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## International Student Migration for Development: An Institutional Approach to the Norwegian Quota Scheme

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Scott Eric Basford entitled "International Student Migration for Development: An Institutional Approach to the Norwegian Quota Scheme." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Geography.

Françoise M. van Riemsdijk, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

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Accepted for the Council:

Carolyn R. Hodges

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(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

# **International Student Migration for Development: An Institutional Approach to the Norwegian Quota Scheme**

A Thesis Presented for the  
Master of Science  
Degree  
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Scott Eric Basford  
December 2014

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## ABSTRACT

This paper addresses a call to acknowledge the varied actors that are involved in international student migration (ISM). In particular, this paper takes an institutional approach to investigate international education as a form of development aid. Research on ISM often omits non-student actors, which contributes to an incomplete understanding of the process. I study the Norwegian Quota Scheme to explore broader mechanisms of ISM. I first situate the Quota Scheme within literature on the internationalization of higher education and international education as development aid. I then use 26 interviews with 31 stakeholders at multiple scales of involvement in the Quota Scheme to identify and probe the objectives of actors invested in the Quota Scheme. Finally, I discuss three findings. First, the diversity of stakeholder actions can influence student migration decisions in unforeseen ways. Second, disparate planning mechanisms, particularly at university and departmental scales, result in uneven opportunities for students. Third, development goals often conflict with personal ambitions as the lived experiences of students dramatically alter their habitus. Taken together, my findings provide a better understanding of the complexities of ISM. Perhaps most importantly, this paper articulates the power of institutions to shape the migration outcomes of international students, particularly through government agencies, universities, and educators.

## PREFACE

The Quota Scheme is a Norwegian scholarship initiative for students from developing countries. Almost immediately after learning of its existence, I became interested in the Quota Scheme as a relatively unique mode of international student migration. In part, I was drawn to its generosity: its core purpose is to contribute to the knowledge capacity of countries that have fewer resources to educate skilled workers. The scheme brings students from the world's poorer countries to Norway at no cost as they return after they graduate. Soon, however, it struck me that many international students—especially those from relatively disadvantaged countries—may not want to return home after experiencing the Norwegian lifestyle. Thoroughly intrigued by this possibility, I embarked on my thesis research intending to study the ethics of scholarship programs that require students to return to their country of origin.

With my thesis tentatively entitled “The Ethics of Conditional Entry: An Investigation of the Norwegian Quota Scheme,” I applied for and received funding for fieldwork research from the W.K. McClure Scholarship for the Study of World Affairs through the Center for International Education. Using the same title and research plan, my research was approved by the Institutional Review Board in April of 2013. Only a month later, I left for Norway intent on interviewing a variety of stakeholders involved with the Quota Scheme. Around the same time, a special edition of the journal *Population, Space, and Place (PSP)* was published that called for research to explore the various non-student actors that influence the international student migration process.

Inspired by this work I asked: How does the Quota Scheme fit within the broader framework of ISM? Relatedly, I ask two sub-questions:

- How do actors involved in the Quota Scheme influence student migration decisions?
- What is the relationship between the capacity development goals of the Quota Scheme and the personal development goals of its students?

During my fieldwork research in Norway, I conducted 26 interviews with 31 people, ranging from politicians (5), to government officials (5), university staff (4), faculty members (2), a student union representation, and international students (14).

Given the scope of my research and its relevance to the journal, I have selected *PSP* for this manuscript. *PSP* stipulates that “papers will not normally be longer than 8,000 words” including references while abstracts must be no longer than 250 words. Currently, my manuscript runs 7,607 words not counting the abstract, bibliography, title page, or table of contents. The total including bibliography runs 9,775 words. My abstract is 205 words. This thesis cites articles by two members of the *PSP* editorial board, Allan Findlay and Russell King, while engages with several papers from the 2013 special edition on international student migration.



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## SECTION I INTRODUCTION

International student migration (ISM) is one of the fastest growing yet least understood components of migration worldwide (King and Raghuram, 2013; Findlay 2011). While universities across the developed world are increasingly recruiting international students to supplement declining state budgets (Altbach, Reisberg, and Rumbley, 2010; Hazen and Alberts, 2013), Norway continues to offer foreign students free tuition (West, 2013; Myklebust, 2013). In addition, it operates four scholarship programs for third country nationals to help defray its high cost of living (Tronstad, Bore, and Britt, 2012)<sup>1</sup>. This paper examines the objectives of various stakeholders of Norway's Quota Scheme, a scholarship program for students from developing countries. In a recent special issue of *Population, Space and Place*, King and Raghuram (2013) call for research to "decentre the student as the object of study and instead recognize the multiple players who simultaneously invest in, and gain from, international student migration" (King and Raghuram, 2013: 134). Also, Jannecke Wiers-Jenssen (2013) calls for research that investigates the tension between the retention of foreign students and development policy objectives. I will address these calls through an investigation of the Quota Scheme.

This paper investigates how the Quota Scheme fits within the broader framework of ISM. It studies how institutional actors and culture have influenced student migration decisions and how the capacity development goals of the Quota Scheme relate to the

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<sup>1</sup> The term "third-country nationals" refers to citizens of countries not members of the European Union or European Economic Area (Hansen, 1998).

personal development goals of scholarship recipients. I ask these questions to elucidate the impact of institutional forces on student migration decisions. I contribute three findings to the broader literature on ISM and development. First, this paper focuses on an array of actors in addition to students who influence the process of ISM. In particular, I study the influence of government and educational actors on the future migration decisions of students. Second, I broaden the perspective on migration and development by focusing on *educational* migration for development. Since students are migrating for personal academic achievement within a program designed to advance institutional development at home, their experiences are likely distinct from other international student migrants. Third, I show that ISM can contribute to drastic life changes. As a result of their migration experiences, students' habitus—their deeply ingrained dispositions and practices—may change their long-term goals (Bourdieu, 1986; Marshall and Foster, 2002). These findings have relevance for governments, universities, educators, and scholars. For governments, a nuanced understanding of the influences on ISM is crucial to develop international student policy that is consistent with the political and economic needs of a society (Alberts, 2007). Universities, meanwhile, can improve student admission and retention rates (*ibid*). Educators can adjust curriculum to the needs of international students, facilitating “a higher level of engagement in learning and the development of more complex understandings for all learners” (Ryan and Hellmundt, 2007: 15; Haigh, 2002; Jackson, 2003). Finally, scholars can gain a more nuanced understanding of the institutional factors that influence student migration decisions.

This paper is organized into five sections. What follows is a brief overview of trends in ISM globally and in Norway. Second, I explore the Quota Scheme theoretically

through literature on the internationalization of higher education and international education for development. In the third section, I describe my methodology, followed by a discussion of my findings in the fourth section. I conclude by placing findings within literatures on ISM and development to assess their wider implications.

### **Background: ISM as a Worldwide Phenomenon**

The organized recruitment of international students began largely in North America in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and was conducted for primarily humanitarian or political reasons (de Wit, 2002; Kolasa, 1962). Since the end of the Cold War, economic rationales have become increasingly dominant (de Wit, 2002), and the numbers of students who study outside their home countries have increased dramatically in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 4.1 million students enrolled in tertiary education studied outside of their countries of origin in 2002—up from estimates of 1.8 million in 2000 (Altbach, Reisberg, and Rumbley, 2010), 2.8 million in 2007 (*ibid.*), and 3.3 million in 2011 (Bhandari and Blumenthal, 2011). This substantial increase has occurred worldwide at almost four times the rate of international migration as a whole (King and Raghuram, 2013). Most analyses of ISM attribute the growing demand for foreign students to the economic and academic benefits that states and universities derive from their presence (Altbach and Knight, 2007; Hazen and Alberts, 2013). Worldwide, international students account for \$45 billion in tuition fees each year (Altbach, Reisberg, and Rumbley, 2010). Perhaps more valuable, however, is their potential as a source of acculturated skilled labor (Suter and Jandl, 2008). As fertility rates continue to languish below replacement level in most developed

countries (Sleeboos, 2003; Ziguras and Law, 2006), many governments have implemented migration policies to attract skilled workers (Storsletten, 2000; Fehr, Jokisch, and Kotlikoff, 2004; Ziguras and Law, 2006). Students are attractive migrants because they generate large amounts of money for local economies through tuition fees and living expenses (Brooks and Waters, 2011; Hazen and Alberts, 2013). If they remain after graduation they often fill high-demand jobs for relatively low wages (Hawthorne, 2010; Raghuram, 2013).

While internationalization policies in developed countries generally encourage a South-to-North flow of international students (Altbach and Knight, 2007), many countries have also developed initiatives to build institutional capacity in the developing world (Knight, 2007; Brooks and Waters, 2011). Capacity building entails the creation or improvement of knowledge and infrastructure to achieve development goals (Panday, 2002; UN, 2006). Institutional capacity building in higher education is often a key component of such regimes. Capacity building in the higher education sector primarily occurs through joint degree programs, foreign branch campuses (McBurnie and Ziguras, 2007; Vincent-Lancrin, 2007), cross-border research collaboration (Barrett, Crossley, and Dachi, 2011), teacher exchange programs that bring experienced faculty to developing institutions (Vincent-Lancrin, 2007), and study-abroad programs for students from developing countries (Knight, 2004; Altbach and Knight, 2007; Brooks and Waters, 2011). At the same time, institutions in more developed countries benefit from collaborations with faculty and students from developing regions (Altbach and Knight, 2007). Frequently this type of cooperation occurs between countries with past colonial ties (Altbach, Reisberg, and Rumbley, 2010; Klineberg, 1979).

## *ISM in Norway*

The expansive growth of international student migration worldwide is a result of a variety of mechanisms that operate across geographic scales. Although global power structures influence the worldwide experience of ISM, circumstances within countries vary considerably (Huisman and van der Wende, 2004), and various factors endemic to Norway have significantly increased its share of international students in recent years (Brekke, 2006; West, 2013; Wiers-Jenssen, 2013; Myklebust, 2013). Since 2000, the number of foreign students in Norway has tripled, reaching 19,300 in 2013 (Wiers-Jenssen, 2013). Third country nationals represent half of all international students who arrived between 2005 and 2012 (Myklebust, 2013). The rise in foreign students in Norway may be explained by four factors. First, the recent implementation of tuition fees for non-EU nationals in Denmark, Germany, and Sweden may have made Norway more attractive for students with limited budgets (Myklebust, 2013; West, 2013)<sup>2</sup>. Second, some scholars suggest that students are attracted to the relative strength of the Norwegian economy during the global financial crisis (West, 2013; Wiers-Jenssen, 2013). Third, the proliferation of English-language programs at the graduate level has made the Norwegian higher education system more competitive compared to other developed countries (SIU, 2013a; DAMVAD, 2013; Cox, 2013). Fourth, a series of policy changes since 2001 have both attracted more international students to Norway and made it easier for them to remain upon graduation (Brekke, 2006). Some media suggest the new center-right government may decide to implement tuition fees for third country nationals (e.g.,

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<sup>2</sup> Tuition in Norway is free for all students studying at public institutions, with the exception of a semester fee that ranges between 300-600 NOK (50-100 USD; SIU, 2007).



Bjørnsen, 2013). However, members of the two largest parties in the ruling coalition—*Høyre* (the Conservatives) and *Fremskrittspartiet* (the Progress Party)—suggested that the policy is not likely to change within the next five years (personal interviews, 5-6 June 2013).

The Norwegian government has started to prioritize the retention of international students, but its traditional emphasis on return migration is still evident (Brekke, 2006). Most notably, in 2001, the government allowed international students to apply for work permits upon graduation. This quarantine provision aimed to benefit origin countries by encouraging the return migration of students educated in Norway, but it could not prevent students from seeking employment in third countries (Gätcher, 2007). Politicians from across the ideological spectrum successfully argued that Norway should more directly gain from its investment in these students. This led to the cessation of the policy that previously required international students to leave Norway for at least five years following graduation. In its place, the country has continued to prioritize return migration through the Quota Scheme, but not all parties agree with this practice (Brekke, 2006; personal interview, 5 June 2013).

Norway funds four programs that bring third country nationals to Norway. These scholarships are usually for graduate-level study, with the intention that recipients should return home after graduation (Tronstad, Bore, and Britt, 2012). The Quota Scheme is the largest of these programs and is administered by the Center for International Cooperation

Table 1. Top 25 Sending Countries for Quota Scheme Students in Norway 2005-2011.

Country	Quota Scheme Students	QS Percentage of National Cohort
Russia	372	6.32
Ethiopia	292	20.32
Ghana	271	26.46
China	254	6.24
Tanzania	202	39.84
Uganda	166	36.56
Nepal	123	8.37
Ukraine	86	7.79
Zambia	86	35.83
Vietnam	80	15.36
Indonesia	70	17.46
Sudan	64	20.13
Sri Lanka	58	14.04
Bangladesh	56	11.13
Kenya	54	16.36
Georgia	45	30.61
Serbia	43	8.90
India	41	4.78
Azerbaijan	40	20.62
Malawi	38	44.19
Cameroon	35	8.56
South Africa	25	14.04
Palestine	23	15.23
Albania	20	12.82
Pakistan	19	1.30

in Education (SIU). Its primary mission is “to contribute to capacity building through education that will benefit the home country of the students when they return” (SIU, 2013b). The Quota Scheme therefore represents a unique manifestation of ISM in that students migrate not only for personal development but also with the understanding that

any knowledge acquired should go toward capacity development in their countries of origin. I now turn to the theoretical implications of the Quota Scheme to explore how the program is situated within the broader context of ISM.

## **SECTION II THEORIZING THE QUOTA SCHEME**

The Quota Scheme is a federally funded program for citizens of developing countries. It is meant to accelerate two processes. First, by bringing international students to Norway, the Quota Scheme promotes the domestic internationalization of higher education (SIU 2005). Second, it educates nationals of developing countries and provides financial incentives to return upon graduation (SIU, 2013b). The program aims to advance capacity building in the developing world. I situate the Quota Scheme within literature on the internationalization of higher education and the use of education as a form of development aid to better understand how it influences migration and development.

### **The Internationalization of Higher Education**

The expansion of ISM is the result of nearly a century of development in the internationalization of higher education. Initially, “the international dimension of higher education was more incidental than organized” (de Wit, 2002: xvi), and institutions such as the American Institute of International Education were established as goodwill gestures to foster cultural understanding (Kolasa, 1962). During the Cold War, the United States and Soviet Union used international education and ISM to solidify and expand their spheres of influence around the world (Knight and de Wit, 1995). By the end of the Cold War, the progressively rapid movement of students across borders began to be conceptualized as the “internationalization of higher education” (Mesiridze, 2012; de Wit, 2009; Muller, 1995). De Wit (2002) argues that in this period the “economic

paradigm...shifted emphasis to the increasing importance of quality assessment of internationalization strategies, the emergence of English as the common language in higher education, the increasing relevance of international networks and strategic alliances, and the gradual acceptance of the internationalization of higher education as an area of research” (de Wit, 2002: xvi).

Although Rivsa and Teichler (2007) suggest that internationalization may eventually *decrease* student mobility due to widespread “internationalization at home,” ISM is a critical component of the internationalization of higher education (Madge, Raghuram, and Noxolo, 2009; and Jöns, 2009). Its implications for origin and destination countries as well as students are hotly contested and diffuse. International students are a vital source of innovation for receiving countries (Storesletten, 2000; Suter and Jandl, 2008; Gribble, 2008; and Hawthorne, 2008), and many countries have implemented policies to retain foreign students after graduation (Vertovec, 2002; Ziguras and Law, 2006; Chellaraj, Maskus, and Mattoo, 2005). In developing countries, returning graduates are often the most well-prepared to build a knowledge-based infrastructure (Cervantes, 2004; Ziguras and Law, 2006; and Gribble, 2008). This advantage spurs some sending countries to send their most talented youth abroad, hoping that they come back and contribute to the domestic knowledge economy (Gribble, 2008). While scholars have written about migrant transnationalism (e.g., Glick Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton, 1992; Portes, 2003; Vertovec, 2002), policymakers have also begun to recognize the benefits of “brain circulation,” which occurs when skilled migrants “return home to establish business relationships or to start new companies while maintaining their social or professional ties” to their former host countries (Saxenian, 2005: 36). Meanwhile,

aging populations exacerbate the need for human capital in developed countries (Storesletten, 2000; Fehr, Jokisch, and Kotlikoff, 2004; Hawthorne, 2008), which often regard international students as a particularly attractive pool of skilled labor (Ziguras and Law, 2006).

The Norwegian government values the human capital of international students, and the Quota Scheme has historically played an important role in the recruitment of international students from poorer countries. An analysis of the Quota Scheme contributes to ISM research in five ways. First, most research on ISM concerns students from East Asia, South Asia, and Europe (Brooks and Waters, 2011). In addition to these regions, the Quota Scheme brings students from world regions less-frequently the focus of ISM investigation, such as Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America (Maringe and Carter, 2007). Thus, this research presents a more equitable account of perspectives that are often minimized or ignored (Smith, 1999; Appadurai, 2000). Second, there is relatively little research on Norway as a destination country for student migrants, despite its growing popularity as a host for international students (see Brekke, 2006; Tronstad, Bore, and Djuve, 2012; van Mol, 2013; Wiers-Jenssen, 2013 for exceptions). Third, little research has been conducted on ISM as development assistance (but see Medica, 2010 for a notable exception). Fourth, the stringent regulations of the Quota Scheme influence the experiences of students in a manner that is likely distinct from self-financed students or graduate teaching assistants (Soon, 2012). Fifth, the Quota Scheme, as a small system that incorporates a variety of actors, represents an interesting case study to examine the influence of institutions on ISM. This paper engages with these five strands of literature to analyze the operation of ISM.

## Education as Development Aid

Donor countries and multinational financial institutions have frequently allocated development assistance to serve educational purposes (King, 1991; Heyneman, 1999; Jamison and Radelet, 2005). Development aid is used to build schools for students at all levels (Mundy, 2006), to increase access to education for women, girls, and other underprivileged groups (UNICEF, 2004), and faculty and staff training (Lacey, Jacklin, and Leste, 1999). Increasingly, receiving countries are using development funds to encourage immigration (Lacomba and Boni, 2008). This development assistance includes the recruitment of tertiary students to complete all or part of their studies, while encouraging them to return home after graduation. Australia, for example, has awarded scholarships since the 1950s for this very purpose (Medica, 2010), and the Norwegian Quota Scheme has its roots in programs started in the 1970s (Brekke, 2006). Medica (2010) has identified five factors that motivate aid-funded higher education: poverty alleviation, capacity development, sending country national interest, recipient country interest, and the high value of the study abroad experience for students. Development programs promote return migration by penalizing those who fail to go home. In the case of the Quota Scheme, students who do not return for at least a year after graduation have to repay the full cost of their stipend. Critics argue that these development programs disproportionately benefit elites of impoverished countries, since they are more likely to be aware of opportunities to pursue tertiary education (Christie 2007; Findlay *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, some scholars argue that receiving countries are motivated less by altruistic concerns than the benefits of remaining students (Tremblay, 2005).

Since 2000, the literature on the allocation of development aid has focused on good governance in decision-making (Santiso, 2001). Following the lead of powerful financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, governance has become a central concern of most donors of development assistance (Hout, 2002). Developed countries increasingly require aid recipients to implement economic and humanitarian policies that conform to the donor's standards (Phillips and Ilcan, 2011). Rich countries exert soft-power over poorer countries through the promise of monetary assistance, which is euphemistically referred to as "good governance" policy.

Research has primarily explored the effects of these good governance policies in recipient countries (see Hermes and Lensik, 2001; Santiso, 2001; Hout, 2002). Some scholars also study the administration of these policies in developed countries (see Phillips and Ilcan, 2011; Guérin, 2008). They argue that good governance is driven by investment concerns rather than a genuine interest in the welfare of developing countries (Hout, 2002; Phillips and Ilcan, 2011). Others critique their lack of efficacy (see Doornbos, 2001; Duffield, 2002; Nanda, 2006). In addition to the efforts of the World Bank to promote good governance in aid allocation (World Bank, 1989; Kaufmann, Kraay and Zoido-Lobaton, 1999; Santiso, 2001), Pedersen (2001) asserts that humanitarian policies encourage recipient governments to "worsen the income distribution because there exist foreign aid organizations eager to help the poor" (Pedersen, 2001: 694). He argues that "altruistic donors end up 'taxing' the activities they want to promote" (Pedersen, 2001: 700), lending support to those who argue in favor of demand-driven aid allocation.



The Quota Scheme implements good governance principles in its international education program, but avoids negative implications. First, since aid is granted directly to individuals, the risk of corruption is reduced. Second, since aid is given to individual students, any misappropriation of funds represents only a relatively small loss. Third, university admissions staff and faculty select award recipients based on academic merit, country of origin, and field of study. In this way, educators control and channel expenses in a thoroughly vetted manner, perhaps increasing the likelihood that aid will be managed effectively. In sum, the Quota Scheme incorporates most of the principles of an education as development initiative as outlined by Medica (2010). However, it fails to account for the change in habitus that often occurs during the migratory experience (Marshall and Foster, 2002; Kelly and Lysis, 2006). As Quota Scheme students adjust to the Norwegian social environment, their perceptions of both home and destination cultures are likely to change, which may curtail return migration. Furthermore, some international students use their mobility capital to re-migrate elsewhere (Carlson, 2013). These factors partially explain why many Quota Scheme students fail to return home after graduation.

## SECTION III METHODS

Since the research questions in this paper are concerned with the *ambitions and experiences* of stakeholders that are involved in the Quota Scheme, the semi-structured interview is the most appropriate research method for this paper. Interviews are a powerful tool to investigate complex behaviors and diverse meanings, opinions and experiences (Kvale, 1994). Moreover, interviews allow the researcher to ask probing questions while simultaneously offering participants the opportunity to voice their own concerns (Valentine, 2005; Dunn, 2010). Ultimately, this provides a well-rounded perspective through a “sensitive and people-oriented” approach (Valentine, 2005: 111). For these reasons, interviews are the primary data source for this paper.

I conducted 26 semi-structured interviews with 31 actors<sup>3</sup> who are involved in the Quota Scheme. Students were asked questions concerning their educational, professional, and personal ambitions and experiences studying in Norway through the Quota Scheme. Other respondents were asked broader questions about the internationalization of higher education in Norway, the role of the Quota Scheme, and its place in higher education in Norway. Additional materials, including brochures and websites, were used to create interview questions. Interviewees included politicians, government employees, university faculty and staff, a student union president, and Quota Scheme students. In order to capture the diversity of the students represented in the program, I conducted one

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<sup>3</sup> I conducted three interviews with two participants and one with three informants.

interview with the president of the International Students Union of Norway and fourteen interviews with students. Of those, seven were male and seven female. Five came from sub-Saharan Africa, three from Eastern Europe, two from Latin America, two from South Asia, and one each from Southeast and East Asia. I also interviewed five representatives for the three largest political parties in Norway, four administrators in international education (two each from the University of Oslo and the University of Bergen), three representatives for SIU who are involved in the direct management of the Quota Scheme, two faculty members at the University of Oslo and the University of Bergen who work with Quota Scheme students, and one official each for the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund (NSELF) and the Ministry of Education and Research. All institutional actors were identified through academic reports, government documents, and e-mail communication with their respective institutions. Students were recruited in three ways. First, flyers were posted throughout Oslo to announce the research project and dates of availability. Second, university staff agreed to distribute an e-mail to all currently active Quota Scheme students in Oslo and Bergen, encouraging them to participate in interviews. Third, snowball sampling was used to increase the likelihood of participation (Bradshaw and Stratford, 2010). In this paper, informants are identified by pseudonyms to ensure their confidentiality.

I coded the interview transcripts in ATLAS.ti. Responses were categorized in the following groups: politicians, government officials, university faculty, university staff, students and student union representative. I then coded the data for roles, motivations, opinions, and experiences related to the Quota Scheme and its relationship to the internationalization of higher education in Norway. Codes for students were also based

on study abroad, opinions of and experiences in Norway, and demographic variables such as sex, region of origin, and program of study. This enabled me to identify experiences that influenced future migration decisions. Finally, I placed the findings in the broader literature on ISM and development.

This study does not aim to be representative of all Quota Scheme institutional actors or students. Nevertheless, the data presented is illustrative of the perceptions and experiences of a wide range of actors who are involved in the program. In the following section, I explore the hierarchy of Quota Scheme stakeholders and I use interview data to identify and discuss the findings. I rely on indicative responses to show how future migration decisions can be shaped by institutional regulations and the complicated geography of development.

## SECTION IV RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section investigates the actors who are involved in the Quota Scheme, their objectives for the program, and its outcomes for students. I will analyze the intersections of institutional objectives and student experiences to investigate how government, universities, and educators influence future student migration decisions.

### Actors in the Quota Scheme Network

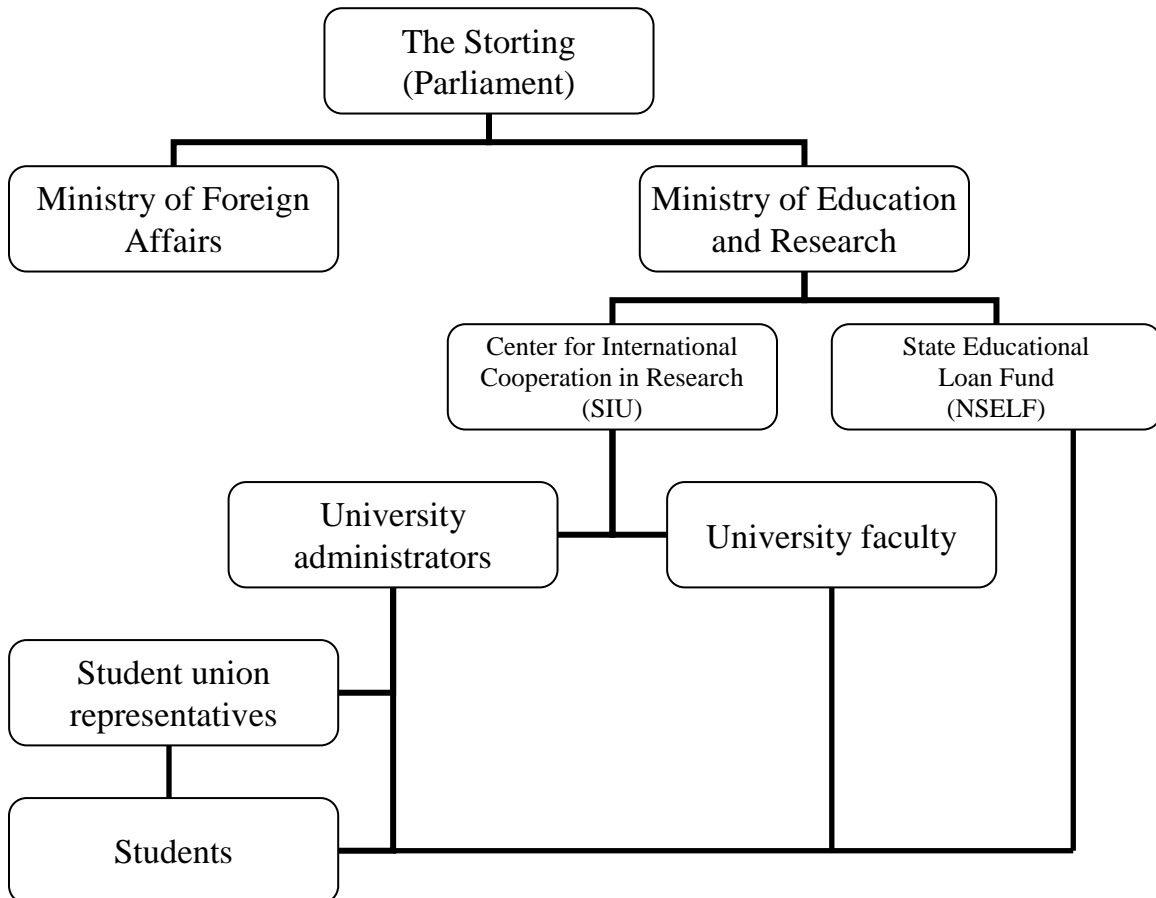


Figure 1. Quota Scheme Hierarchy.

The Quota Scheme is a government-run program that consists of a hierarchal network of stakeholders. At the top level is the Norwegian parliament. On behalf of the national government, two ministry-level departments preside over the program: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Research. Although the funds for the Quota Scheme are ultimately distributed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, responsibility for the program lies with the Ministry of Education and Research. Below the ministries, NSELF and SIU have roughly the same amount of influence. While SIU administers the Quota Scheme, NSELF finances students and tracks their movement upon the completion of their studies. Universities and university colleges operate at the level directly below government organizations. University administrators and faculty design programs and personally interact with students. Student union representatives work on behalf of Quota Scheme students, who, finally, occupy the bottom of the stakeholder hierarchy. Now that I have outlined the structure of the network, I will explore how it operates through the objectives of each of its members.

### **Actor Objectives**

Quota Scheme applicants have to meet rigid standards to be eligible for scholarships. Most importantly, they must be citizens of countries on the OECD Development Assistance Committee list<sup>4</sup>, and they must be affiliated with universities that have collaboration agreements with a participating school in Norway. Because of this

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<sup>4</sup> The Development Assistance Committee is the self-proclaimed “venue and voice of the world’s major bilateral donors” (p. 3), as it determines which countries are eligible to receive aid from the OECD (OECD 2006). It maintains a list of such countries, which it updates every few years.

requirement, awardees are generally graduate students. University agreements are based on department-level relationships, which means that applicants usually work in a related field at their Norwegian institution. Furthermore, students must meet the admission standards of their chosen university. There is intense competition for scholarships (personal interview, 22 May 2013). As one faculty member put it:

For the time being we have...something like 300 highly qualified applicants for these 4 positions. When we sit down with these 300 applications we certainly try to make the number much less before we start composing<sup>5</sup>, and then we are cruel (personal interview, 22 May 2013).

In this program, the applications far exceed the number of seats available. This professor, and presumably others, base admission decisions on country of origin, gender, and age, to select the best candidates. Both professors interviewed for this project would like to double the total number of spaces for Quota Scheme students because of the overwhelming supply of talented students (personal interviews, 20 and 22 May 2013).

Some university programs are more popular than others, however, and SIU administrators sometimes have to give Quota Scheme seats to self-financed students. This most likely happens because admitted Quota Scheme students fail to arrive (personal interview, 7 June 2013). Nevertheless, the competition for scholarships in some fields is very high.

Since 1990, between 18 and 32 percent of each yearly cohort of international students in Norway remained in the country ten years later (IMO 2014). The Quota

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<sup>5</sup> Composing, in this sense, refers to selecting the individuals who will *compose* the incoming class of students.

Scheme appears only slightly more successful in returning students, as Brekke (2006) estimated that somewhat less than half of all Quota Scheme students return home. It is therein debatable whether the student selection process has been effective in terms of circulating talent. The high number of remaining Quota Scheme students may be a result of the divergent objectives of Quota Scheme stakeholders. Consider the following exchange between two administrators from a government organization that runs the Quota Scheme:

Borghild: For the Center of International Health, many students go home but [at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology] many students stay.

Sigrud: The study programs that students take [at the University of Stavanger] are often oil-oriented, and a lot of the students are recruited by local firms. So I think it depends on which institution and program you study.

Borghild: [It's] probably on the recruitment policy of that institution and also on nationality because we see that Russian students tend to stay (personal interview, 29 May 2013).

Borghild and Sigrud administer the Quota Scheme, and they have an in-depth knowledge of the program. They note that local actors sometimes convince students to stay, although this conflicts with the program objectives. This is especially the case in the oil and gas sector, which has an acute need for skilled workers (OECD, 2014). Increasingly, self-financed international students are recruited to Norway in the hope that many will remain (Brekke, 2006). Many of the Quota Scheme students who do stay fill high-demand jobs, which suggests that the connections they develop with local business actors has a great impact on future migration decisions. Borghild further notes that students of Russian backgrounds are more likely to stay in Norway than others. While I have insufficient data



to explore whether this is true, two informants from Eastern Europe stated that they plan to stay in Norway after graduation. A third indicated that she would stay if she had the financial means. Even among those who initially intend to return home, Borghild adds “life happens” (personal interview, 29 May 2013).

Political parties differ in their opinions of the value of the Quota Scheme. While an education advisor for the Conservative Party suggested that the scheme is valuable for Norway, members of the Freedom Party were critical of the program in light of Norway’s need to retain skilled workers:

Representative of the Conservative Party: My gut feeling would be that Norwegian students who study in Norway have loans when they finish their studies, so foreign students should have to repay theirs if they stay. The idea of the system is for them to come to Norway to get a good education for them to use when they go back home. It's a dilemma that often we need the qualifications they have and we could use them in the Norwegian labor market and I guess that's just something that is maybe hard to correct (personal interview, 6 June 2013).

Representative of the Progress Party: I think the Quota Scheme is based on a good idea; it's a good way of helping talents from developing countries. What I would like to do is give them the opportunity to stay if they want to stay. To make engineers leave Norway, I think it's basically not a good idea...I think they are better qualified to develop their home countries if they also have some experience in the Norwegian workforce (personal interview, 5 June 2013).

Importantly, these parties are the largest factions in the ruling coalition of the new parliament elected in September 2013. A representative of the Ministry of Education and Research assumed that the Quota Scheme would not be affected by changes in government, but faculty, university administrators, and SIU staff agreed that the new

government may change the program in the future, likely weakening the return migration directive (personal interviews, 22 May, 24 May, and 29 May 2013).

Despite the intent of the Quota Scheme, students view commitments to their home countries in vastly different lights:

If I am going to be here [in Norway], then there is nothing I have done (personal interview, Masani, 28 May 2013).

I care about myself more than my country (personal interview, Dewei, 30 May 2013).

These reactions illustrate different perspectives of Quota Scheme students on return migration. Masani, a female student from Africa, has never considered working in Norway after graduation, while Dewei, a male student from Asia, does not feel a sense of duty to his home country. Borghild relatedly noted:

The percentage [of students] that's going home—especially to poor countries—is higher than it is to [wealthier countries]" (personal interview, 29 May 2013).

Like other categories of ISM, the Quota Scheme draws from students with divergent personal goals. Though the Norwegian government encourages return migration, these students are among the “new” migrants described by King (2002) who are “mobile people with multiple place affiliations and hybrid or cosmopolitan identities [who] have no wish to fit in to the ideology of one national identity” (King, 2002: 102). In addition, the lack of domestic students with degrees in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields (OECD, 2014) entices businesses to convince Quota Scheme students to remain in Norway. These variant objectives contribute to the disparate migration outcomes for Quota Scheme students.

## **Planning Mechanisms at the University and Departmental Scales**

Although the Quota Scheme is administered by a national organization (SIU), universities and departments provide tailored services for students. This is particularly apparent in the curricula for Quota Scheme students. At the departmental scale, the Centre for International Health at the University of Bergen was one of the first programs to recognize the value of the Quota Scheme. It remains one of the most successful programs in returning graduates and maintaining cross-border collaborations with alumni. The International Health program at the University of Oslo—influenced by colleagues from the University of Bergen—admits students with varying national backgrounds to encourage cross-cultural communication and network building:

We appoint early in the semester a kind of internal government where [students] have one minister of culture who is trying to spot all the international or cultural gatherings in Norway and spread the information among the students. In this local government of the students we also have a minister of supplies, for example, who is then telling them where they can find cheap food, and we can see when students start to exchange information about all these survival techniques they will also start exchanging knowledge on statistics and molecular biology and whatnot in the future (personal interview, 22 May 2013).

The Department of International Health, perhaps due to the cosmopolitan nature of the field, strives to provide a positive experience for all students (personal interview, 22 May 2013). International Health appears to have, perhaps not incidentally, one of the highest return rates of graduating students (personal interviews, 22 May, 24 May, and 29 May 2013). Meanwhile, some programs at the University of Oslo provide little to no support

for Quota Scheme students. For example, Mariana, a Latin American Ph.D. student in Psychology noted that:

I also have had problems with the department in terms of some courses are just offered in Norwegian, and it doesn't make sense because it wasn't a requirement when I was accepted in the program that I speak Norwegian. I should speak English. I think it's because of a lack of preparedness for international students more than prejudice (personal interview, 1 June 2013).

All students who received insufficient guidance from their department and university, such as Mariana, reported a greater desire to remain abroad. I propose that the lack of steering increases the likelihood that students will pursue programs that impede return migration. This issue may be especially acute for students who study engineering, as Sigrid—an administrator for SIU—indicates the majority at some universities remain in Norway:

Author: Could you estimate what percentage of Quota students stay in Norway?

Sigrid: [At the Norwegian University of Science and Technology] that's more than half. They have lots of engineering students and they recruit heavily.

Author: So would you say more than half of all Quota students they get remain?

Sigrid: That's the impression I got as an average, so that means probably in some faculties that's more (personal interview, 29 May 2013).

Businesses are keen to hire international students for a number of reasons, including language proficiency, cultural capital, and the over-valuation of domestic academic credentials. Moreover, students often work for lower wages than native talent (Ziguras

and Law, 2006; Hawthorne, 2008; and Suter and Jandl, 2008). Economic and development interests compete as Norway's high salaries can entice Quota Scheme students to remain in the country.

Beyond the scope of departments, universities can also play a significant role in shaping migration decisions. For instance, some students noted that orientation services were insufficient. While all schools provide a basic orientation, Quota Scheme students sometimes needed information that was not presented in the meetings. As Violeta, a Quota Scheme student of Eastern European origin, said:

This is a country that will give you anything, but you have to ask for it. In my country, foreigners get extra help and attention. Here they assume whatever you need you will try to get by yourself. They will not offer it. You can sometimes feel alone. (personal interview, Violeta, 3 June 2013).

Violeta added that, based on cultural differences between her country and Norway, she thought that Norwegians were simply rude. Only after considerable frustration did she realize that she had to seek help herself. Petra, also from Eastern Europe, expressed bewilderment at how ill-prepared her department was to assist her:

One thing that I don't know is how good the contact is between Quota and the department. For example, I remember that in the first semester I paid the semester fee, and then I was talking with someone in the department, and they said you should not pay, you are Ph.D., but I got an email saying I should pay. It seemed that the department doesn't know the rules of the Quota Scheme (personal interview, Petra 2 June 2013).

The experiences of Mariana, Violeta, and Petra emphasize the need for universities and advisors to coherently and consistently assist foreign students. Of these students, only Petra plans to return home, for financial reasons. The experience of the three students

underscores that migration decisions are strongly influenced by institutional and pedagogical factors (Gribble, 2008). The disparate levels of preparedness among universities and departments to assist foreign-born students contributes to uneven migration outcomes.

### **“If You Manage to Get Abroad...You Are Super Cool:” The Student Decision-Making Process**

Whether students intend to remain abroad or return home, future plans are characterized by oscillation. Regardless of sex, geographic origin, degree program, or department of study, all students described difficulties with planning their personal and professional future. Alberts and Hazen (2005) also noted this difficulty in their study of the migration decisions of international students at the University of Minnesota. Although students from poorer countries generally were more inclined to go back to their countries of origin, they noted that “deciding whether to return to their home countries or to stay in the host country is a dilemma for most international students, and it seems that many find the decision becomes more complex as their stay in the host country lengthens” (Alberts and Hazen, 2005: 148). Most Quota Scheme students begin with the intention to return home when they graduate. Isabela, a Latin American student in Oslo, described her situation as follows:

Well, I was very happy to say that I was going to go back home and just use all the knowledge that I got here, but I come from a very conflicted country, and so now the situation is really bad, and I don't see myself doing something very useful there if I go back. There's a lot of competition and corruption. After being here and seeing how an ethical society works, going back to somewhere where my boss is going to be someone who didn't finish high

school is not very appealing to me for the moment (personal interview, 28 May 2013).

Isabela became acculturated to Norwegian social norms and did not want to return to a corrupt business environment. Many students ultimately wish to remain in Norway or move somewhere else:

Author: Do you want to go back...when you're done?

Okello: Yeah of course, but at first I would like to work and get some experience, but not under Quota with the loans.

Author: So are you going to go back home even though you would rather stay here?

Okello: I am going to go back home. Yes. I would like to stay here at least at first after finishing, and maybe after that I would like to go back home. Maybe after one or two years, but I cannot (personal interview, 30 May 2013).

Okello, an African male student, expressed a desire to gain work experience in Norway or abroad before returning to his home country. He chose to return home due to the financial penalties of the Quota Scheme. Sometimes, also, family responsibilities influence the return migration decision:

I would go home because I need to go to my family. But because I like the work culture here and other things, the work system here...even if I had the option [of] working anywhere in the world, for now I would choose Norway, but because I have a family to take care of [I will return home. If I had the option, I would bring my family to Norway (personal interview, Esi, 21 May 2013).

Esi, a married woman from Africa, would like to stay in Norway because of its good work-life balance (Crompton and Lyonette, 2006). For Esi it is not financial repercussions holding her back, but rather the hardship of relocating her family.

Altogether, three students—one from Eastern Europe and two from Africa—were reluctantly planning to return home.

Even though most students initially intend to return home, only four students—one from Southeast Asia and three from Africa—expressed an unwavering commitment to go back. A more common response is morbidly illustrated by a South Asian student:

I would like to work abroad, preferably in Norway but anywhere really. I want to go back home only when older. It is very important for me to go back home to die (personal interview, Hitesh, 27 May 2013).

Although Hitesh would like to return home when he is older, other students have no plans to return. They typically prefer to stay in Norway for economic reasons. Darja, an Eastern European business student, offered this colorful explanation:

In [a] developing country every child is brought up by parents with one big goal: if you manage to get abroad, you are successful, you are super cool. If you don't manage to get abroad you are not as good as that child, [and] rationally... I want to be a person who has enough food, enough money, and enough appreciation of my work. So [those are] the main rational reasons why I decided to stay (personal interview, Darja, 19 May 2013).

Darja explained why being successful is important to her:

I am from such a country where you have to survive every single day because you don't have money, because your parents are working in 3 different jobs each, because to buy bread and milk you have to work 24 hours a day, and it's hard because the government is such a bad thing. Here everything is more or less provided. Here [people have] a much better well-being (*ibid*).

Some students from developing countries wish to remain in Norway as this confers higher status and an easier life than their country of origin. Similarly, Isabela was one of



five female students (out of seven total) who mentioned that Norway's egalitarian society was attractive:

I also happen to feel a little more free [in Norway], with gender roles. It's a big thing for me here, and at home, I think you have to struggle more [at home] just because you're a young woman with knowledge (personal interview, Isabela, 28 May 2013).

Isabela initially felt content to return to Guatemala, but after experiencing a "society respectful of the other person" (personal interview, Isabela, 28 May 2013), she became reluctant to cede the freedom she now enjoys. Here, it is evident that the cultural traditions and socioeconomic context of the sending and receiving countries influence the decision-making process. In sum, although students often feel obligated to return home, the decision-making process quickly becomes complicated when they live in Norway. In some cases, the Quota Scheme is unable to enforce return migration due to the unanticipated impact of the lived experiences brought on by ISM.

## SECTION V CONCLUSION

This paper examined ISM through a case study of the Quota Scheme. I studied actors who are involved in the Quota Scheme and showed the ways in which the scheme is governed and experienced by these actors. First, by revealing the motivations of the various governmental, administrative, and educational stakeholders in the Quota Scheme, I establish the potential for institutional actors to mold student decisions. Indeed, my results draw attention to tensions between stakeholders that result in different migration outcomes for students. Second, I make clear that the decisions and experiences of international student migrants are both constrained and shepherded by the resources of the universities and their faculty. In instances where Quota Scheme students were better integrated socially and academically, students were more likely to commit to return migration. This implies that in order to increase the rate of return migration of Quota Scheme students, universities and departments should create structured plans with guidelines for Quota Scheme students to follow. Third, my research shows how the experiences of international students shape their beliefs and actions (Webb, Schirato, and Danaher, 2002). The goals of migrants are likely to change somewhat over time as a result of this change in habitus. If the circumstances are sufficiently compelling, Quota Scheme students are willing to pay the financial penalty and pursue initially unintended mobilities (Carlson, 2013).

Given the above, the research findings highlight that migrant and program intentions and material outcomes conflict in the Quota Scheme. These multilayered contradictions are partly a result of the inherent complications of the geography of

development. High-income states, such as Norway, set the terms for the allocation of development aid to less-privileged countries (Duffield, 2002; Phillips and Ilcan, 2011). The Quota Scheme seeks to bring citizens of developing countries to live in Norway for the duration of their studies. The program then attempts to resettle graduates in their countries of origin to build institutional capacities. However, this transition is complicated in both directions. As Lewthwaite (1996) found for international students in New Zealand, the development of intercultural communicative competence is an arduous process. In addition, the reintegration process for returning students—like other migrants—is often very challenging, as both migrant and home have changed in the interim (Stefansson, 2004). It is my position that the return stipulation for Quota Scheme students permeates the bounds of ethics. As I have documented in this paper, the lived experiences of Quota Scheme students brought on by the migration process produces a fundamental change in habitus that is impossible to predict. It follows, then, that students are unable to give truly informed consent to return home years before they graduate.

The experiences of Quota Scheme students depicted in this paper show that they—as most international students—do not neatly pursue return, circular, or permanent migration. During their academic careers, students typically vacillate among various migratory choices, responding to new challenges and opportunities as they arise. After graduation, students may also perform one or another mode of migration, embodying the self-realizing “new” migrants of the global age (King, 2002).

Although the Quota Scheme is designed to improve institutional capacity in developing countries through return migration, this capacity development goal often conflicts with the personal development goals of students. While Quota Scheme students

may initially fully intend to return home upon graduation, the significant personal accomplishment that ISM represents often fundamentally transforms a person's habitus. In the process, migration plans may change. Nevertheless, students who decide to remain abroad may ultimately benefit their countries of origin as much as those who return immediately, since they are likely to maintain familial, business, or academic connections to their homeland throughout their adult life (Lowell and Findlay, 2002; Szelényi, 2006). From this point of view—espoused by some on the political right in Norway—both the origin and destination country can benefit from the brain circulation of Quota Scheme students, even if return migration never occurs (Saxenian, 2002).

In this paper, I have attempted to show how ISM operates through a case study of the Norwegian Quota Scheme. I found that the broad network of stakeholders, disparate planning mechanisms at universities and departments across Norway, and conflicts between capacity development goals and personal development ambitions have led to an uneven production of migration decisions for Quota Scheme students. Perhaps most importantly, this paper articulates the power of institutions to shape the migration outcomes of international students. Government actors, through regulations on ISM and development interests, often produce policies that encourage return migration. However, a tension exists between domestic economic concerns and migration for development. This conflict of interest sometimes produces circumstances in which international students are recruited simultaneously to develop skills to be used in capacity building at home and to work in the host country labor force. Furthermore, university faculty and staff play an important role in facilitating and directing the human, cultural, and social capital of international students. Whether it means promoting circular migration or

sustaining links with local industry, faculty appear to generally act in their best self-interest when mentoring students. The quality of administrative support for international students at the university level also affects the future migration decisions of students. This interaction of stakeholders acting for their own advantage at the scales of government, university, and department plays a crucial role in the lived experiences of international students. It is therefore unsurprising that Quota Scheme students develop divergent strategies to bridge the gap between disparate institutional goals that makes enforcing capacity development goals difficult.

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## APPENDIX



## Interview Questions

### *Students*

What is your home country?

What institution do you attend?

What is your program of study?

Why did you decide to study outside of your home country?

Why did you decide to study in Norway, specifically?

What did you know about Norway before you left?

What did you expect when you came to Norway to study?

Did your experiences differ from your expectations?

If so, in what ways?

How would you describe your experience studying in Norway?

How long have you been living in Norway?

How have you benefitted from studying in Norway?

What obstacles have you experienced studying in Norway (academic, legal, social, financial, or otherwise)?

Would you recommend a friend study in Norway?

Why, or why not?

How would you compare and contrast studying in Norway to studying in your home country?

What is it like to live in Norway for you, as an international student?

What is good about Norwegian society?

What is bad about Norwegian society?

What are your future goals as a professional and/or a student?

Do you think this experience has helped you achieve those goals?

Why, or why not?

How did you learn about the Quota Scheme?

What is your view of the Quota Scheme?

Based on your understanding, what is the purpose of the Quota Scheme?

What should be the purpose of the Quota Scheme?

According to circular F-12-10, the purpose of the Quota Scheme is twofold. First, it is to contribute to capacity building in recipient countries by empowering students with the education to integrate institutions and businesses in their home countries into the global knowledge society. Second, the scheme will also help to strengthen international cooperation among Norwegian universities. From your perspective as a Quota student, do you see the Quota Scheme as effective in achieving these goals?

If so, how? If not, why, and how could it do so?

What do you most like about the Quota Scheme?

What do you most dislike about it?

How would you change it, if you could?

Do you hope to return to your home country when your studies in Norway are finished?

Why, or why not?

If you do want to stay in Norway, when and how did you decide you wanted to stay?

What do you plan to do after graduation?

Where do you plan to go?

Is there anything else you would like to say about the Quota Scheme?

...or about anything else involving your experiences living and studying in Norway?

Can you put me in touch with other Quota Students?

I also have a questionnaire for international students in Norway (not just Quota). It contains many of the same questions I've asked you today. Do you have any advice as to how I can distribute it? Would you be interested in taking it?

Do you have any questions for me?

### ***University Faculty***

How many Quota students would you estimate you have taught over the years?

What are the backgrounds of most of your Quota students?

Have you advised any Quota students?

Naturally they are a diverse group of people, but what kinds of students are Quota recipients, typically?

Are there any noticeable differences between Quota students and other international students?

What about Quota students v. domestic students?

Do Quota students interact with domestic students much?

If so, in what ways?

What have the Quota students that you know gone on to do after leaving your program?

Have any remained in Norway?

What were the ambitions of Quota students you worked closely with?

Do you believe the Quota Scheme has helped them achieve those ambitions?

What are the strengths of the Quota Scheme?

What are the weaknesses of the Quota Scheme?

If you could, what would you change about the Quota Scheme?

Do you believe the Quota Scheme has been successful in achieving its goals?

Why and how?

Have there been any unintended benefits?

If so, what are they?

What about unintended consequences?

If so, what?

How has your university reacted to the Quota Scheme?

Could your university do anything to improve the effectiveness of the Quota Scheme?

From your vantage point, what is Norwegian life like for Quota students?

Do they have special needs, distinct from other international students?

Can you recommend anyone else I speak to about the Quota Scheme?

Other faculty or staff?

Any students?

Is there anything else you would like to say about the Quota Scheme?

Do you have any questions for me?

### ***University Administrators***

Are there statistics kept by the university about its international students (e.g., total number, countries of origin, programs of study, etc.)?

Can I access them? Where/how?

Do you actively recruit international students from developing countries, specifically?

If so, from what countries?

How and Why?

Drawing on your experience working with international students, what would you say are the most important needs of students from developing countries, specifically?

Would you say the needs of international students from developing countries are different from the needs of international students from other places, or domestic students in general?

If so, how are their needs different?

Can you say a few words about the history of the Quota Scheme at your university?

Does the Quota Scheme effect how you recruit international students from developing countries?

If so, how?

Does your university receive a lot of Quota Scheme students?

Is there data available that I can see about Quota students (e.g., countries of origin, length of stay, program of study, gender, etc.)

Do Quota Scheme students have any special needs distinguishable from other international students?

Academically, how do Quota students typically perform at your university?

What is their attrition rate?

Do you have information on what Quota students from your university go on to do after graduating?

If so, can I access it?

If you do, but I cannot access it:

What percentage of your Quota students remain in Norway?

What percentage return to their home countries?

What percentage go to another country?

What fields do Quota students study?

What are they studying/working on now?

What effect has the Quota Scheme had...

...for the students themselves

...for domestic students

...for the university

From your perspective as university administrators, is there anything about the Quota Scheme that you would like to see changed?

Why?

What do Quota students bring to your institution?

How involved are Quota students in campus organizations?

Do you have services to help Quota students acclimate to Norwegian society?

What, in your experience, are the concerns of international students from developing countries

How do you address those?

What are the usual concerns of Quota students?

How do you address those?

### ***International Students Union***

What kind of work does the ISU typically do?

Can you give some examples of recent activities the union has been involved in?

Can you provide a list with the numbers of students by country that are members of the ISU?

What kinds of needs do international students in general have that are distinct from those of domestic students?

What about students from developing countries, specifically?

Do you actively recruit international students from developing countries?

If so, how and why do you do this?

What do international students from developing countries bring to the union?

How involved are students from developing countries in your organization?

How are they involved, and how do you involve them?

What, in your experience, are the concerns of international students from developing countries?

How does the union address them?

Does the ISU have contact with the Center for International Cooperation in Education?

What does the ISU think about the Quota Scheme scholarship program?

Are Quota students among the members of the union?

### *SIU*

How much does the Quota Scheme cost, annually?

Why is the Quota Scheme worth that cost? In other words, why is the Quota Scheme important?

The SIU website states: "The Quota Scheme includes developing countries as defined by OECD (the DAC-list) as Least Developed, Other Low Income and Lower Middle Income Countries. In addition, South Africa, Russian Federation, Brazil and Cuba are included in the Quota Scheme." However, some countries listed as Lower Middle Income are not included (Belize, Fiji), while some listed as upper middle income are (e.g., Chile, Dominican Republic, Iran, Namibia, Nepal, Tunisia). Why were certain Lower Middle Income countries left out and other upper middle income countries included?

The SIU website also states that the Quota Scheme is "quite popular...among eligible students, most of whom are highly qualified in their field of study. Every year the number of applicants far exceeds the number of students admitted under the scheme." In that case, why is the number of scholarships locked at 1,100 per year?

300 scholarships are reserved for Eastern European and Central Asian students and 800 for students from elsewhere. Is there a reason for a set mathematical limit per region?

Can you provide a list with the number of students who have studied under the program per country?

What about other statistics about Quota students (e.g., gender, program of study, degree)?

How many students have studied under the Quota Scheme?

Do you keep track of what Quota students do or where they go once they complete their studies?

If so, what have students done after receiving their Norwegian education? A report or statistical breakdown would be most helpful, but individual experiences are also informative.

According to the SIU website, 40% of the student's scholarship is given as a grant and 60% is administered as a loan, but the loan portion is waived once the student returns to his/her home country. If a student stays in Norway, however, s/he must repay the loan. What percentage of (or how many) Quota students remain in Norway after completing their studies?

Do all of these students always have to repay their loan?

Do they have to re-pay the grant portion if they stay in Norway?

What happens if a student goes to another country in the developing world?

What happens if a student goes to another country in the developed world?

Have certain universities been more successful in graduating Quota students (or helping them get their degrees at another institution in their home countries)?

If so, which? Can you speak to why?

Have other universities been less successful in graduating Quota students (or helping them get their degrees at another institution in their home countries)?



If so, which? Can you speak to why?

Does the SIU (or do host institutions) provide other services (academic, social, economic, etc.) to Quota students (or students from developing countries in general)?

Norway is one of the most expensive countries in the world to live in, and Quota students come from countries that are usually very poor. Are Quota students given financial advice?

Are they allowed to have paying jobs or given other financial assistance to provide income?

Is there information concerning the academic attainment of Quota students in Norway?

What percentage of students drop out of the program without finishing?

Do Quota students ever drop out of the program and remain in Norway?

According to circular F-12-10, the purpose of the Quota Scheme is twofold. First, it is to contribute to capacity building in recipient countries by empowering students to integrate institutions and businesses in their home countries into the global knowledge society. Second, the scheme will also help to strengthen international cooperation among Norwegian universities. I am further aware that the Ministry of Education has recently announced an evaluation of the Quota Scheme, with a report due out in February 2014. Based on what evidence you have available now, would you say the Quota Scheme has been effective in achieving its goals?

Why, or why not?

Can you identify any unintended benefits or consequences of the program...

...for Quota students?

...for domestic students?

...for institutions?

### ***NSELF***

How much does the Quota Scheme cost, annually?

I am very interested in how many students return home. As I understand it, if a student does not return home, they have to pay back their loan. What percentage of Quota students pays their loan?

Do you know the percentage of Quota students that pays back their loan by university? If so, can you tell me?

If not, can you at least say if students from some universities are more or less likely to have to pay their loan back (and thus remain in Norway)?

Is there any allowance for a Quota student to remain in Norway but not have to pay their loan? For instance, what if the student returns home in a few years?

How do you ensure Quota students that remain in Norway pay back their loan?

How do you verify that Quota students have returned to their home countries?

### ***Ministry of Education and Research***

I often hear officials involved in higher education in Norway talk about the “internationalization of higher education.” What does the internationalization (or, sometimes, globalization) of higher education mean to you, on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Research?

How does the Quota Scheme fit into the internationalization of higher education in Norway?

When and how the Quota Scheme initially conceived and created?

How much does the Quota Scheme cost, annually?

Why is the Quota Scheme worth that cost? In other words, why is the Quota Scheme important?

The SIU website states: "The Quota Scheme includes developing countries as defined by OECD (the DAC-list) as Least Developed, Other Low Income and Lower Middle Income Countries. In addition, South Africa, Russian Federation, Brazil and Cuba are included in the Quota Scheme." However, some countries listed as Lower Middle Income are not included (Belize, Fiji), while some listed as upper middle income are (e.g., Chile, Dominican Republic, Iran, Namibia, Nepal, Tunisia). Why were certain Lower Middle Income countries left out and other upper middle income countries included?

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of applicants far exceeds the number of students admitted under the scheme." In that case, why is the number of scholarships locked at 1,100 per year?

300 scholarships are reserved for Eastern European and Central Asian students and 800 for students from elsewhere. Is there a reason for a set mathematical limit per region?

Does the Ministry of Education and Research keep any statistics on the Quota Scheme and its current students/graduates?

If so, can I access them?

According to circular F-12-10, the purpose of the Quota Scheme is twofold. First, it is to contribute to capacity building in recipient countries by empowering students to integrate institutions and businesses in their home countries into the global knowledge society. Second, the scheme will also help to strengthen international cooperation among Norwegian universities. I am further aware that the Ministry of Education has recently announced an evaluation of the Quota Scheme, with a report due out in February 2014. Based on what evidence you have available now, would you say the Quota Scheme has been effective in achieving its goals?

Why, or why not?

Can you identify any unintended benefits or consequences of the program?

I am aware that there is an upcoming evaluation of the Quota Scheme due out next year sometime. Who is working on that evaluation, and how is it being conducted?

What kind of report will this result in?

What happens with the annual report the MoER receives each year from SIU?

### ***Politicians***

Please describe your party's stance on the internationalization of higher education in Norway

Would your party change the way international students are recruited to study in Norway?

If so, how?

I have read that your party supports not charging fees for international students studying in Norway. Is that true?

Why, or why not?

Does your party believe the Center for International Cooperation in Education (SIU) is being managed properly?

If not, how should it be run differently?

My research is especially interested in the Quota Scheme run by SIU. Does your party have a position on the Quota Scheme?

Would you continue to support the Quota Scheme to be managed the same way it is now, or would you prefer to change it?

If so, how?

Is it important to your party to allocate development aid for higher education?

If so, how does your party want this to be done?

What value do international students bring to Norway?

## VITA

Scott Eric Basford was born and raised in the small town of Poydras, Louisiana. He has received both an A.S. and B.A. in Geography, the former from Walters State Community College in Morristown, Tennessee and the latter at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. This thesis was written in support of a Master of Science degree in Geography.