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Department of Political Science  
& Geography Presents



## Canada through the looking-glass? International Canadian Studies amid a lack of cultural diplomacy

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**Abstract:** In 2012, the federal government ended the 'Understanding Canada' program. This program aimed to support international Canadianists in their efforts to contribute to the study of Canada, or 'to know ourselves better' as Thomas Symons (1975) put it. In this presentation, we examine the evolving profile, trends and realities in the field of international Canadian Studies over the last 12 years. A survey with international Canadianists, interviews with executives of local associations of Canadian Studies and centres, as well as in-depth archival work reveal the resiliency of the field despite limited means, growing and concerning geographical inequities in how the study of Canada is supported abroad, as well as the profound misunderstanding of the Canadian government for the importance of such cultural and scientific diplomacy initiatives.

Reference:

Symons, T. H. B. (1975). *To know ourselves: The report of the Commission on Canadian Studies* (Vol. I). Association of Universities and Colleges of