, the repeated use of which signals the university’s intention to appear

progressive and attractive to previously excluded populations. While institutions do not typically self-identify as prestigious, instead letting public rhetoric perpetuate this image in response to their miniscule acceptance rates and enormous endowments, the current rhetorical trend on university websites is to declare that they are a diverse and inclusive institution. These are buzzwords found across websites, with many universities also including diversity and inclusion statements or dedicating whole offices to diversity and inclusion efforts. These terms are used to signal a positive, safe environment for potential students, especially for students who come from different cultures or have life experiences different from the historically unspoken hegemony in American academia: white cisgender heterosexual middle-to-upper class able-bodied American men and more recently women (henceforth referred to as white hegemony). However, the term has little meaning when universities evoke it on their webpages because “diversity” as a description blankets a vast number of heterogeneous experiences without suggesting anything specific, and it is frequently uttered without sustained institutional change. This use perpetuates a generic narrative of Otherness that continues to privilege the white hegemony.

There are many ways to measure diversity in a student population, including race, gender presentation, ability, socioeconomic status, and interests, but universities commonly associate nationality with diversity initiatives, meaning universities target international students, an expansive and fungible commodity, as evidence of their diversity. This reduces other dimensions of diversity within the university and overwrites international student diversity as predominantly based on nationality, an otherness that more easily highlights the university’s internationalization. Diversity initiatives are

incentivized as a means of making money rather than as a method of changing the infrastructure that keeps universities homogenous. Although this exploitative relationship can still benefit international students, incentivizing diversity for profit is one reason why a more nuanced understanding of international students does not exist and why they are subject to the narrative of fungibility. The university displays generalized diversity for their economic benefit and to reach broad institutional goals rather than to positively impact international students and other groups of previously excluded students.

Keeping in line with the university's generalized diversity tactics, universities often boast about the number of countries represented by their international student population. Of the universities I analyzed, the international student and scholar population at Harvard represents the highest number of countries, at 161 ("Statistics"), while UPenn has the lowest number of countries represented by students, scholars, and employees, at 120 ("Prepare for Penn"). Northeastern, Columbia, MIT, Rutgers, and NYU fall within this range. Declaring this number is meant to show how diverse their student population is; however, it also comes across as if universities are competing with one another to see who can accumulate the most countries represented. This number accomplishes very little in describing the actual diversity on campus, but it does suggest that recruiting might target underrepresented countries to increase the universities diversity statistics. Although it is not incorrect to state that students from the same country of origin can have qualities in common, such as similar cultural and educational experiences, it is a limited definition of diversity. International students from China may have similar educational experiences, but they do not necessarily have the same personal experiences, the same motivations for enrolling in a US university, or the same interests

simply because they are from China (see Heng). The number of countries represented by a university's international student population does not fully reflect how diverse a student population is and reduces the experiences of international students to a simplified national identity.

Universities also share information about the number of international students they enroll, with NYU boasting they have “the highest number of international students in America” (“NYU Facts”). Open Doors data for the 2019-2020 academic year includes NYU, Northeastern, and Columbia as three of the top four universities hosting the largest populations of international students (“Open Doors 2020 Fast Facts”). These numbers provide international students with a superficial sense of the diversity of the student population, especially considering that international student numbers are often boasted without the context of overall student population.

In the same way diversity statistics do not provide prospective international students with a deep understanding of the university, images of international students are also used as part of superficial diversity recruiting methods. When universities like Harvard, UPenn, Northeastern, and Rutgers feature photographs of international students on their webpages, they are meant to attest to the diversity of their student population; however, unless their nationalities are affixed to these photos (as is the case with Harvard) we have no way of knowing whether these students are international students or not simply by looking at these photos. For example, on their international student and scholar services page, Rutgers has a photo of six students in Rutgers shirts above the title “Welcoming International Students and Scholars.” We have no way of knowing where these students are from, what their interests are, how they identify. While images of

students may be helpful to prospective international students because they might see students who look like them, and thus feel represented, these photos can only show us the image of the student, what they *look* like. In the case of these photos, the university definition of diversity is further reduced to how their student population looks, asking the viewer to assume a fraught connection between appearance and nationality. Moreover, these photos are evidence of the splitting of the international student between what Dolmage refers to as a “program of assimilation” and a “process of abjection” (83), in which international students are seen as a member of the university and spectacle of diversity, both insider and outsider. Columbia paraphrases the complicated position international students are expected to embody, describing, “An international student body does not merely refer to the number of countries, ethnicities or cultures represented, but it must describe the tenor and character of a place” (“A Global Community”). International students are seen as a representation of their country and culture as well as their university, without the university actually speaking to these institutions and their influence on the individual at all. The result is an empty gesture towards diversity and inclusion.

When detailing the current use of immigration history museums in Canada and the United States, Dolmage points out that these museums are dangerous sites of a “co-optation of diversity” (127). It is “something to be celebrated artistically at the margins, but not something to reconcile with history or with the dominant institution” (127). He goes on to claim that this framing of diversity allows for the continued exclusion of entire demographics of immigrants because it perpetuates marginalization. Diversity is often celebrated in universities, but its reach is limited and predominantly self-serving, as

evidenced by the motivations in recruiting previously excluded populations. Through the rhetorical process of recruiting, we have seen how international students positively influence the university's prestige and diversity, making them valuable rhetorical figures in the shaping of the university's reputation. International student pages provide prospective students with practical information as well as insight into this reputation, but these pages also relegate international students to a corner of their website, where they can be drawn upon to highlight diversity but are not fully integrated into the university.

4. University as Mythmaker

In *Disabled Upon Arrival*, Dolmage argues that immigration processing in North America in the 1920s and 1930s was a process of racializing and disabling certain groups of immigrants in a eugenic effort to create a national (white, able) identity. There are overlapping rhetorical features at work in the process of immigrating and the process of applying to an American university. As Dolmage explains, the inspections that immigrants were subject to upon arrival to the United States in the 1920s and 1930s relied on eugenically defined racial and ability “standards” measured by immigration officials. Immigration officials assessed perceived race and ability—and by extension, class—often by glancing at immigrants as they moved through Ellis Island and Pier 21, creating a rhetorical act Anne-Emanuelle Birn terms the “snapshot diagnosis” (281). This method was praised for its apparent intuitive power because it quickly and successfully identified many unfit immigrants and kept processing efficient (Dolmage 77). The snapshot decision gained credibility through eugenicists’ support (78-79), effectively rationalizing the grounds to bar immigrants from entry. To immigration officers,

immigrants were either visibly white and able-bodied just by looking at them, or they were not. If an immigrant did not easily meet these criteria, they were subject to additional processing or barred from entering the country. These racial and ability standards, along with quotas for how many immigrants from specific countries were allowed each month or year, were implemented for eugenic and economic purposes in an effort to design a national identity by excluding non-white races and disabled peoples. As a result, immigration processing meant that the immigrant must satisfy all of the requirements in order to be allowed into the country or risk being denied entry.

This section extends Dolmage's work by applying his theory of the snapshot decision to the parts and process of applying to U.S. universities as an international applicant. I will explain how the application process is the university's mythmaking method of inscribing a specific university identity onto international applicants. The application measures college readiness not only by GPA, transcripts, and college readiness exam scores like the SAT or ACT, but also by proof of English proficiency and financial security. At the same time, accepted international students must also apply for a student visa, which demands proof of intent and its own evidence of financial security and English proficiency. These additional qualifications effectively cull the field of international applicants so that universities are always able to admit the top applicants who meet all of these requirements. The students who meet the GPA, course load, standardized test scores, and extracurricular expectations along with financial security, English proficiency, and satisfactory proof of intention requirements comprise the international student myth. They are the sufficiently fungible students who possess the necessary qualities and abilities to represent the university identity.

The additional requirements put on international students reflect the same racist, ableist, and classist ideology that informed immigration processing in the early to mid-twentieth century. The standards are invasive, extensive, and arbitrary in measuring college readiness, demanding to know more about each international student than is required for domestic applicants. Although applying to a university is not exactly the same process as immigrating, international students must meet all of these requirements to be considered for admission, and if they cannot meet these requirements, they will not be eligible to study at U.S. universities.

4.1 Proof of Financial Security or Need

The construction of international students as fungible commodities, “cash” (Stein and de Andreotti), or “assets that serve larger organization goals” (Ford and Cate 1209) begins during the application process, in which international applicants must submit proof of financial security or need. This requirement echoes immigration rhetoric from a century ago (that is still used today) and is invasive and predatory, as it is a step to guarantee that an incoming international student is a net positive for the university. For comparison, universities often request domestic students submit a FAFSA to determine how much of their tuition and fees they will pay on their own and with their family’s support. The FAFSA is also used to determine what financial aid domestic students are eligible for, including federal grants and loans, and university scholarships and work-study grants. However, the FAFSA is separate from the domestic student’s application and often optional. In contrast, most universities require international applicants to submit proof of funding as part of their application, and in many cases this information is used to

determine an admissions decision, known as need-aware admissions. To be need-aware means admissions departments use the additional factor of financial security as a rhetorical screen to partition fungible applicants from their less secure peers. This process is fraught with inequity and difficult-to-find or misleading information, as we see when looking at the websites of NYU, Columbia, Northeastern, and UPenn.

NYU, Northeastern, and Columbia claim to meet the demonstrated financial needs of their students, but this is because they use proof of financial security or need to determine an admissions decision. This caveat is either buried in lists or links, as on the NYU and Northeastern websites, or it is presented in immediate juxtaposition to guaranteed support, as is the case with Columbia. NYU discloses their need-aware process within a list of jumbled advice on their “How to Apply” section, stating, “International students applying primarily to New York and seeking financial aid should be aware that your indicated financial need will be factored into an admissions decision.” This information is located in the general admissions webpage that addresses the concerns of many types of applicants and is not found on the prospective international students or international applicants pages. On Northeastern’s international applicants page, under their “Declaration and Certification of Finances” tab, there is a link at the end of this section to an FAQ document that directly answers the question “Is Northeastern need-blind or need-aware?” Their answer: “Undergraduate admission to Northeastern is need-aware for all international students, which means your financial need and your ability to cover Northeastern’s educational costs ... will be considered by the Admissions Committee when your application is being evaluated” (“Declaration and Certification of Finances FAQs”). Although this information can be found on their websites, it is

obscured. Hiding their need-aware status can lead students who would not be able to afford financing their own education to invest money in applying, revealing how the university prioritizes their “inclusive” image and the international student’s fungibility over their wellbeing.

Columbia is only marginally better at disclosing their need-aware status, although they make the confusing claim of meeting “100% of all admitted first-year students’ demonstrated financial need for all four years, regardless of citizenship” (“International Student Financial Aid”). This claim is confusing because after it they further explain,

Columbia’s admissions application process is largely the same for all students regardless of their citizenship or country of residence....For admissions and financial aid purposes, students who are not citizens or permanent residents of the United States and who do not have refugee visas are considered international and their applications are evaluated in a need-aware manner. This means that the admissions committee takes into consideration how much financial aid a student requires when rendering an admissions decision. (“International Student Financial Aid”)

Columbia’s initial claims of meeting 100% of need and evaluating all students in the same manner is contradicted by the fact that their need-aware status only applies to international students. Moreover, applicants to Columbia must declare their financial need when they submit their application; they will not be able to do so at any other point during their degree, should they be accepted (“International Student Financial Aid”). Proof of financial security or need, as it is rigidly constructed at these need-aware institutions, filters international applicants so that only those who bring in the most money, or those the university is willing to invest in, make the cut.

To further explain how proof of financial security works at a need-aware institution, I will walk us through UPenn’s website and how it dictates the process and outcomes of providing proof. UPenn’s Student Registration and Financial Services does

not identify itself as a need-aware university, but it does specify that international applicants must declare financial need when they apply for admission. If they are admitted, the international student is not allowed to apply for financial aid at any future point during their degree. Therefore, if an international applicant believes they may need financial aid during their course of study, they have this single instance to declare their need; otherwise, the burden of payment falls entirely on the student, their family, or a sponsoring organization. This window to declare need is exceedingly narrow and has the potential to trap international students in a degree they cannot afford partway through. Keep in mind too that international students are not eligible for federal or state assistance—in fact, if they receive government assistance they are liable to be deported because they become a public charge.¹ International students should take advantage of this opportunity, then, since it is the only chance they'll get to declare need for the duration of their program.

When a UPenn applicant begins the process of declaring financial need, they are met with an invasive form that demands to know the applicant's and their entire family's recent financial history. The form, titled "Application for Financial Aid: International Citizens," requests the amount that any person or organization will contribute to the student's education for the four years they will presumably be enrolled. If the applicant's parents are divorced, the form needs to know how long they've been divorced and if they remarried. It requests information about income, assets, benefits, and the family's

¹ The term public charge has been used in immigration rhetoric since the early twentieth century. Labeling an immigrant "liable to become a public charge" (LPC) justifies excluding immigrants who might rely on government assistance. This language is still used to deny entry to immigrants, and it is why international students are not eligible for federal financial aid, food stamps, or unemployment. NYU and Harvard explain public charge rhetoric on their information for international students pages, but it is not widely found across university websites.

monthly/annual expense budget. The budget form inquires about the family's cost of rent or mortgage, utilities, insurance, food, vacations, debts, and savings, among other expenses. After filling out this form, the international applicant will be notified about their eligibility to receive financial aid. UPenn boasts on their international student financial aid page that they meet 100% of their international students' financial needs, a claim that is sure to boost their attraction to international applicants; however, under the "Student Registration and Financial Services FAQ" page and the "Financial Aid for International Students" page, the university states they reserve the right to deny admission to international students they decide they cannot fund. Like Columbia, UPenn can claim they meet 100% of demonstrated need because they control the number of financially insecure international students who are offered admission.

MIT and Rutgers' do not directly tie financial security to an admissions decision, but the information they provide regarding funding shows how inescapable these expectations are, even outside of need-aware universities. Universities must have proof of financial documentation before issuing an I-20, which is a form that international students need to register with SEVIS (a database run by ICE) and begin the visa application process. So even if the university does not tie their admissions decisions to the student's financial security, they must prove financial security before they can enroll in the university and receive a visa. MIT describes the four sources from which students can declare financial support: themselves, their family members, a banking institution, or a company or organization. Each type of source requires verification of funds and a declaration of the funding amount. In the case of family funding, the individuals responsible for providing funding must also submit a letter declaring their support that

confirms their relationship to the student and the duration and amount of their support (“Financial Documentation Requirements”). Rutgers conveys this same information by making their International Student Financial Statement form publicly available. The only difference between the two universities is the amount of funding the student must declare, which is determined by the cost of attendance for each institution.

Of these schools, Harvard is the only one to render proof of financial security obsolete by offering financial aid to international students using a need-blind admissions procedure and making need-based rather than merit-based financial aid the norm for both international and domestic students. The Harvard College Griffin Financial Aid Office website states that international students receive the same funding as domestic students, but this is slightly misleading because international students cannot receive state or federal funding, which are resources available to domestic students and fall outside of the university’s control. This contradiction is acknowledged at least once on the website, and despite this slight hyperbole, the university’s intention is to offer equal funding opportunities to students regardless of their residency status. Harvard describes their financial aid disbursement as “revolutionary” (“How Aid Works”) and “groundbreaking” (“Financial Aid”), and it certainly nullifies the proof of financial security in the admissions process and, by extension, one key aspect of the fungibility narrative.

For each of these universities except Harvard, the international student must provide some level of proof that they can pay to attend the university, creating a classist standard against which international applicants are judged. This is a requirement that comes in part from ICE, again echoing back to immigration rhetoric that any immigrant should be a net positive to the country. However, the ways in which the universities

express this legal requirement and offer their financial support to international students differ, revealing the degree to which each university weighs the importance of financial proof when evaluating international applicants. For universities like UPenn, NYU, Northeastern, and Columbia, financial security is an intrinsic part of the application. Other universities require this documentation after admission. In either case, proof of financial security is almost always a key aspect of the fungibility myth that establishes the international student identity by denying the same opportunity to low socioeconomic applicants.

4.2 Proof of English Proficiency

The myth of international students as a fungible commodity is further reified through the construction of English proficiency as an additional rhetorical screen through which they must pass. It is another instance in which a university identity is created through exclusion, as we witnessed through the proof of financial security or need in the previous section. To analyze the English proficiency requirements put upon international applicants, I will use the theory of making race as Lisa Flores defines it in *Deportable and Disposable* when discussing the racialization of Mexican immigrants in America in the 1920s and 1930s. According to Flores, the making of race “is a paradoxical and continuous project compelled by the cultural, material, and legal needs of political cultures and the ontological insecurities of race” (31). It is a rhetorical process of creating an Other through “vulnerable ontology” (30), by ascribing physicalities to races and nations of people undesired by the United States, a preference that changes throughout history. The rhetorical and material outcome of the making of race is the ability to

exclude because of these shifting traits. English proficiency is another area in which vulnerable ontologies surface. In the same way undesirable traits can shift to reflect national identity concerns, definitions and measures of English proficiency are not firm; the language used to define English proficiency changes between universities and relies on the vulnerable history of Standard Written English in higher education.

Submitting proof of English proficiency for international applicants comes from the global imaginary, which is controlled by the Global North. The global imaginary provides “both a descriptive and normative framework for what things are and what they should be” (Stein and de Andreotti 228). The prevalence of Standard Written English specifically as *the* standard exists only because it is what is used by the elite Global North, who dictates these norms. Its use in American universities perpetuates “a narrow way of thinking (epistemology) and being (ontology) ... as universal,” (228) giving the university the imaginary power to insist on proving this proficiency in specific ways. Other language proficiencies and other measures of English language proficiencies are not widely considered because the United States and its universities historically deem such alternatives as “inferior, and less developed,” revealing the vulnerability and limitations of the homogenous Standard Written English-speaking experience and the fallout this has on international students (Stein and de Andreotti 228). American universities’ monolingual approach to proficiency perpetuates SWE, a traditionally gatekeeping dialect of English ill-equipped to comprehend and make room multilingual cultures or even other dialects of English. Requiring proof of English proficiency further refines the fungible international applicant group because it seeks to enroll only

international students who can perform language proficiency according to their narrow definition.

Proof of English language proficiency is justified by describing the linguistic culture of American academia as a fast-paced and rigorous environment in which a command of English is crucial to success. The following descriptions precede the details of submitting English proficiency test scores as part of the application:

- UPenn: “A strong command of the English language is necessary for successful study at Penn” (“International Application Guidelines”).
- NYU: “All NYU students must have a strong command of the English language to be successful in a fast-paced, rigorous academic environment” (“English Language Testing”).
- Harvard: “A strong knowledge of English is essential for successful study at Harvard, including the ability to understand and express thoughts quickly and clearly.” (“Applying from Abroad: Frequently Asked Questions”).
- Columbia: “To be considered for admission to Columbia, you must be comfortable with rapid and idiomatic spoken English” (“International Student Admission”).
- Northeastern: “Northeastern students will be exposed to not only a rigorous academic environment but also a fast-paced experiential one” (“Information for International Applicants”).

Not only must students know English, but the university also claims they must meet a threshold of rapidity that reflects proficiency. The current framing of English proficiency associates proficiency and speed with success, which strongly implies that students who might process language slowly—whether because it is a second language or because they have a disability—are not likely to succeed and therefore liable to be excluded. There is no reason for this expectation to exist, as it cannot be measured empirically by the existing English proficiency exams, so I am left to believe that this construction of English proficiency inflates the importance of speed and proficiency to further distinguish their most fungible applicants.

Universities recognize that requesting proof of English proficiency will be redundant for some of their international applicants, so they list reasons for which applicants may be exempt from submitting English proficiency exam scores. These reasons include:

- Native or home language is English (NYU, UPenn, Columbia)
- Three or more years of secondary education was completed in English only (NYU, UPenn, Columbia)
- “700 or higher on the Evidence Based Reading and Writing section of the redesigned SAT (beginning in March 2016)” (Columbia)
- “29 or higher on the English or Reading sections of the ACT” (Columbia)
- 4 or 5 on AP English exam or equivalent exam (Northeastern)
- B or better grade in college-level English composition course from a US college (Rutgers)

These are the minimum reasons why a student might be exempt from submitting English proficiency scores. Some universities expect the student’s entire secondary education be completed in English (UPenn), while others require a combination of these reasons before they grant a waiver (Northeastern). While the reasons for requiring proof of English proficiency is widely agreed upon, what qualifies students as exempt is inconsistent from university to university. The fact that exemptions can be made for a variety of reasons makes us reconsider how universities measure proficiency, as some weigh three years of secondary education in English as equal to a language proficiency exam (NYU) while others insist on these years *and* the equivalent of a 4 or 5 on an AP English exam and refuse to consider one’s native language as sufficient for exemption (Northeastern). Such variation in how exemptions are determined reveals the ontological vulnerability of what it means to be proficient in English, casting doubt on the rapid-fire high-stakes English-speaking myth that these universities use to preclude their English proficiency exam information. Moreover, we must also be cognizant of the fact that

Harvard and MIT do not require English proficiency exam scores, rendering the need for exemptions moot. Between the cracks in this myth, we see that there is room to engage students who do not fulfill this arbitrary expectation, including multilingual students and students with disabilities. However, while these requirements remain, the field of international applicants must contend with the arbitrary expectations of the ontologically insecure English-speaking university.

The use of the term “native language” when discussing English proficiency exams and exemptions reflects the monolingual SWE history of the American university and limits the ways language acquisition and proficiency can be understood. Native language is meant to refer to the first language that a person comprehends; however, many people from polylingual cultures first learn multiple languages at once, making the designation of a single “native language” impossible. Many applicants—international and domestic alike—come from polylingual cultures, so the notion of a single native or primary language does not apply to these applicants because they learned English and another language (or languages) at the same time, speaking both (or all) with equal skill and negating the hierarchy associated with “native language.” For example, there are over 1,500 languages spoken in India, and more than 47 languages of instruction in Indian schools (Trines). Students often learn English alongside one or more of these languages at home and throughout the course of their education (Trines). As students continue onto upper-secondary education, their internal school exams and external board exams are only given in English (Trines). India’s education system has incorporated multiple languages to the benefit of their student populations, which shows that the historically monolingual term “native language” is not necessarily a useful term in this context.

However, the use of this term once again points to how universities aim to write their narrative onto international students in attempts to make them homogenous, exchangeable assets.

For the purpose of this thesis, I will not be expounding on the TOEFL and other English proficiency exams because such work lies beyond the language around the university application itself. I will, however, mention that universities are able to set minimum test scores, which are published on their websites and which fields applicants to accept only those who tested best. I will also say that the TOEFL is a screening tool that measures both SWE proficiency and indirectly assesses whether students can afford the extra costs associated with these tests, an additional way to prove financial security. The TOEFL is helpful to universities in that it maintains SWE as the norm, meaning the average American university does not have to accommodate multiple Englishes or multiple languages. English is the primary language of instruction in most classes in American universities—this is the assumed reason why language proficiency tests are required. However, this is also another way in which universities can continue to shirk responsibility for providing additional resources to the diverse students they claim to want or to innovate their teaching methods to be inclusive of multiple Englishes.² Rather than finding a more equitable measure of language proficiency or absorbing the cost of providing more resources to multilingual students, universities take the route of forcing students to prove how much they want to be their student by studying and paying additional fees to take the test and send their scores.

² There is growing research in composition studies about decentering English and decolonizing language use in higher education. See Asao Inuoue's work on antiracist writing pedagogy and Vershawn Ashanti Young's work on code-meshing.

The use of this rhetorical screen shows how increasingly fraught the image of the international student is within American universities—while they are valued for the diversity they bring, they are expected to conform to a narrow definition of English-speaking ability, which we may interpret as a homogenizing effort to make international students more like American SWE-speaking students. This terminology reflects the monolingual culture of American universities and an inability to recognize, account for, or respect the full language abilities of multilingual students. In contrast, MIT and Harvard no longer require English language proficiency scores as part of their applications. Both universities explain that a command of English will be necessary for their coursework, and MIT urges students with limited experience in speaking English to submit scores, but it is not part of their admissions decision (“International Applicants”). Dropping the English proficiency requirement means English proficiency is no longer subject to direct assessment in the application process, but there are ways for the university to measure English proficiency indirectly, through interviews and essays. These methods would untangle the many international student narratives that become lumped together under TOEFL scores, making room for alternative narratives to exist.

4.3 Proof of Intention

We have discussed how proof of financial security and proof of English proficiency construct a specific type of international student that is likely to benefit the university. The university application also requires proof of intention, a university and federal requirement in which international students must present a specific plan evaluated by the federal government, a clear plot through which their international student characterization

must follow. This requirement comes in part from federal law that dictates for which visas immigrants and nonimmigrants are eligible depending on their intent. For the purpose of this thesis, we will be discussing F-1 visas, which are the most commonly granted visas for international students who have been accepted to four-year universities. Proof of intention is evidenced in part by an acceptance letter from the university and is evaluated by a visa application and interview, conducted by immigration officers at a US embassy or consulate.

We won't be analyzing the rhetoric of the F-1 visa except in how it overlaps with university enrollment and the trajectory of the international student myth. The process of proving intention starts upon admission into a U.S. university. Before admitted students can apply for an F-1 visa, they must pay an enrollment deposit, then their university will grant them an I-20 form that they use to register with the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) and pay the accompanying \$350 fee ("I-901 SEVIS fee"). After registering with SEVIS, they can apply for an F-1 visa, which also comes with an application fee of \$160 ("Student Visa"). At this point, there is no guarantee that the student will receive a visa— this is decided after an interview, in which students meet with an immigration officer and declare, as recommended by the Department of Homeland Security, "[their] academic preparation," "[their] intent to depart the United States upon completion of your program of study" and "[their] financial ability to pay educational, living and travel costs" ("Students: Prepare for Your Visa Interview"). They must also present financial statements and sponsorship letters and respond to interview questions in English. This advice is echoed by universities. These are the same screening methods international students face in the university application, the parallels of which

again cast doubt on whether the university application really measures college readiness or adherence to a state-sanctioned myth. The myth that shapes the international student application is rendered apparent in the visa application, specifically the visa interview, in which students are expected to recite this myth. While there may be students whose plan is this narrative, the fact that these intentions are expected to be stated during a visa interview implies some level of coercion from the host university and the US because if students do not recite this narrative to the satisfaction of their immigration officer, they may be denied their visa.

Part of proving intent in the application process includes committing to the student-only narrative bound to the F-1 visa, meaning international students are limited in what they can do during the course of their degree and how they complete their degree. There are many restrictions for F-1 visa holders that force them into a student-only role. Harvard International Office (HIO) explains that “International students must maintain a full course of study and make regular progress towards their degree” (“Your Immigration Responsibilities”). If international students need a reduced load, they need authorization from the HIO, and this authorization is given only under certain circumstances. These circumstances must be documented, and personal reasons do not make you eligible to remain in the US. This requirement reflects the rigidity of the international student narrative— students must fully commit to their role; they do not have the opportunity to enroll part-time, as domestic students do.

During the semester, the F-1 visa also prohibits international students from working more than 20 hours per week (part-time), and they must be employed by their host university or in a position directly related to their program or major. The terms of the

visa as they currently exist, such as limiting work opportunities, work to the benefit of universities and local economies. To ensure universities and local economies continue to be net-positive based on international student contribution, international students are limited in their employment options and how much they can work while studying in the United States. Limiting how much international students can work also reproduces the misconception that immigrants, whether temporary or permanent, “take jobs” from American citizens. During times of economic recession, the United States has historically deported immigrants and the children of immigrants under the guise that it will stimulate the economy by redistributing jobs to “Americans.” This was the case during the Great Depression, when the United States deported Mexicans and removed Mexican Americans in an effort to boost the economy. Removing these populations does not boost the economy, but it remains a common tactic still used to manipulate immigration patterns.

One key reason why international students are restricted in what they can do and why they must continuously prove their financial security before and during their degree is to ensure they do not become a public charge. The term “public charge” is a common label used throughout the history of immigration rhetoric in the United States. The use of the term dates back to the waves of immigrants coming to the US through Ellis Island around the turn of the twentieth century. Immigration officers, employing their snapshot decisions, would label immigrants who supposedly displayed physical or mental deficiencies/disabilities or appeared poor as LPCs, or “liable to become a public charge” (Dolmage), meaning they might rely on government assistance. Of the seven schools I researched, NYU and Harvard were the only universities to advise international students on matters of government assistance. NYU advises that international students should

“avoid receiving government funding or benefits that might make [them] seem to be what is known as a ‘public charge’” (“International Student Checklist”). This means that international students are not allowed to apply for or accept government assistance, such as SNAP (food stamps) or unemployment, again reinforcing the historical pattern of the United States requiring immigrants be a net-positive for the United States economy in order to maintain their visa status.

The rhetorical function of the application works similarly to that of the photographs taken of immigrants at Ellis Island. Vicki Goldberg and Robert Silberman show that these photographs were taken to make “images of foreign peoples as ‘documents’” (31). The photographs serve to catalogue and record immigrants, “to sort out and to exclude undesirable aliens” (Dolmage 94). Universities and their applications work in the same way. By ascribing these desirable attributes to international applicants, universities create the myth of the ideal international student. The applications become means of cataloguing, of making real, this vulnerable ontology. These additional requirements presume to establish a baseline against which to judge international applicants; however, the methods most universities employ to justify this baseline are not sound. The additional requirements overwhelmingly measure financial security rather than college readiness, illustrating the primary motivation for this myth. The application is a rhetorical device employed by universities that reifies the status of international students as fungible and also reflects the tedium of the process—the common immigration pitfall that necessitates getting all parts of this rigorous and tenuous process “right” or risk being rejected.

5. University as Sponsor

We have traced how universities create the myth of the fungible international student through their recruiting methods and the additional requirements they put upon international applicants. Now, we will look at the rhetorical position of university as sponsor, a relationship between university and international student that reifies the international student narrative that was extended to the international student upon offer of admission. Sponsorship is a common relationship in immigration rhetoric that describes a person or institution of authority vetting the immigrant, or in this case, the international student. In the same way prestige is a rhetorical tool that works by its degree of ethos, sponsorship is a relationship that extends ethos from the host institution or sponsor to the sponsored party. For example, when international students are proving their intent during their visa interview, the university's acceptance letter functions as the first instance in which the university acts as sponsor because they are claiming the student as theirs to the interviewer. Once the student is officially enrolled, they will remain in this sponsorship for as long as they are a student at that university. The rhetorical position of sponsor is best represented in recent events by the universities' response to the July 6th ICE directive. The directive caused most universities to issue public statements defending and/or supporting international students and culminated in the Harvard-MIT lawsuit brought against ICE on behalf of international students, which was co-signed by more than 200 universities. These public-facing documents reify the university's international student narrative by publicly defining this group and their function in the university system.

In March 2020, when the United States announced a national state of emergency because of COVID-19, ICE issued a list of temporary exemptions for international students studying in the United States. Normally, international students on an F-1 nonimmigrant student visa would only be allowed to take one class or three credits online per semester (“SEVP’s governing regulations”). ICE, recognizing that much of higher education would have to move online to mitigate the spread of the virus, rolled back this restriction so that international students could finish their semester with their credits honored and without fear of deportation. These exemptions were issued March 9th with the provision that they would remain in effect for the duration of the emergency. As the spring semester ended and universities planned for fall semester with the COVID-19-induced state of emergency still in place, they made decisions about face-to-face, hybrid, and online classes based on the March 9th directive. Many schools began announcing their plans in early July. Harvard, along with several other universities that have large international student populations, announced that all of their classes for the 2020-2021 academic year would be online. Then, on July 6th, ICE rolled back the temporary exemptions regarding online classes, meaning international students would not be allowed to take more than one course or three credit hours online. Regardless of their university’s temporary operating status, international students were expected to be enrolled in majority face-to-face or hybrid classes.

In addition to constructing the international student myth through recruiting and application processes, the rhetorical position of sponsor publicly reifies the international student myth of fungibility by evoking a history of US immigration rhetoric. International students have historically been constructed as “desired” immigrants, meaning they have a

demonstrated ability to learn or work, thus benefiting the US economy. The categorical definition of “desired” immigrants and their “undesired” counterparts have been used to qualify racism, classism, and xenophobia as rhetorical strategies of national exclusion, which makes it possible to draw boundaries along these constructs in addition to perceived character. The July 6th ICE directive reflects the increasingly blatant xenophobic rhetoric spurred by the outbreak of COVID-19 in the United States. In contrast, Harvard and MIT, as rhetorical sponsors and agents of social movement, prescribe a conservative narrative to the international student that manifests desired immigrant qualities and links them to the health of a thriving university community. The splitting of the rhetorical figure of the international student along the border of desired and undesired casts the figure into categorical chaos in which they are simultaneously fungible and irreplaceable. They are left in a categorical limbo while the federal agencies that monitor them and the universities that sponsor them debate what it means to be an international student and why and how they matter in the networks and economies of higher education in the United States. The universities’ responses to the July 6th ICE directive construct a rhetorical figure of the international student to serve their purposes— the conversation appears to be less about the students’ insecure status and more about how the category of “international student” can be used toward their own rhetorical ends.

5.1 Public Statements

A key iteration of university as sponsor in the recent history of US immigration rhetoric, these statements are a public commitment to international students by the university.

Each public statement issued by the universities I analyze reassures international students, the university community, and the public that the university is doing what it can to protect international students during a global pandemic and that they staunchly oppose the perceived anti-immigration rhetoric that precipitated the July 6th directive. The universities announced they will push back against the directive while also providing accommodations based on the directive in the meantime. These universities unanimously accept their role as sponsor, defending their international student populations during a pandemic; however, in articulating this support, many of these universities recall a positive history of immigration and international student enrollment in the United States, which we know is just one very narrow and privileged narrative of immigration. This narrative also disproportionately highlights the function of international students, how important they are to university operations and goals, underscoring the insidious valuation of international students for how their diverse life experiences positively impact the university, rather than as individuals worthy of education and self-fulfillment.

While statements from Rutgers and Northeastern only contained practical information—they stated they would make accommodations for international students and work to repeal this directive—statements from UPenn, Harvard, NYU, and Columbia configure the international student as a fungible commodity, important for what they bring to the university. For example, in the same sentence in which Harvard President Larry Bacow claims international students as part of the university, he also frames how integral they are to the learning of the entire university community: “These students are our students, and they enrich the learning environment for all.” UPenn President Amy Gutmann also frames international students as integral, calling them “treasured members

of our community who contribute to the diversity, vibrancy and intellectual excellence of Penn in countless important ways.” NYU President Andrew Hamilton attempts to contextualize the role of the international student in American universities when he states, “International students—who number some 1.1 million—have long been an integral part of US campuses. They contribute to the vibrancy of university education in the US, learn about US values, and bring diverse skills and knowledge to our communities.” Not only does Hamilton explain how important international students are, but he also manages to slip in how the university benefits international students by being a space to “learn about US values.” This phrase echoes American universities’ initial internationalization efforts in which they recruited international students in the name of charity to further American values globally (O’Mara). It also aligns with the current appeal of the “American experience” that makes international graduates more competitive in a global economy (Garcia and de Lourdes Villarreal). While each of these universities justifies protecting international students because of how useful they are, NYU President Hamilton evokes the even more complicated history of international student programs as the backdrop for globalization efforts, which is yet another difficult role international students are expected to embody.

Neither the valuation of international students nor the inflation of the importance of the university’s American experience serve to benefit the international student directly. These positive remarks about the benefits of international students are meant to be received by a public audience, one that may question the purpose of international students in the United States during a pandemic that drives many countries to shuttering borders. Columbia President Lee Bollinger articulates these stratified contexts in the statement,

“We must continue to vigorously oppose immigration policies that damage Columbia, higher education, the national interest, and the international students, researchers, and faculty who immeasurably enrich our institution and the intellectual and personal experiences of each of us.” UPenn President Amy Gutmann also speaks to these stratified contexts, denouncing the July 6th directive as “having a devastating effect on our international colleagues and students, while also having a deleterious impact on America’s historical role as a welcoming place to all.” The image of “a welcoming place to all,” whether attached to the United States or American universities, rings hollow after this directive and after analyzing the multiple ways certain demographics of international applicants are excluded. This statement subscribes to a version of American history that does not acknowledge how historically anti-immigrant the United States has been and continues to be. International students, who are subject to immigration law, have not always been welcome in the United States, as was the case after 9/11, when international student enrollment dropped significantly. Perhaps it is more apt to claim that American universities have been historically welcoming, but even then, it is worth noting again that UPenn reserves the right to deny admission to poor international students who cannot guarantee their own funding. These statements rely on a sanitized version of the relationship between the United States/immigrants and the university/international students that is heartening and pleasing to read, but it’s not an accurate depiction. This is the university’s narrative at work, rounding out the rough corners of the relationship so that they may position themselves as the well-meaning sponsors in opposition to ICE. Rather than wrestling with their own problematic positioning of the international student, the university has placed themselves as diametrically opposed to ICE, wherein actuality

they similarly inhibit international students from fully participating in the university as unique individuals with their own motivations, fears, and goals. In these statements, international students are a valuable asset to the university—one that they cannot go without. What was meant to come across as a compliment to international students perpetuates this limited narrative.

MIT's statement publicly denounces the July 6th directive and articulates a plan of action in much the same way as the other universities. However, what differs in their statement is the moment where MIT President L. Rafael Reif addresses international students directly. While it seems like much of this statement was written for a general audience, President Reif shifts the direction of his words for just a moment: "Our international students now have many questions – about their visas, their health, their families and their ability to continue working toward an MIT degree. Unspoken, but unmistakable, is one more question: Am I welcome? At MIT, the answer, unequivocally, is yes." Whereas publicly defending the image of the international student continues the fungible myth of the international student, using the university's public statement to speak directly to international students humanizes them, acknowledges the individuality of each student rather than their collective rhetorical force for furthering university goals. President Reif publicly addresses those who are most affected by this directive while most other universities only deign to talk about them.

5.2 Harvard-MIT Lawsuit

Immediately after these public statements, Harvard and MIT led a lawsuit against ICE in response to the July 6th directive. Joined by Rutgers, NYU, UPenn, Northeastern, and

Columbia, these and 200 more universities across the country publicly situated themselves not only as sponsors, but also as what O'Mara calls parastates. O'Mara describes the history of universities as parastates as a result of the Cold War, during which time American universities were re-envisioned as hubs of international social interactions that reflected peacekeeping and advancement goals (590), or what CITE calls charity. Additionally, universities began receiving large amounts of funding to further globalization and research efforts, which, combined with their authority on “cross-cultural understanding” (590), gave them the power to influence and even make policies about international students and foreign exchange programs. Although the dynamic between state and parastate has changed more recently with the evolution of ICE, “the university remains a formidable authority on the rhetoric of international students as both a recipient of and an antecedent of” immigration policy (Streitwieser 419).

Harvard and MIT have the historic, economic, and popular authority to influence immigration policy as it affects international students, so they are subsequently poised to challenge ICE's July 6th directive. Similar to actors in social movement theory, the university-as-sponsor assumes rhetorical agency in order to bring awareness to and express support for the student (Streitweiser 410, Lazcano-Pry 137). On the surface, the lawsuit seems to be the ultimate sponsor move—they defend the character of their international students publicly and legally in three claims against ICE: “the July 6 directive is arbitrary and capricious because it fails to consider important aspects of the problem before the agency,” “it fails to offer any reasoned basis that could justify the policy,” and it “violates the APA's requirement of notice-and-comment rulemaking.” These are clear and defensible claims; however, in the process of defending them,

Harvard and MIT rely on a configuration of the international student as a fungible commodity. They speak to the very real problems and emotions that international students faced as a result of the July 6th directive, but the lasting argument these universities make is that the human capital that international students bring to their universities is too valuable to lose. Given how the universities oppose ICE, it's surprising that they similarly manipulate the role of the international student as they defend their international students.

Whereas much of immigration rhetoric, including the July 6th ICE directive, hinges on exclusion, the universities reframe international students by emphasizing the “student” part of this categorization and deemphasizing their international status. The Harvard-MIT lawsuit norms the international student by explaining how they are subject to the same problems domestic students face. Their relative power as a sponsor allows them to make such claims, founded in ethos and pathos, by citing the real-world problems that international students will face if this directive is not rescinded. They appeal to common hardships, like the difficulty of breaking a lease or paying a large term bill, in addition to the conditional experience of living cautiously during the pandemic. The universities contend international students are subject to the same leases and term bills; they are vulnerable to the same virus; they are experiencing the same changes domestic students are facing due to COVID-19. To reconstruct the international student as outside of these experiences others the student, making it easier for ICE to recategorize them as undesired. In contrast, the universities co-signed on this lawsuit effectively assimilate their international students according to Ironside and Corrigan's rhetorical definition of assimilation as the “process by which minority groups suppress or discard facets of their

cultural identity...and absorb facets of the dominant culture” (Ironside and Corrigan 160). The universities force assimilation onto their international students by reframing international students as just students, or perhaps more aptly, domestic students, who face the same precarious future.

However, after they work to homogenize their student population, Harvard and MIT distinguish international students from domestic students in an effort to highlight the diversity these students bring to their classes. The universities claim that hindering international student participation “will impair the educational experience for all Harvard and MIT students” (18). This statement implies a distinction between international and domestic students in that international students are integral to the learning of domestic students, but not vice versa. The insight of international students is considered part of the curriculum at Harvard, as the lawsuit states, “many of Harvard’s curricular programs depend on the presence and diversity of international students” (19). Harvard offers the Kennedy School of Government as an example, which, they claim, “depends on the perspectives of international students, including mid-career public officials from around the world who bring unique viewpoints about different approaches to governance and policy” (19). This means international students are valued inasmuch as they present diverse perspectives from which domestic students can learn. They are not like other (domestic) students and are therefore irreplaceable—valued, but othered. Now, they are viewed as an exceptional part of the network that comprises a university campus, so “by threatening to force many F-1 students to withdraw from Harvard and MIT, [ICE has] put both schools to an impossible choice: lose numerous students who bring immense benefits to the school or take steps to retain those students through in-person classes”

(19). Having just gone to great lengths to norm the international student, Harvard and MIT undermine their argument by categorizing the international student as a unique asset.

According to Lazcano-Pry, “Because sponsors have access to public forums, they control the representation of those whom they sponsor in crucial ways” (138). The rhetorical position of sponsor requires that Harvard and MIT make use of existing immigration rhetoric to show the assimilative potential of international students as well as their exceptional utility, two characterizations that have followed immigrants in the United States for over a century. Harvard and MIT attempt to restore the rhetorical figure of the international student to its former desired immigrant characterization by fixing them to these characterizations. In doing so, international students are protected as they traditionally have been from discourses that would redefine them as undesired. However, the role of international student is a complex role to fill, requiring carefully distributed degrees of assimilation and diversity to maintain a teetering status quo, and it is a role that international students are bound to accept if they want to enroll in an American university.

6. Conclusion

Whether through recruiting methods, application requirements, or public sponsorship appeals, Harvard, MIT, NYU, Columbia, Northeastern, UPenn, and Rutgers shape a narrative of the international student and then seek out ways to write that narrative onto recruits, applicants, and students. From the moment international students engage with American universities, they are subject to the university-dictated myth of what it means

to be an international student. Universities force international applicants to meet additional expectations that are not reciprocally expected of their domestic counterparts in an effort to cull the field of international applicants so that they only accept those who best embody this myth, transforming them into fungible commodities that can easily be incorporated into their university schema. Upon admission, international students are further exploited by being bound to pay more to attend the university and by having their demographic information used to attract additional international students through recruiting efforts. When public issues arise regarding international students, such as the July 6th ICE directive, their universities speak on their behalf, drawing on the myth they have created to identify all international students as “diverse,” “integral,” “treasures” of the university “who benefit us all.”

This is an impossible myth for international students to embody. By putting this narrative onto international students, universities erase the very diversity they claim to value and in its place is a flat, homogenous story about how useful international populations are to American universities. For universities to ascribe measures of valuating international students according to number of countries represented, how much money they bring to the university, how their photograph would look on their website, and how their life experiences can teach domestic students, universities reduce the hundreds of thousands of international students studying in the United States to human capital.

International students are so much more than that.

Parts of this thesis have gestured to the deconstruction of the international student myth. Harvard and MIT’s abolishing of the English proficiency requirement creates space

for more students to be considered for admission who might have been excluded because of poor test-taking skills, not being able to pay for the test, or because they practice an English that is not accurately measured by such tests, a.k.a. students who are less fungible according to this myth. Additionally, while I was writing this thesis, the public charge provision that dictates international students must be totally financially independent and refuse US government support has been rescinded, meaning universities are no longer legally required to demand proof that students can fully finance their education. Harvard also provides a way around proof of financial security by using need-blind admission, a practice that should be adopted by more schools if they believe in equitable access to education and are dedicated to diversity in their student body. These various cracks in the façade show us that it is possible for universities to engage international students with more ethical rhetoric and rhetorical processes than is the current norm. That these universities all operate in different ways and with different standards suggests that these systems could operate differently. These rhetorical systems could be conscious of the construction of the international student as fungible commodities and actively divest from the valuating and othering that this current myth relies on.

For universities to meaningfully address their historic xenophobia, institutionalized racism, and colonizing practices, they must revisit their myth of the international student. International students are not diversity clout. They are not wide margins or badges of prestige. They are not cultural signifiers and they are not responsible for the cultural awareness of domestic students. They are individuals seeking education. Each and every international student has their own interests, their own passions, their own motivations, fears, and goals. The title “international student” is not

meant to be synonymous with fungible commodities. It is meant to denote the vast potential of the individual who has traveled across countries and invested thousands of dollars and years of their time to learn and to better themselves. This rhetorical analysis has revealed the ways in which university rhetoric continues to cast international students as fungible commodities and has gestured towards the cracks in this myth that can be explored for their rhetorical potential. Universities owe it to these students to take stock of their rhetorical practices, the negative affects it has on international students, and how it participates in the United States' historical anti-immigrant exclusionary nationalism in order to provide equitable access to education, regardless of nationality.

Works Cited

- “A Global Community.” *Columbia University*, undergrad.admissions.columbia.edu/learn/studentlife/diversity/global-community. Accessed 3 April 2021.
- “Application for Financial Aid: International Citizens.” *University of Pennsylvania Student Registration and Financial Services*, sdfs.upenn.edu/sites/default/files/publisher/International-Penn-Financial-Aid-Supplement-2021-2022.pdf. Accessed 8 Feb 2021.
- “Apply for Your Student Visa.” *New York University*, www.nyu.edu/students/student-information-and-resources/student-visa-and-immigration/newly-admitted/before-you-arrive/get-a-us-visa/apply-for-your-student-visa.html. Accessed 4 April 2021.
- “Applying for Your Visa.” *Harvard International Office*, hio.harvard.edu/applying-your-visa. Accessed 4 April 2021.
- “Applying from Abroad: Frequently Asked Questions.” *Harvard College*, college.harvard.edu/resources/faq. Accessed 2 April 2021.
- Bacow, Larry. “Supporting International Students.” *Harvard Office of the President*, www.harvard.edu/president/news/2020/supporting-international-students/. Accessed 25 April 2021.
- Beasley, Vanessa. “Presidential Rhetoric and Immigration: Balancing Tensions between Hope and Fear.” From the introduction of *Who Belongs in America?: Presidents, Rhetoric, and Immigration*, edited by Vanessa Beasley. Texas A&M University, 2006, pp. 3-18.
- Birn, Anne-Emanuelle. “Six Seconds per Eyelid: The Medical Inspection of Immigrants at Ellis Island, 1892-1914.” *Dynamis*, 17, 1997, pp. 281-316.
- Bollinger, Lee. “Response to Recently Announced ICE Restrictions.” *Columbia University Office of the President*, president.columbia.edu/news/response-recently-announced-ice-restrictions. Accessed 25 April 2021.
- Bound, John, et al. “A Passage to America: University Funding and International Students.” *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, vol. 12, no. 1, Feb. 2020, pp. 97–126, doi:10.1257/pol.20170620.
- Cantwell, Brian. “Are International Students Cash Cows? Examining the Relationship between New International Undergraduate Enrollments and Institutional Revenue at Public College and Universities in the US.” *Journal of International Students*, vol. 5, no. 4, 2015, pp. 512-525.
- Childers, Jay P. “Defining the Right Sort of Immigrant: Theodore Roosevelt and American Character.” *Hartelius*, pp. 183-203.

- “Declaration and Certification of Finances FAQs.” *Northeastern University*, www.northeastern.edu/admissions/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Northeastern-DCF-FAQ-2021.pdf. Accessed 23 April 2021.
- Dolmage, Jay Timothy. *Disabled Upon Arrival: Eugenics, Immigration, and the Construction of Race and Disability*. Ohio State University Press, 2018.
- “English Language Testing.” *New York University*, www.nyu.edu/admissions/undergraduate-admissions/how-to-apply/standardized-tests/english-language-testing.html. Accessed 2 April 2021.
- “Financial Aid.” *Harvard College Griffin Financial Aid Office*, college.harvard.edu/financial-aid. Accessed 1 April 2021.
- “Financial Documentation Requirements.” *MIT International Students Office*, <https://iso.mit.edu/getting-started/requesting-an-i-20-or-ds-2019/financial-documentation-requirements/>. Accessed 8 Feb 2021.
- Flores, Lisa. *Deportable and Disposable: Public Rhetoric and the Making of the “Illegal” Immigrant*. Pennsylvania State University Press, 2020.
- Ford, Karly S., and Leandra Cate. “The Discursive Construction of International Students in the USA: Prestige, Diversity, and Economic Gain.” *Higher Education*, vol. 80, no. 6, 2020, pp. 1195–211. *Springer*, doi:10.1007/s10734-020-00537-y.
- Garcia, Hugo and Maria de Lourdes Villarreal. “The Redirecting of International Students: American Higher Education Policy Hindrances and Implications.” *Journal of International Students*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2014, pp. 126-36.
- “General Statistics, 2018-2019.” *MIT International Students Office*, iso.mit.edu/about-iso/statistics/general-statistics-2018-2019/. Accessed 15 April 2021.
- Goldberg, Vicki, and Robert Silberman. *American Photography: A Century of Images*. Chronicle, 1999.
- Gutmann, Amy. “Statement of Support to International Students.” *Penn Today*, penntoday.upenn.edu/announcements/statement-support-international-students. Accessed 25 April 2021.
- Hamilton, Andrew. “Statement from NYU President Andrew Hamilton on New ICE Policy Regarding International Students.” *New York University*, www.nyu.edu/about/news-publications/news/2020/july/ICE_Guidance_International_Students_AHStatement.html. Accessed 25 April 2021.
- Hartelius, E. Johanna, editor. *The Rhetorics of US Immigration: Identity, Community, Otherness*. Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015.

- Heng, Tang T. "Understanding the Heterogeneity of International Students' Experiences: A Case Study of Chinese International Students in U.S. Universities." *Journal of Studies in International Education*, vol. 23, no. 5, Nov. 2019, pp. 607-23. SAGE Publications, doi:10.1177/1028315319829880.
- Holloway, Jonathan. "Rutgers Will Defend and Support Our International Students." *Rutgers University Office of the President*, www.rutgers.edu/president/rutgers-will-defend-and-support-our-international-students. Accessed 25 April 2021.
- "How Aid Works." *Harvard College Griffin Financial Aid Office*, college.harvard.edu/financial-aid/how-aid-works. Accessed 1 April 2021.
- "How to Apply." *New York University*, www.nyu.edu/admissions/undergraduate-admissions/how-to-apply.html. Accessed 2 April 2021.
- "I-901 SEVIS fee." *U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement*, www.ice.gov/sevis/i901. Accessed 4 April 2021.
- "Information for International Applicants." *Northeastern University*, www.northeastern.edu/admissions/application-information/international-student-admissions/. Accessed 4 April 2021.
- "International Applicants." *MIT Admissions*, <https://mitadmissions.org/apply/firstyear/international/>. Accessed 2 April 2021.
- "International Applicants." *New York University*, www.nyu.edu/admissions/undergraduate-admissions/how-to-apply/international-applicants.html. Accessed 1 April 2021.
- "International Application Guidelines." *University of Pennsylvania*, admissions.upenn.edu/admissions-and-financial-aid/apply-admission/transfer-admission/international-applicants-0. Accessed 2 April 2021.
- "International Student Admission." *Columbia University*, undergrad.admissions.columbia.edu/apply/international. Accessed 4 April 2021.
- "International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)." *Rutgers University*, global.rutgers.edu/international-scholars-students. Accessed 4 April 2021.
- "International Student Checklist." *New York University*, wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/getting-started/intl-student-guide. Accessed 8 February 2021.
- "International Student FAQ." *University of Pennsylvania Student Registration and Financial Services Office*, srfs.upenn.edu/financial-aid/international-faq. Accessed 8 Feb 2021.

- “International Student Financial Aid.” *Columbia University*, undergrad.admissions.columbia.edu/apply/intl_fa. Accessed 24 April 2021.
- “International Students.” *New York University*, <https://www.nyu.edu/admissions/high-school-programs/precollege/apply/international-students.html>. Accessed 8 Feb 2021.
- Ironside, Emily and Lisa M. Corrigan. “Constituting Enemies through Fear: The Rhetoric of Exclusionary Nationalism in the Control of ‘Un-American’ Immigrant Populations.” *Hartelius*, pp. 157-182.
- Lazcano-Pry, Yazmin. “Documenting Dreams: A Rhetorical Performance of Inclusive Citizenship and Collaborative Expertise.” *Hartelius*, pp. 133-154.
- “Legal Updates for Students and Scholars.” *Northeastern University*, executive-orders.northeastern.edu/. Accessed 27 April 2021.
- “Life at NYU.” *New York University*, www.nyu.edu/admissions/undergraduate-admissions/life-at-nyu.html. Accessed 8 February 2021.
- Martinez, Aja Y. *Counterstory: The Rhetoric and Writing of Critical Race Theory*. NCTE, 2020.
- Naidoo, Vik. “From Ivory Towers to International Business: Are Universities Export Ready in Their Recruitment of International Students?” *Journal of Studies in International Education*, vol. 14, no. 1, Mar. 2010, pp. 5-28. *SAGE Publications*, doi:10.1177/1028315308327953.
- “NYU Facts.” *New York University*, www.nyu.edu/admissions/undergraduate-admissions/nyu-facts.html. Accessed 4 April 2021.
- O’Mara, Margaret. “The Uses of the Foreign Student.” *Social Science History*, vol. 36, no. 4, 2012, pp. 583–615. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/23361144.
- “Open Doors 2020 Fast Facts.” *Open Doors*. opendoorsdata.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Open-Doors-2020-Fast-Facts.pdf. Accessed 2 April 2021.
- “Prepare for Penn.” *University of Pennsylvania International Student and Scholar Services*, global.upenn.edu/iss/prepare. Accessed 26 April 2021.
- “Prospective International Students: 2021-2022 Financial Aid Application Checklist.” *University of Pennsylvania Student Registration and Financial Services*, sfrs.upenn.edu/financial-aid/apply/prospective-UG-checklists/international. Accessed 8 Feb 2021.

- Reif, Rafael L. "MIT and Harvard File Suit Against New ICE Regulations." *MIT News*, news.mit.edu/2020/mit-and-harvard-file-suit-against-new-ice-regulations-0708. Accessed 25 April 2021.
- "SEVP modifies temporary exemptions for nonimmigrant students taking online courses during fall 2020 semester." *U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement*, 6 July 2020, www.ice.gov/news/releases/sevp-modifies-temporary-exemptions-nonimmigrant-students-taking-online-courses-during.
- "SEVP's governing regulations for students and schools: 8 CFR 214.2 (f) Academic and Language Students: Full Course of study 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6)(i)." *Student and Exchange Visitor Program, Immigration and Customs Enforcement*, 27 Jan 2020, <https://www.ice.gov/sevis/schools/reg#f>.
- Shih, Kevin. "Do International Students Crowd-Out or Cross-Subsidize Americans in Higher Education?" *Journal of Public Economics*, vol. 156, Dec. 2017, pp. 170–84. *Elsevier B.V.*, doi:10.1016/j.jpubeco.2017.10.003.
- "Statistics." *Harvard International Office*, <https://www.hio.harvard.edu/statistics>. Accessed 8 February 2021.
- Stein, Sharon, and Vanessa Oliveira de Andreotti. "Cash, Competition, or Charity: International Students and the Global Imaginary." *Higher Education*, vol. 72, no. 2, Aug 2016, pp. 225-239. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/24756979.
- Streitwieser, Bernhard, et al. "Comparing the Responses of US Higher Education Institutions to International and Undocumented Students in the Trump Era." *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 64, no. 3, Aug. 2020, pp. 404–27. *The University of Chicago Press*, doi:10.1086/709427.
- "Students: Prepare for Your Visa Interview." *Department of Homeland Security*, <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/2018/08/students-prepare-your-visa-interview>. Accessed 4 April 2021.
- "Student Visa." *U.S. Department of State*, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/student-visa.html>. Accessed 4 April 2021.
- Trines, Stefan. "Education in India." *World Education News and Reviews*, 13 Sept 2018, <https://wenr.wes.org/2018/09/education-in-india>.
- United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts. *President and Fellows of Harvard College; and Massachusetts Institute of Technology v. United States Department of Homeland Security; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; Chad F. Wolf, in his official capacity as Acting Secretary of the United States Department of Homeland Security; and Matthew Albence, in his official capacity as Acting Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement*. Harvard and MIT, 8 July 2020, <http://orgchart.mit.edu/sites/default/files/reports/20200708-Harvard-MIT-Complaint-Injunctive-Relief.pdf>.

“US Entry Visa.” *University of Pennsylvania International Student and Scholar Services*, <https://global.upenn.edu/issv/visa>. Accessed 4 April 2021.

Waters, J. L. “International Education Is Political! Exploring the Politics of International Student Mobilities.” *Journal of International Students*, vol. 8, no. 3, July 2018, pp. 1459–1478, doi:10.32674/jis.v8i3.66.

“Welcome to the Office of Global Services.” *Northeastern University Office of Global Services*, international.northeastern.edu/ogs/. Accessed 4 April 2021.

“Your Immigration Responsibilities.” *Harvard International Office*, hio.harvard.edu/student-immigration. Accessed 8 February 2021.