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CROSS-CULTURAL LEADERSHIP:  
BEST PRACTICES IN MULTINATIONAL GRADUATE EDUCATION

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November 29, 2016  
Educational Leadership

CROSS-CULTURAL LEADERSHIP:  
BEST PRACTICES IN MULTINATIONAL GRADUATE EDUCATION

ABSTRACT

The international security environment depends in part on professional military leaders with the knowledge, skills and attributes to execute a broad range of leadership communication, collaboration and negotiations with counterparts in complex international and intercultural settings. If higher education is the path to cognition, metacognition, motivation and behavior, then it may be an effective instrument for developing leadership readiness for a range of international/inter-cultural tasks. This study explores US military leaders' perceptions about graduate-level, senior professional military education alongside foreign military officers at the U.S. Army War College as an influence on readiness for decision-making, cultural adaptation, and task performance in a cross-cultural leadership context. Five findings suggest the influence of a collaborative multinational graduate education setting on US leaders' cross-cultural competence. Best practices based on theory-based analysis of graduate interviews include institutional guidance linking cultural agility and professional purpose; direct and meaningful engagements; skillful faculty facilitation; cultural immersion-like effects through multiple cross-cultural experiences; and experiential learning that challenges and reframes mental models.

Keywords: cross-cultural competence, international education, cultural intelligence, social cognitive theory

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## CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
LIST OF FIGURES.....	x
Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Statement of the problem.....	3
Problem to be studied.....	7
Purpose of the study.....	7
Research questions.....	7
Conceptual Framework.....	8
Assumptions, limitations, scope.....	11
Significance.....	13
Definition of terms.....	13
Conclusion.....	16
Chapter 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	18
Literature review methodology.....	19
Understanding requirements, capabilities, and gaps.....	21
Leadership demands for a globalized world.....	22
Knowledge, skills and attributes of cross-cultural leadership.....	23
Theories and concepts of cross-cultural competence.....	24
Developing cross-cultural competence.....	28
Internationalized education.....	34

International business and developing cross-cultural competence .....	36
Military themes in developing cross-cultural competence .....	39
Assessing cross-cultural competence.....	43
Summary of arguments and issues.....	44
Implications for the study .....	45
Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY .....	47
Setting .....	52
Participants.....	58
Data.....	62
Participant rights .....	63
Chapter 4: RESULTS .....	65
Study participants .....	66
Study design and execution .....	70
Preparation and organization of the data .....	72
Description of the data: Presentation of results .....	74
Professional purpose and opportunity to ‘learn from others’ influences US students.....	74
Experiential learning offered the promise of US-IF teamwork .....	97
Participants’ perceptions about relationships .....	103
Participants’ perceptions of extracurricular activities .....	108
Participants reported post-grad influences on career choices.....	113
Summary .....	114
Chapter 5: CONCLUSION.....	117
Findings .....	117



Application of findings to Research Questions .....	119
Research implications .....	122
Summary of findings with respect to educational interventions.....	128
Limitations of the study .....	131
Recommendations for future research .....	133
Conclusion .....	134
References.....	136

## LIST OF TABLES

1. Study participants' assignments in or with foreign nations/military units .....	68
2. Extracurricular choices of survey participants.....	109
3. Insights about Social Cognitive Learning for Cultural Intelligence.....	123
4. Summary of findings with respect to educational interventions.....	131

## LIST OF FIGURES

1. Four-Factor Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS).....	27
2. Army War College organization .....	54

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The global interconnectedness that is commonly described as “globalization” is characterized by increasing numbers, types and complexity of interactions across national borders and across cultures. Countries and organizations working in this globally connected environment require leaders who can be effective in international, or cross-cultural, settings (Barakat, Lorenz, Ramsey, & Cretoiu, 2015; Rockstuhl, Seiler, Ang, Van Dyne, & Annen, 2011). While the term, globalization, has a modern connotation, the history of international diplomacy, business, war, education, population movement, and culture has been shaped by clashes, negotiations, partnerships and other exchanges at the level of leaders. A pattern emerges as organizations progress in their investment in cross-border or cross-cultural operations: from tentative, tenuous engagements through successive levels of engagement: envoy, exchange, partnership, full integration (Ashkenas, Ulrich, Jick, & Kerr, 1999). Globalized businesses, for example, reflect the progression from selling products to another country’s population to assigning a domestic management team to manage a foreign plant and, ultimately, to recreate an internationalized firm that integrates multiple countries and cultures across all levels and functions of the business (Ashkenas et al, 1999). Higher education reflects a similar pattern across United States (US) campuses: visiting professors from other nations; exchange studies based on transplanting a parent program to another country; international partnerships, international communities of academic practice; guiding development of partner institutions abroad; and foreign campuses with integrated staff, faculty and students; and institutional policies, practices and pedagogy that advances a global mindset among administrators, faculty and students. (Blaess, Hollywood, & Grant, 2012; Knight, 2013).

As is true with international corporations and non-governmental organizations that work across borders and cultures in a range of relationships in multiple countries, defense relationships engage formal allies, friendly nations, neutral nations and antagonist countries at multiple levels to multiple ends. Further, the pattern of progression from titular engagements to integration on many levels holds true, as well. Since the days when General Dwight D. Eisenhower represented the United States while working with political and military leaders of multiple countries to shape a global response to Germany and Japan in World War II, types of military engagements between the United States and other nations have changed. In the years following the attacks of September 11, 2011, during prolonged periods in Afghanistan and Iraq, military leaders have guided both combat operations and stability operations, marked by a variety of engagements with leaders at all levels of government, religious organizations, nongovernmental organizations. Just as operations in those countries were unplanned, future military engagements could be in any of a broad number of different cultures simultaneously (Caligiuri, Noe, Nolan, Ryan, & Drasgow, 2011). Around the world, Army forces are operating in 140 countries; engagements in most of those countries are supporting U.S. current policy of regional engagement, to include the missions related to building partner capacity (Joint Chief of Staff [JCS], 2015; Marshall, 2011). Despite debates and anxieties about effects of globalization within the United States, the majority of Americans think that globalization is mostly beneficial for the country, and favor international engagement, indicating common ground on the country's traditional alliances, its leadership role abroad, and the preservation of US military superiority (Smeltz, Daalder, Friedhoff, & Kafura, 2016). The future of multinational defense relationships depends in part on senior military leaders prepared to assess and understand a situation in a foreign setting, and to facilitate and

negotiate the decisions of partners about shared interests and strategies to achieve the agreed-upon ends (Yukl, 2013).

### **Statement of the problem**

Because senior military leaders are responsible to represent the United States in a range of complex cross-cultural engagements in multiple settings with single, multiple and even opposing countries, traditional means to develop cultural acumen through immersive foreign life experience or intensive cultural training are commonly infeasible; senior leader availability is the limiting factor given the time required for language immersion education and/or extensive integration into a specific culture. Current national strategy calls for military leaders to be effective in both combat tasks and in diplomatic engagements. The National Military Strategy calls for alliances, partnerships, and a global-stabilizing presence characterized by engagements in training, exercises, security cooperation activities and military-to-military engagements, all intended to increase capabilities and capacity of partners and, in turn, to enhance collective ability to deter aggression and defeat extremists (JCS, 2015). Expectations for the future infer the need for professional military leaders with the skills and attributes to execute a broad range of negotiations and discussions with partner agents in complex international and intercultural settings.

The skills and attributes that bridge cross-cultural and cross-border differences are recognized as critical to leadership effectiveness (House, Dorfman, Javidan, Hanges, & de Luque, 2014), but not universally present in leaders. Historically, business leaders' cross-cultural acumen was tested in actual job performance, and success was the best indicators of future success in foreign assignments (Mol, Born, & van der Molen, 2005). While extended expatriate experience has been traditionally the gold standard for developing corporate and,

often, diplomatic cross-cultural leadership effectiveness, education offers opportunity to replace or enhance experience (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002). Anthropologists, historians and traditional cultural instructors have emphasized cognitive learning about country-specific history, social norms and language (Ang, VanDyne, & Rockstuhl, 2015). Recent studies, however, suggest that “country-specific” knowledge is less useful to senior leaders and managers than “culture-general” competence for leaders who will work in multinational settings and move from country to country, matching leadership skills to context (Earley & Peterson, 2004; Rockstuhl et al., 2011). Recent efforts to identify learning outcomes related to cross-cultural competence in a military context call for integrative cultural approaches that include cognitive, affective and behavioral learning outcomes (McDonald, McGuire, Johnston, Selmeski, & Abbe, 2008; Salmoni & Holmes-Eber, 2008). While research into cross-cultural readiness have resulted in lists of skills and abilities linked to job performance, there are few efforts to create frameworks for integrative cross-cultural learning (Yamazaki & Kayes, 2010).

Today, the US Army develops cultural competence through language training and country-specific cultural knowledge for selected units and soldiers, as made necessary by imminent overseas missions (TRADOC, 2015). The strategy is intended to widen the scope of training while maintaining the country-specific focus. Historically, selected military officers (Foreign Area Officers and Civil Affairs personnel) have received education in country-specific cultural knowledge, language, and behavioral orientation that they apply in advisory roles to military commanders or US ambassadors. However, the complexities and demands of today’s national security environment can require military engagement across the globe -- leader engagement to create partnerships, cooperation, interoperability -- which in turn requires the military commanders themselves to be able to ‘partner’ with counterparts in other countries. In

some cases, very senior military officers whose careers have been US military-centric find themselves in positions of significant responsibility for international negotiations about multinational exercises and operations (USACAC, 2006). Unlike the specialist advisors who spend years in language training and immersive living and working in a selected country, a senior leader may be assigned anywhere in the world and may find a new challenge arise at any assignment, from a natural disaster to a new political accord with military implications, to a joint military training exercise to signal strength in the face of aggression.

Senior professional military education (PME) within the US Department of Defense (DOD) is made available at the US military services' senior PME institutions, such as the Army War College; at several joint senior PME institutions; and through service-recognized equivalent fellowships at civilian institutions, advanced military schools, and international military colleges. The focus of senior PME is to prepare selected senior military officers for positions of strategic leadership and advisement, by emphasizing analysis, fostering critical examination, encouraging creativity, and providing a progressively broader educational experience (CJCS, 2015). Senior military leaders prepare for potential responsibilities working in interagency and multinational environments through a yearlong regionally accredited graduate course at one of the nation's senior service colleges: the US Army War College. The student body incorporates representatives from other nations and other federal agencies and other military service, so as to suggest the joint, interagency and multinational world in which senior leaders may coordinate, communicate, persuade and negotiate in post-war college assignments (USAWC, 2015). Leadership capability for cross-cultural contexts is a reasonable outcome of education that is designed to prepare senior military leaders for responsibilities working with other countries. The



Army selects its general officers and leaders with strategic level responsibilities from the body of senior service college graduates.

PME prepares international students with new patterns of reasoning, new sources of information, new socialization networks enabling graduates to be influential in their home country and in the international security environment (Atkinson, 2014). The US Congress set two objectives in establishing the International Military Education and Training (IMET) Program in 1976; IMET is a Department of State program executed by the Defense Department to encourage effective and mutually beneficial relations and to improve the capabilities and professionalization of selected countries' defense (Ahles, Rehg, Prince, & Rehak, 2013). The United States sends a small number of U.S. military officers to other countries' institutes of professional military education, but the vast majority of US military officers participate in U-based education alongside foreign military officers. While foreign militaries have signaled their assessment of value for this US-based education since 1978 by electing to participate and by selecting their top officers, evidence of the mutual benefit to US students is limited to several anecdotes. There exists no history or program to survey students or graduates about cross-cultural thinking, attitudes, or behaviors. Experienced faculty can offer examples of academic dialogue when the foreign officers add a necessary sense of reality and experience with respect to the regions in which US forces operate. Graduates can offer examples of individual relationships that have proved invaluable in times of tension and complex political situations (Ahles et al, 2013). In civilian education, studies have explored foreign students' cultural competence and the acculturation of academic international undergraduate students in US schools (Bang & Montgomery, 2013; Zhou, Frey, & Bang, 2011), but few address the impact on US students' development of cross-cultural leadership capability through educational experience shared with foreign students.

Given the context that DOD's graduate-level PME is designed to prepare senior military officers for strategic leadership responsibilities to negotiate and collaborate across national borders, and that the IMET program exists to develop useful and effective relationships among student representatives of the United States and other countries, it's reasonable to expect that education in a mixed US-foreign student cohort would influence US officers' leadership capability for cross-cultural contexts. At a time when such cross-cultural leadership capability will maintain or increase its importance to US national security interests in a complex, interconnected, international security community, the need for military leaders/practitioners to understand the characteristics of PME that drive learning and development for cross-cultural leadership underpins the proposed study.

### **Problem to be studied**

The problem to be studied is that college leadership has not formally evaluated if and how PME at the Army War College influences learning and development of US military officers' cross-cultural leadership for post-graduate responsibilities.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this qualitative case study will be to explore US military officer/graduates' perceptions about how their studies and activities alongside foreign officers at the Army War College influenced their preparation for decision-making, cultural adaptation, and task performance in a cross-cultural leadership context.

### **Research questions**

The research questions are informed by social cognitive theory and cultural intelligence theory.

**RQ 1.** What types of learning activities of the Army War College graduate program do U.S. military officer/graduates link to cross-cultural leadership capability, as characterized by the cognitive, metacognitive, motivational and behavioral factors of cultural intelligence?

**RQ 2.** What types of collaborative experiences with foreign counterparts, in and out of academic settings, did US Army War College graduates identify as influential modeling for personal motivation and behaviors in cross-cultural leadership settings?

### **Conceptual Framework**

This qualitative study is situated within a framework of cultural intelligence theory's characterization of relevant cross-cultural competence, and social cognitive learning theory's description of learning relevant in an educational setting for adaptation to diverse environments. Cultural intelligence theory advances a concept of four types of factors that characterize readiness to anticipate, address, and adapt to cultural differences: metacognitive, cognitive, motivational and behavioral "intelligences" that intersect for integrative effect, are malleable rather than innate, and correlate positively with cross-cultural judgment, decision-making, adaptation and job performance (Earley & Peterson, 2004; Ang et al, 2007; Ang et al., 2015). Cultural intelligence theory purports that competencies are learned, not inherited; social cognitive learning proposes ways of learning that appear to be applicable to cross-cultural learning interventions. Social cognitive learning theory, situated among psychological learning models, explains the process by which an individual can develop or deepen cultural intelligence by creating his or her own pathway: observing modeled behavior, reflecting and learning vicariously, and applying self-efficacy to regulate cognitive, motivational, affective and decision making related to new learning, as in preparedness for cross-cultural leadership contexts (Bandura, 1977; Bandura, 2002; Burke, Joseph, Pasick, & Barker, 2009; Deardorff, 2015).

Layering the two theories reveals commonalities. Cultural intelligence, or CQ, theory recommends a learning approach that is built on a unifying psychological model of cultural adaptation, indicated by three fundamental elements. Metacognition and cognition addresses thinking, learning and strategizing. Motivation refers to self-efficacy and confidence persistence; value congruence; and affect for a new culture (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004). Behavior addresses social mirroring and behavioral norms. Social cognitive theory describes three modes of agency: an individual's influence on one's self and life circumstances. These are self-efficacy; social mediation, as in faculty modeling and interventions; and collective agency through group action, as in experiential education (Bandura, 2002).

At the leadership level, certain cross-cultural competencies are weighted in significance to likely tasks. Acculturation is a key focus of international business and education because it speaks to the individual's ability to become comfortable, remain, and work well in a foreign setting (Perry & Southwell, 2011). Training in culture-specific knowledge and language aids acculturation for specific location at specific times (Gonzalez-Loureiro, Kiessling, & Dabic, 2015). At the leadership level, however, generalized culture education is transferrable to different settings at different times; it is the understanding, and motivation for understanding, the underlying implications and meaning and values of cultural norms (Turley, 2011; Perry & Southwell, 2011).

Existing theories and models of cross-cultural (or inter-cultural) competence reflect the disciplines of cultural anthropology, psychology, sociology, education, communication, and especially in the past twenty years, business management. Across these disparate disciplines are several common concepts. Development of cross-cultural competence requires a combination of knowledge, attitude, skills and behaviors. Such competence includes tolerance for ambiguity, respect for others, and skill in communicating, interpreting and relating. And, the competence is not

fixed but, rather, changing and deepening (Perry & Southwell, 2011). The theories and models are suggestive but not predictive as to what the required skills and attributes might be.

Less well understood are the knowledge and experiences that develop cross-cultural competence, particularly, whether training and/or education can be adequately influential. Efforts to measure the link between education and cross-cultural mindset use indirect measures of student perceptions, such as surveys and portfolio reflections. (Abe, Talbot, & Gellhoed, 1998; Altshuler, Sussman, & Kachur, 2003; Jacobson, Sleiche, & Burke, 1999)

Twenty years of studies in global leadership capabilities explore the operationalization of Cultural Intelligence theory, which itself builds on social intelligence theory and specifies four factors integrated in the mindset, words and behaviors of cross-cultural workers: meta-cognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral measures (Earley & Ang, 2003). The Cultural Intelligence model, with its four-factor cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral assessments is a unifying theory that incorporates most of the later theories and models. It has been widely studied in diverse business settings, and attempts to be predictive as to how cognitive and behavioral personality factors correlate with acculturation (Presbitero, 2016).

The focus of this study is to reverse the lens, and use the four factors of cultural intelligence to discover how a specific educational setting influences development of those factors that correlate to personal readiness to develop and deepen cultural judgment, decision-making, motivation to deal with difference, and behavioral agility for different cultures. An understanding of the educational experiences that graduates associate with cultural intelligence factors may inform a deeper understanding of how PME drives learning and development of cross-cultural leadership readiness.

### **Assumptions, limitations, scope**

Existing research into cross-cultural competence reveals these patterns of limitations: overwhelming reliance on self-reporting; absence of a commonly accepted set of attitudes and behaviors linked to global leadership readiness; variation in types and levels of leadership studied; and a preponderance of corporate studies. This study will echo some of those limitations as it does not seek to establish a cause-effect relationship between the current educational system and the actual cultural intelligence of study participants. Rather, it examines graduates' perceptions of how and why foreign officers in the student body influence their US counterparts in ways relevant to cross-cultural motivations and behavior, such as respect, patience, curiosity. Further, it will invite graduates' reflections on curriculum and pedagogy with respect to cognitive and metacognitive conceptualizing about the strategic leadership responsibilities for which the Army War College seeks to prepare them.

Despite the existence of multiple instruments to measure intercultural competence, there's no consensus on the efficacy of the existing tools, nor the applicability of those tools with respect to future actions (Perry & Southwell, 2011). Further, no study measures the relationship between education and measures of intercultural competence. Nevertheless, there is a strong argument for the premise that education provides an effective path to developing cross-cultural leadership capabilities, as expressed in concepts, attitudes and behaviors and that, therefore, that premise deserves further study (Andenoro, Popa, Bletscher, & Albert, 2012; Blaess et al., 2012; Neihaus, O'Rourke, & Ostick, 2012). To create a foundational understanding of the elements of education relevant to their fitness for intercultural leadership, this study proposes to use a case study approach to explore insights as reported by graduates with experience

The author's personal bias is a function of working in the study setting for more than a decade, having observed interactions and listened to anecdotes about the value of US-foreign officer relationships in post-graduation settings. Anecdotal stories are told and retold because they are rare, and enduring relationships are the exception. The author has mentored foreign officer/students' research projects and witnessed deepening cognitive development, but has no understanding of the US officers' response to the foreign perspective. Close relationships have been evident within the body of international students, but fewer and looser individual relationships have been observed between US and foreign officers. US students have been known to remember negatively their experiences working alongside foreign military counterparts in multinational operations. Some US students have expressed frustration at perceived shortcomings of foreign students, e.g., language proficiency and contributions to seminar learning. These exist as isolated data points, however. The author's reflection on these expressions of cross-cultural interactions juxtaposed with US Army policy to develop partnerships inspired motivation for this study, to question how an extended educational experience within a US-foreign cohort influences the US student. Several years ago, the author mentored a student officer's graduate research paper about efforts in multiple combatant commands, e.g., US European Command, or US Africa Command, to develop partner capacity in public affairs work. The student's observations triggered the question as to whether the U.S. military is developing leaders who understand that partnership is a relationship of respect between/among relative equals -- if not in hard power, then in other power variables. Author bias, then, is related to belief that it is important to use this graduate military education to develop the cultural intelligence for leader-to-leader interactions on a partnership basis, and that it is worthwhile to explore for evidence of that.

## **Significance**

This study offers potential insights about the role of higher education in engendering the leadership mindset and capabilities that can positively shape challenging intercultural exchanges, negotiations, and partnerships. The immediate significance is in terms of the war college's deeper understanding about how graduates perceive cross-cultural skills and attitudes and the elements of the educational experience that they report as relevant to those perceptions. The college itself may use the findings to modify program elements, priorities or policies. The study will contribute to educational knowledge and may add generalizable insights about the effectiveness of practices, structures and opportunity within multinational graduate education.

## **Definition of terms**

- Behavioral cultural intelligence refers to capacity to exhibit appropriate verbal and non-verbal actions when engaging people of other cultures: mental capability for cultural understanding paired with ability to select within a personally flexible range of behavioral options (Ang, Van Dyne, & Koh, 2006; Hall, 1959)
- Building Partner Capacity advances a mutually beneficial partnership between the United States and a partner country, focused on identifying capabilities, gaps, and needed assistance to fill gaps in order to participate in regional, and global, security; such partnerships are built on relationships of shared values, mutual interests, respect and trust enable dialogue with other nations (Marshall, 2011).
- Civil Affairs forces are the Department of Defense's primary force for working through and with nonmilitary organizations, institutions and populations of host nations and regional partners in order to facilitate military operations, reduce friction between civilians and



military forces, and accelerate the return of civil functions to the local people's control (HQDA, 2014).

- Cognitive cultural intelligence (CQ) is knowledge of other cultures' history, systems (Ang et al., 2006)
- Curriculum includes content, pedagogy, architecture and purpose selected by the institution to express its perspective on education (Rajendran & Premchandar, 2015).
- Emic refers to cultural understanding that arises from "insider" or first-person examination of the perspectives of individual(s) of an "other" culture (Morris, Leung, Ames, & Lickel, 1999)
- Etic refers to cultural understanding that is gleaned from a deductive, "outsider" approach, characterized by external description and analysis of patterns of cultural insights so as to inform others (Morris et al., 1999)
- Exercise, military is a military maneuver or simulated wartime operation involving planning, preparation, and execution that is carried out for the purpose of training and evaluation (Joint Pub., 2016)
- Expatriates are organizational members assigned to an international position for five years or less (Harvey, Fisher, McPhail, & Moeller, 2013).
- Experiential learning is the process of individual learning through reflection on concrete experience and/or active experimentation, contrasted with rote or didactic learning in which the learner plays a comparatively passive role (Kolb, 1984)
- Global mindset is comprised of individual attributes -- social, psychological and intellectual capital -- that can help increase a leader's effectiveness in influencing groups, organizations, and systems that are unlike their own (Leninger & Javidan, 2010).

- International Fellow is a senior military officer of a non-US country enrolled in the US Army War College (IF) (USAWC, 2016).
- Metacognitive cultural intelligence (CQ) refers to mental processes to acquire, plan for, monitor, question and adapt mental models related to knowledge of other's culture (Brislin, Worthley, & MacNab, 2006; Triandis, 2006; Ang et al., 2006).
- Military engagement refers to the activities to influence people, security forces, and governments across the range of military operations to prevent, shape, and win in the future strategic environment; the Army in 2014 added to its doctrine the US Army Functional Concept for Engagement in order to address the need for Army forces to enter an area of operations on foreign soil; communicate with local leaders and populace; assess needs; understand the situation, and develop capacity building programs; and direct efforts toward achieving outcomes consistent with US interests (TRADOC, 2014).
- Motivational cultural intelligence (CQ) is the individual's decision to direct interest and energy toward learning about and performing in cross-cultural situations: characterized by "agentic control of affect cognition and behavior that facilitate goal accomplishment" (Kanfer & Heggstad, 1997, p. 39; Ang et al., 2006). With high motivational CQ, individuals seek cross-cultural engagements for intrinsic interest and with confidence in their own cross-cultural ability (Bandura, 2002; Ang et al., 2006).
- Seminar is a cohort of students who meet together on a recurring basis for academic instruction, focusing each time on some particular subject, in which everyone present is requested to actively participate (USAWC, 2016).

- Senior military officers are officers at the rank of colonel or equivalent, with approximately 20 years' leadership experience in the US or foreign armed forces, e.g., Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

## **Conclusion**

An interconnected world means that politics and economics, among other things, are at stake when US military leaders step forward to represent the United States in coordination, collaboration, communication and negotiation across borders and cultures. The steep price of missteps adds to the importance of understanding how education, as an alternative to expensive investments in language training and immersive living experience, drives and develops cross-cultural leadership capabilities.

The literature review that follows recounts the efforts of multiple disciplines to ascertain the relevant set of cross-cultural competencies, to understand how to recognize or measure them, and to recognize the training and education that engenders them. It details the efforts of more than 50 years to pinpoint the characteristics of a cross-culturally competent leader; and the development programs to prepare individuals for a wide variety of cross-cultural impacts (from personal adaptation to job success). It identifies the themes of psychological theories, anthropological approaches to cultural competence, higher education's contributions to the field, organizational management themes, and military approaches to cross-cultural readiness.

The expectation for continued military engagement across the globe leads to the requirement for military leaders to be effective representatives of the United States in negotiations, coordination, and planning across nations and cultures. Despite an enduring respect for immersive foreign experience or intensive culture training, recent literature indicates that today's global managers and leaders require generalized cultural sensitivity in terms of

knowledge, thinking about effects of culture, motivation to adapt and invest effort, and behavioral agility. These cultural intelligence factors are not created by short-term training but by continuing development over time and through multiple experiences. The goal is leader readiness for unanticipated cross-cultural leadership challenges for which country-specific investment can turn out to be irrelevant. If higher education is the path to cognition, metacognition, motivation and behavior in a wide range of fields, then it's logical to expect it to be the locus of cultural intelligence development.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this literature review is to explore the key theories and concepts associated with cross-cultural competence and related education to give context to, and guide the study of student perceptions about effective factors in the cross-cultural education experience of the Army War College. The student body for this one-year graduate program comprises senior military officers of approximately 42 years of age and an average of 20 years of military leadership experience. The student body is shaped into multiple seminars, or cohorts, of 16 students each that include US military officers, foreign military officers, and senior civilian managers in U.S. national security agencies. The cohort mix reflects the multinational, multi-Service (joint) and interagency environment in which graduates will work. Selected for the program based on their prior leadership and expertise in specific fields working within their organization, the students complete a master's degree-granting program in Strategic Studies that is designed to prepare them for leadership responsibilities crossing borders, services, and agency boundaries (USAWC, 2015). Foreign officers have been integrated into this accredited program in higher education since 1978, lending the program cross-cultural exposure.

Cross-cultural traits and skills are required skills for global connections of technology, travel, internet, banking, communication, corporations, environmental movements, social media, national security, and, even, drug- and human-trafficking, terrorism and the international efforts to deter and defeat crime and terrorism. Once the realm of specialists, like anthropologists and diplomats, cross-cultural effectiveness is now a requirement for military leaders, business managers and others who will influence cross-border and cross-culture activities, operations and missions. Failure in cross-cultural effectiveness can lead to lost business, failed assignments,

missed opportunities, or worse (Stahl & Javidan, 2009; House et al., 2015). Authors of a recent business book made the case for a strategic global mindset by describing, “a world that is simultaneously boundary-less and replete with boundaries that mark significant differences across a broad spectrum of business and culture ...” (Gundling, Hogan, & Cvitkovich, 2011).

This literature review provides foundation for the study designed to address a lack of understanding about how the professional military education at the Army War College drives learning and development of US military officers’ cross-cultural leadership for post-graduate responsibilities. For context, the literature review recounts the efforts across multiple disciplines to ascertain the characteristics of cross-cultural competence characteristics (personality, behavioral, cognitive, cultural intelligence); and to explore the literature about ways to develop those characteristics across multiple career settings, to include academic, business and military fields.

### **Literature review methodology**

The purpose of this literature review is to review the associations that have been found between a set of personal traits, attributes, skills and the characterization of effective leadership in cross-cultural settings; and to explore the studies and activities that contribute to learning, application, evaluation and synthesis of those specific attributes and skills preparation for decision-making, cultural judgment, and task performance appropriate to cross-cultural leadership responsibilities. The review includes theories and models associated with social/culture development, studies related to characterizing effective leadership in an international setting; and distinctions among educational interventions that influence awareness and mindset as compared to effective behaviors in influencing or negotiating with those in other cultures. The review reveals a burgeoning of relevant studies since the mid-1990s, yet gaps exist

in understanding objective measures of cross-cultural leadership competency and in identifying the developmental studies or experiences understood to influence that competency.

This literature review includes recent sources published within the last decade, as well as sources that originated relevant theories and concepts and are, therefore, older than the last decade. Sources were collected from multiple locations to include dissertations, studies, peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and studies by government agencies and non-governmental policy-related agencies. The review was based on web searches of a wide range of key words, systematic review of associated journals on academic databases, using the same keyword searches, with backward snowballing for reference lists and forward snowballing to identify more contemporary works that cited the articles found in the search. Because of the exploratory nature of the literature review, the key words list evolved to capture a broad selection of potentially related theories and concepts: social capital, academic cohorts, international education, transformational leadership theory, cross-cultural competence, cultural intelligence, social cognitive theory, intergroup contact theory, etc. The review captures the studies that attempted to codify the attributes, traits and skills associated with cultural effectiveness. This broad-based literature review evolved into a review of literature related to enduring theories of cultural acumen and of learning models, and it is focused primarily on application in the fields of business, higher education, and the military. Refining the focus led to dismissal of some studies as criteria for study was clarified; as example, the literature review therefore does not include studies of undergraduate studies abroad nor college policies for recruiting/ retaining foreign students.

Works are included in the final data set when they contribute to understanding of those attitudes and behaviors relevant to senior leaders and managers operating in an international

setting, understanding of the meaning of “cross-cultural competence” and understanding of the background education and experience that contribute to those attitudes and behaviors. The intent of the literature review is to identify scope of understanding of the phenomenon of preparing leaders to represent their organization’s best interest while respecting an “other” in pursuit of shared interests -- in this case, common security goals.

### **Understanding requirements, capabilities, and gaps**

The study depends on this literature review to identify foundational efforts to characterize cross-cultural effectiveness and, then, to tease out the learning theories associated with educational development of culturally-astute knowledge, motivation and behavior. Research seeks to find correlations between personality traits and intercultural effectiveness, with an assumption that presence of traits are predictors of success and can be used as such (Digman, 1990; Bennett, 1986; Shaffer, Harrison, Gregersen, Black, and Ferzandi, 2006). Others propose that intercultural effectiveness presupposes varied combinations of personality and intelligence, with affective and behavioral indicators (Earley & Ang, 2003; Altshuler, 2003; Medina-Lopez-Portilla, 2004; Van Dyne & Koh, 2006; Shaffer, Harrison, Gregersen, Black & Fersandi, 2006). The literature reveals 50 years of internal professional development efforts in those fields that require leadership in international settings: diplomacy, international business, and military. Some research has sought to determine which educational experiences heighten the attitudes and traits needed for intercultural settings, with an assumption that education is a pathway to prepare individuals for overseas responsibilities (Triandis, V. Vassiliou, G. Vassiliou, Tanaka, & Shanmugam, 1972; Allport, 1954; Altshuler, Sussman, & Kachur, 2003). Both rest on the assumption that intercultural effectiveness can be defined, measured and engendered through experience and/or education. There are therefore two threads of examination in this literature



review – studies to define and identify indicators of cross-cultural leadership capability and the theories that shaped those studies; and studies to identify and characterize learning models applicable to education-based preparation for cross-cultural leadership.

### **Leadership demands for a globalized world**

Cross-cultural competence is a common phrase capturing the “ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations, to shift frames of reference appropriately and adapt behavior to cultural context” (Deardorff, 2006, p. 249). The expectation of high-level leadership effectiveness is exemplified in the demands of cross-cultural negotiation: social interaction with high stakes for both parties complicated by variations in cultural cognition, communication adaptability and negotiation skills (Brett, 2007). Legal, political, social, governmental, military, charitable organizations operate in the context of globalizing patterns of interrelationships.

Whether leading or influencing in other countries or planning from the Pentagon, senior U.S. military leaders will be responsible for international engagements ranging from humanitarian assistance and counter-drug trafficking and counter-terrorism to multinational combat operations (DOD, 2008). For the U.S. government and its military services, e.g., the Army, national security is itself a global undertaking that requires international relationships developed through education, economic and diplomatic policies, joint military training exercises, multinational operations, and humanitarian efforts, among others. In the military, civil-military communication, cooperation and coordination has been a specialized field, Civil Affairs, with specialized training and educational experiences. But more than a decade in Iraq and Afghanistan drove home the lesson that interaction with local people is part of the job for most soldiers and not just specialists (Caligiuri et al., 2011). Beyond armed conflict, military units engage in

disaster relief, peacekeeping, reconstruction operations, and support to partner militaries that are accomplished in association with other nations and cultures. Army policy and strategy increasingly are designed to develop partners, build partner capacity, and craft multi-national regional strategies (Caligiuri et al., 2011).

### **Knowledge, skills and attributes of cross-cultural leadership**

Psychological studies of adaptive personality traits as predictors of behavior date to the early 1800s. Efforts to characterize specifically the traits associated with adapting to cross-cultural settings date to the mid-1900s. The ability to operate effectively in culturally diverse settings implies a set of attitudes and skills that have inspired many studies to characterize what this study will term as ‘cross-cultural competence.’ The phrase as used by this author represents an individual’s respect and sensitivity for other cultures, races, religions and nationalities – as well as a predilection and skill set to create win-win outcomes for both the individual’s national organization and other nation (with their own mix of race, religion, culture, and political heritage). This phrase is not intended to encompass global movements that put human concerns above more traditional national or corporate loyalties, e.g., environmental organizations with activist agendas counter to some nations’ policies. In contrast, military organizations are tools of national power (excepting the armed militaries and paramilitary organizations of terror and criminal organizations). Therefore, the intent of this review is to reveal what is known about developing multicultural sensitivity and effectiveness applicable in international leadership activities.

There is little consensus about defining the phenomenon nor of naming it. Cross-cultural competence, global mindset, global/international/intercultural competencies (GII), cultural sensitivity, inter-cultural effectiveness, cultural intelligence, cross-cultural understanding, and

global competence are among the descriptors that appear in this literature review, based on the referenced authors' preferences. This study uses the term "cross-cultural leadership effectiveness" to describe the dual nature of the intended effect, described by Hunter, White and Godby (2006) as the skills to leverage knowledge and understanding to interact, communicate and work effectively outside one's own environment in pursuit of one's own agency objectives. The dual expectation to both leverage understanding and work effectively is significant, due to the inference that successful work is accomplished on behalf of the individual's organization, service or nation. The leadership element of the equation raises the level of impact of efforts and, therefore, the sophistication of required cross-cultural knowledge, skills and attributes. Cross-cultural leadership operates at a level ill-served by cultural awareness survey programs, for example.

Given that strategic leadership literature examines executives' cognitive styles in decision-making for complex problems, cognitive actions are the crossroads between mental and social characteristics of leaders. Five aspects of cultural influence on strategic leadership styles emerge from Upper Echelon theory: observable experiences, personalities, values, cognitive style, and leadership behaviors (Wang, Waldman, & Zang, 2012).

### **Theories and concepts of cross-cultural competence**

Psychological theories -- that personality tests can predict behavior -- marked early attempts to codify the attitudes and traits of those who are cross-culturally sensitive and adept. Building on almost a century of efforts to identify personality traits, the Big Five taxonomy of adaptive personality traits was defined and advanced by several sets of researchers in the 1960s, '70s and '80s. It identified five factors: openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. (Digman, 1990) Acceptance of the Big Five was marked by

efforts to correlate these five adaptive personality traits to cross-cultural settings. The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity was introduced (Bennett, 1986) as a framework for understanding a spectrum of individual proclivity for effective engagement in intercultural experiences, marking ethnocentric and ethno-relative orientations.

Early in this period, in 1972, the US Navy wished to turn every sailor into an ambassador for the United States and turned to an early contributor in cross-cultural research, Triandis, for a program based on an early understanding that a single factor, cognitive understanding, was relevant to cross-cultural effectiveness (Triandis et al., 1972). He built a training program that positively influenced sailors' cultural adjustment by familiarity training about intercultural differences – but failed to meet the Navy's ultimate intent hope for sailors' influential engagements abroad (Hunter et al., 2006). Since then, others have attempted to pinpoint the traits or behaviors needed in a culture that is not one's own. Through the 1980s and '90s, research patterns shifted from examining psychological adjustment to focus on behavioral performance in foreign settings.

Medina-Lopez-Portilla (2004) determined that both psychological and behavioral characterizations are relevant indicators of cross-cultural effectiveness. Intercultural sensitivity refers to psychological ability to deal with cultural differences – as measured by the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (a framework for changes in intercultural sensitivity); and intercultural competence refers to behaviors when operating in a foreign cultural context.

But it was in 2003 that Earley and Ang set out deliberately in a new direction from models of intelligence (social, emotional, physical, cognition, etc.) when their concept of Cultural Intelligence, or CQ, put behavioral indicators in the spotlight. They described the new

model as needed in the post-9/11 world to understand “why people vary so dramatically in their capacity to adjust to new cultures.” CQ, or the ability to adapt behavior for cross-cultural competence, addressed four factors: meta-cognitive, cognitive, motivational and behavioral (Earley & Ang, 2003). Their work triggered more than a decade of related studies to refine understanding of CQ in varied work contexts and geographical regions.

When Earley and Ang (2003) introduced the concept of cultural intelligence, researchers sought to correlate what was known about Big Five traits against the new CQ measures, adding new findings that personality was only part of the picture for cross-cultural savvy. Altshuler and colleagues (2003) applied cultural intelligence to workplace settings. Ang, Van Dyne and Koh (2006) looked for correlations between Big Five traits and CQ factors, finding some level of correlation for U.S. workers in other countries. Within a short time, researchers concluded that personality did not give a complete picture for cross-cultural adaptivity. Shaffer, Harrison, Gregersen, Black and Ferzandi (2006) correlated three of the Big Five personality traits (openness, agreeableness and emotional stability) to intercultural success and concluded that measures of cross-cultural effectiveness must include not only affective and cognitive measures but behavioral measures. In 2007, Ang and colleagues determined that personality was not an adequate predictor of necessary cross-cultural traits, and that the individual’s ability to function in culturally diverse settings is a more meaningful focus. Ang’s new work supported the use of the CQ scale, displayed in Figure 1, to determine intercultural effectiveness, but as a combination of traditional psychological measures of adaptation as well as the job-related measures of decision-making and task performance: related to affect, or motivation, and behavior.

Figure 1. Four-Factor Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS)

**The 20-item, Four Factor Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS)**

Instructions: Select the response that best describes your capabilities.

Select the answer that BEST describes you AS YOU REALLY ARE (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree).

**CQ Factor Questionnaire Items**

**CQ-Strategy:**

MC1 I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds.

MC2 I adjust my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from a culture that is unfamiliar to me.

MC3 I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I apply to cross-cultural interactions.

MC4 I check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from different cultures.

**CQ-Knowledge:**

COG1 I know the legal and economic systems of other cultures.

COG2 I know the rules (e.g., vocabulary, grammar) of other languages.

COG3 I know the cultural values and religious beliefs of other cultures.

COG4 I know the marriage systems of other cultures.

COG5 I know the arts and crafts of other cultures.

COG6 I know the rules for expressing non-verbal behaviors in other cultures.

**CQ-Motivation:**

MOT1 I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.

MOT2 I am confident that I can socialize with locals in a culture that is unfamiliar to me.

MOT3 I am sure I can deal with the stresses of adjusting to a culture that is new to me.

MOT4 I enjoy living in cultures that are unfamiliar to me.

MOT5 I am confident that I can get accustomed to the shopping conditions in a different culture.

**CQ-Behavior:**

BEH1 I change my verbal behavior (e.g., accent, tone) when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.

BEH2 I use pause and silence differently to suit different cross-cultural situations.

BEH3 I vary the rate of my speaking when a cross-cultural situation requires it.

BEH4 I change my non-verbal behavior when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.

BEH5 I alter my facial expressions when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.

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Earley and Ang's CQ model (2003) influenced many follow-on studies. Thomas, Elron, Stahl and Ekelund (2008) further argued that personality traits were less significant than the skill element of CQ: perceptual skills related to information gathering and interpersonal skills. In 2010, Paige, Fry, Stallman, Jon and Josic introduced yet another new framework of behaviors

associated with a global mindset. Examples -- voting, riding a bike to work, donating to international organizations, and shopping with 'voluntary simplicity' -- were intended to characterize global citizenship, rather than ability to work in cross-cultural settings domestically or abroad. That focus on a global mindset infused the work of Hanson (2010) who characterized a global mindset in terms of effect, or impact. Specifically, that work described cross-cultural understanding in pursuit of cooperation, and the social transformation model of cross-cultural understanding in pursuit of redress of inequities. Cartwright, in 2012, continued the shifting pattern of research into attitude or behaviors when describing intercultural competence in terms of impact on the individual's heightened connective leadership.

Although research patterns shifted in the 1990s from examining psychological adjustment to focus on behavioral performance in foreign settings, there has not been a discernible parallel shift to study the deeper set of attitude and skills in thinking, communicating and acting effectively among other cultures.

### **Developing cross-cultural competence**

Understanding of cross-cultural leadership requirements leads to questions about interventions to bridge the gap in leadership capabilities by examining the learning theories associated with educational development of culturally-astute sensitivity, behavior, and motivation. Psychologically-oriented learning theories, like those of Piaget and Bandura, are founded in the thesis that learning and development are, essentially, social activities (Bandura, 1977; Egan, 2005).

Hunter, White and Godby (2006) dismissed the possibility of identifying the right education for a global mindset by noting the still-murky nature of what behaviors reflect a global mindset, revealing the weakness of many studies that rely on self-reporting by those whose

cultural effectiveness is under assessment. Nevertheless, and across a wide variety of international and cross-cultural educational experiences, researchers have sought to determine how and how well the experience influenced cross-cultural sensitivity and later ability to work in a cross-cultural setting.

Models of learning create a systematic way to apply all the elements that contribute to learning and, in doing so, offer guidance for analyzing and planning for specific learning challenges. A multitude of learning models are linked to these learning theories: behavioral or conditioning learning that focuses on changing behaviors through stimuli; cognitive theories focus on how memory works to promote learning; constructivist learning theories promote teaching concepts that recognize how learners build on what they know and have experienced so as to develop new ideas; and, transformational learning focuses on how a learner may modify a frame of reference to be more inclusive and reflective (Amstutz, 2002).

**Behavioral learning.** A growing range of education programs are offered by corporations, commercial training programs, ranging from videos to lectures to overseas orientation visits to the culture assimilators. Triandis, who had introduced a knowledge-based familiarization tool, later championed culture assimilators, based on behavioral learning theories. These are widely tapped for their practicality and ease in orienting individuals to behavioral settings and appropriate responses, according to Bhawuk (2001), who argues for the addition of cognitive learning (based on culture theory, for example, culture-based perceptions of individualism vs collectivism). Bhawuk is but one who believes that cross-cultural readiness for the deep issues important to negotiation and collaboration is beyond the reach of a two-day training program. The challenge endures – to determine educational programs that lie somewhere



between training in surface culture (personal interaction, language, dress, social cues) and the evolutionary effect of a lifetime living with other cultures (Caligiuri et al., 2011).

In a separate vein, multiple studies examined the concept of academic cohorts. Introduced by universities to improve retention and facilitate scheduling, cohorts were found to be incubators of psychological and social effect. When Coleman introduced the concept of social capital in 1988, it opened new lines of reasoning and research. Coleman posited that social capital as a personal resource represented a better description of human behavior than the sociologist's view that the individual is governed by social norms and the economist's view that the individual is motivated by self-interest. Coleman's insights infuse most discussion of cohorts as a learning tool – relevant to this literature review when they are cross-cultural or inter-national in composition. Further examination of cohort learning from the psychological perspective observed that effects of cohort experiences on the individual have not been studied. (McCarthy, Trenga, & Weiner, 2005) But studies indicate that faculty-guided cohort norms are more successful than member-directed norms in groups of dissimilar backgrounds, as is true in multinational cohorts (Mandzuk, Hasinoff & Seifert, 2005).

**Contact Learning.** Robert Williams Jr in 1946 triggered decades of research on group-group relations and the premise that interracial contact under conditions of equality would lead to “mutual understanding and regard” (Lett, 1945, p. 35). His preliminary intergroup contact theory based on 1930-40s research identified relevant factors: equivalency between the groups through similar status in a structured intervention with shared interests and tasks. Through the next 60 years, more rigorous work clarified conditions for intergroup contact interventions to reduce prejudice; an enduring model called for four factors: equal status between groups in the contact situation, common goals, intergroup cooperation, and institutional support (Allport, 1954). Later

researchers tested the duration of the contact effect and the relative value of each factor, now recognized as a bundling of conditions (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Intergroup contact theory has found wide-ranging applications, from racial desegregation to mainstreaming disabled children, to regional conflicts and more (Amir, 1969). Some colleges' foreign exchange programs reflect the intergroup contact theory.

Contact models described varied degrees of contact as necessary to develop cross-cultural traits that cross cognitive, affective, behaviorist domains (Deardorff, 2006), building on Lewin's person-environment interaction theory about overcoming prejudice (1936) and contact theory of learning through interactions (Allport, 1954). Soria & Trois (2014) studied a variety of U.S. campus-based interactions - curricular, co-curricular, and social interactions - and concluded that the mix can create a cross-cultural competency equivalent to study abroad; those results were based exclusively on self-reporting rather than a measure of actual competency.

**Constructivist Learning.** Piaget's constructivist learning theory acknowledges the social dynamic within the learning experience, that individuals construct their own learning from their own experiences by assimilating new information into an existing mental framework, or by accommodating new information by reframing a mental model (Gentner & Stevens, 2014). An effort to measure the effectiveness of cultural training with pediatric physician-residents (Altshuler et al., 2003) determined some degree of success but revealed that the highest degree of post-training cultural sensitivity occurred for those physicians with extensive prior backgrounds outside the United States. A multi-set study of health students in overseas settings found that duration of contact was a predictor of effectiveness (Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004). Similarly, social cognitive theorists Bandura and Locke (2003) found that prior foreign experience is part of

the continuum of cross-cultural learning, assuming the prior experience did not reinforce negative perceptions.

**Transformative Learning.** Transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1991) refers to the process of effecting change in a frame of reference: a recent phenomenon in research and studies with respect to cross-cultural effectiveness. In the middle of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, several researchers indicated the obligation and opportunity for universities to internalize universal benefit of globalization, using transformative learning language (Gacel-Avila, 2005; Marginson & Van der Wende, 2007). Hanson (2010) was pointed in describing transformative learning theory as a roadmap for universities' cross-cultural educational experiences. Malkki (2010) studied Transformative Learning Theory, concluding that TLT's recommendation for developing emotional maturity through reflection is inadequate, and that changing fundamental worldviews requires learning activities focused on individuals' 'edge-emotions;' Malkki dismisses TLT reflection as an ideal that has been seldom studied in terms of outcomes. Lysaker and Furuness (2011) championed research and reflective writing as a tool for transformation that would benefit cross-cultural education, providing "space and opportunity" for students to address dissonance and strengthen relationships by sharing writing. The debate about transformative learning experiences – emotional, edge-emotional, reflective, etc.—suggest a potent line of research, that this author has not found, into the emotional factors associated with ethnocentric and ethno-relative attitudes and behaviors.

**Social Cognitive Theory.** Social cognitive theory is a learning model that recognizes the individual's role, self-efficacy, in learning and adapting. Based on a cognitive process executed in a social setting, social cognitive theory identifies personal efficacy as a central tenet of motivation and behavior, regulating all cognitive, motivational, affective and decision-making

process (Bandura, 1977 & 2002). In cross-cultural situations, the individual learns and adapts to different cultural contexts via vicarious experience: observing influential models, reflecting, and deciding to think and behave in new ways (Bandura, 1977). Social cognitive learning describes three “modes of agency”, or individual’s influence on one’s self and life circumstances: self - efficacy, social mediation, and collective agency through group action. Therefore, SCT integrates cognitive and behavioral theories of learning applicable to the nuances of cultural learning; learning is an active participation with cognition, environment and behavior mutually influencing each other, as in reciprocal determinism (Bandura 2002).

Today, the psychologists’ influence endures. The GLOBE Study famously captured middle manager leadership styles across 24 countries, concluding that culture shapes and selects leadership behaviors -- and that cross-cultural leaders will be more successful if their leadership style aligns with the nature of the country/culture, for example, individualist or collective preferences. It applied the same cultural preferences that Geert Hofstede introduced in the 1960s when he related the study of management styles to national culture: individualism and collectivism; power distance; uncertainty avoidance; relationship focus or deal focus, and long-term or short-term orientation. (Salmoni & Holmes-Eber, 2008). Subsequent works influenced by Hofstede, like the GLOBE Study, were psychology-based studies of national cultures specific to leadership/management styles -- and are presented as preferences along a continuum. Social Cognitive Theory, in contrast, is proposed as a more adaptive response to global interconnectedness and social developments that are fast making irrelevant the historical, bifurcated views about culture, for example, individualism versus collectivism, and autonomy versus interdependence (Bandura, 2002). Rather than focusing on personal preference for one style of social interaction or another, Social Cognitive Theory underscores the individual’s

control: self-efficacy, self-consciousness, self-regulation, in observing, processing, and adapting modeled behavior. In that model lays the opportunity to develop cross-cultural motivation and behavior through vicarious experience, short of the immersive experiences long-considered essential to developing cultural intelligence.

### **Internationalized education**

The internationalization of higher education, like on-the-job cultural training, follows the growth of globalization, with academic policies, procedures, and initiatives to cope with the global academic environment. A current count of almost 2000 publications related to international education in the last 20 years reflects a surge in interest in educational policies and trends, cultural differences, and program design (Kosmutzky & Putty, 2015).

Universities were established originally with a global worldview, for which sharing information transcended national and university boundaries (Marginson & Van der Wende, 2007) and these institutions have long been committed to guide students to prepare for roles in a globally connected environment. Specific universities, like Cornell, University of Minnesota, and Portland State University, were encouraged and funded to experiment with educational approaches and sponsor intercultural communication workshops, under the auspices of the Association of Foreign Student Affairs and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the US Department of State. These introduced English as a Second Language, and intercultural training technique in communication classes (Pusch, 2004). Undergraduate institutions, particularly, have invested in the broadening influence of study abroad programs and, increasingly, higher education institutions seek to prepare their students for specific work environments in a globalized setting, for example, health, hospitality, business, and national security. Internationalization describes the policies and practices that educational institutions

develop to prepare students for globalization (Altbach & Knight, 2007). However, studies show weak correlation between student exchange experiences and enduring cross-cultural competence; one identified little change in pre- or post-scores for students' Intercultural Development Inventory, absent tailored, targeted developmental interventions (Kuchinke, Ardichvili, & Lokkesmoe, 2014).

An academic shift from a prevalent interest in U.S. students' experience abroad began with attention to the foreign student in U.S. universities, and more recently on the influence of internationalization within U.S. university communities. Research findings that some on-campus activities may benefit cross-cultural competency more than study abroad, and that extra-curricular activities are more powerful than in-class interactions, are linked to the key factors of intergroup contact theory (Soria & Trois, 2014; Deardorff, 2009; Altbach & Knight, 2007). Academic support for overseas immersion experiences has experienced the same shift, from university-style cognitive lectures to high-contact, experiential engagement, as has occurred with cross-cultural management training; innovative approaches in domestic academic settings include the global leadership development plan which is founded on the concept that undergraduate students would develop personal plans to develop their own awareness of and interaction with international individuals and organizations (Neihaus, O'Rourke & Ostick, 2012).

Recent thrusts of interest in higher education include focus on creating the institutional commitment to global mindset through policies, practices and pedagogy; and on supporting teaching faculty to be themselves cognitively prepared to guide students' development of a global mindset (Blaess, Hollywood, & Grant, 2012). The constructivist view informs innovative efforts in higher education to create cross-cultural development opportunities and engagements short of overseas immersion experience, e.g., use of narrative as a pedagogical tool to develop

the self-awareness that is fundamental to open-mindedness and ability to pursue authentic, open dialogue with those of other cultures (Andenoro et al., 2012).

### **International business and developing cross-cultural competence**

International corporations' struggle to select and retain US managers for expatriate assignments followed the trajectory of federal efforts with respect to diplomacy and development officers, balancing functional expertise and adaptivity to overseas environments. The issue became notable after World War II with new sets of cross-cultural interactions: foreign service officers implementing the Marshall Plan to rebuild parts of Europe, the establishment of US Agency for International Development; educational exchange programs; and the growth of international trade. Early recruitment relied on language abilities that proved ill-suited as a selection criterion. Early cross-cultural training emerged as ad hoc efforts to resolve problems with underprepared representatives. The business community duplicated evolving approaches of federal diplomacy and development personnel. Edward Hall created in the late 1950s the Foreign Service Institute's training with respect to culture and communication, based on the premise that knowledge of a country was an inadequate form of preparation, as was prior expatriate experience. He focused on intercultural communication rather than study of other cultures, and advanced a concept of engaging foreign service students, themselves, in analysis about cultural challenge and adaptation. In doing so, he promoted a learning model founded in self-efficacy and self-awareness, experiential learning, and deliberate reflection about adapting to a foreign culture. The lesson was relearned with the establishment of the US Peace Corps in the 1960s. First using a university model of on-campus lectures and country-specific information, the Peace Corps recognized its inadequacy and adopted in 1970 an experiential model focused on

preparing candidates to learn not only about a specific country but about themselves (Pusch, 2004).

Corporate training, mid-century, had followed the ad hoc nature of the government efforts to develop individuals' ability to acculturate and adapt. The earliest recognized corporate training program prepared employees of Standard Vacuum Oil Company for assignments in Indonesia as of 1954. The early period, however, was marked by entrepreneurial training workshops. By 1984, the majority (87 percent) of cross-cultural training for a range of individuals was being offered by the Peace Corps, the Washington International Center, AFS International/Intercultural Center and the Experiment in International Living – despite the globalizing character of US businesses. Then and even now, behavior-centric workshops were either in-house preparation or limited pre-departure training offered by training groups, to socialize with expatriate managers the specific cues and skills that can be relevant in the target country (Pusch, 2004). Two patterns of research are discernible in the literature in the intervening years. Acculturation analysis, drawing from psychology, sociology and anthropology, looks at personality traits, values, beliefs, behavior and adaptation. Adjustment studies have shifted over time to minimize attention to specific work settings in favor of attention to those factors relevant to the individual and his/her relationship with the organization: performance, stress, family issues, career impact of failure, organizational culture and management interaction (Gonzalez-Loureiro, Kiessling & Dabic, 2015). Teaching styles evolved in corporate training as Kolb's Learning Styles Inventory (1976) and trainers modified programs to address multiple learning styles and, especially, to incorporate experiential learning.

The slow and fitful development of cross-cultural training programs produced in the 1980s a new sophistication suggested by more discerning approaches for specific corporate



audiences. One such audience was the group termed, “global nomads” who spent significant years outside of their home culture, to include “third culture kids” who lived many years overseas as children of missionaries, and members of the military, diplomatic corps, international business, and academia. By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, cross-cultural business preparation was a business itself, with a blossoming of small training enterprises. These endeavors were characterized by two new points of emphasis: executive coaching that included high-impact, meaningful and long-endurance contact with the trainers and coaches; and Internet leveraging to maintain contact and share resources and training processes virtually (Pusch, 2004). More important, perhaps, is diminished interest in one-size-fits-all management as businesses face cross-cultural challenges to motivation and leadership not only in global settings with multicultural teams, but at home with a diverse workforce and customer base (Eisenberg, Hartel & Stahl, 2013).

A study of foreign students participating in a management education cohort revealed the importance of informal curriculum or extracurricular activities as critical to the cultural experience, according to Brookes and Becket (2011) who applied the European Quality Improvement System criteria. This finding tracks with emerging understanding of the ability of US campus-based activities to raise US students’ cross-cultural exposure and engagement with the foreign students in their midst.

Cultural diversity is an explicit element of an international business education in Europe. The European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS) was established in 1997 by the European Foundation for Management Development to advance a competitive Europe by accrediting international management degree programs in terms of both academic quality and internationalization. Its existence is an example of the commitment to serve business managers

from throughout the Europe community where cross-cultural skills are in demand: 50 countries and 60 languages. EQUIS overtly promotes and measures internationalization in seven of 10 institutional standards: context, governance and strategy, programs, students, faculty, research and development, executive education. An outcome of EQUIS is that European management schools favor professional projects, internships and action learning more than the US case-study based management schools (Rajendran & Prechander, 2015; Kaplan, 2014).

### **Military themes in developing cross-cultural competence**

Since the post-World War II days, when Triandis was recruited to minimize “ugly American” incidents by sailors at foreign ports of call, the US military has duplicated the business model, through fits and starts driven by the environment and expectations about cross-cultural and international interactions. After occupying Germany, Japan and South Korea, the US military retained bases in those countries with large numbers of US service members assigned for several years; good-neighbor intentions led to institutionalizing in-country orientation classes to teach a few phrases of the host nation language and impart key behavioral cues and admonishments. Multinational military operations might take some small percentage of the US military to foreign countries for conflicts or peace operations of limited duration and limited interaction, often, with other cultures during the years following the end of the Cold War (Abbe, 2014).

The hybrid developmental approach, toward which diplomatic, academic and international management approaches have turned, contrasts with the military’s historical embrace of the anthropologists’ models since World War II, offering behavioral training for specific cultures defined by psychology models. These military training preferences were influenced by dominant theories, available trainers, and easily-grasped national cultures

approaches. Hofstede's national cultures analysis infused professional development within the Special Forces and Civil Affairs communities. Those military sub-communities were the exception to a military tradition that applied cultural training in specific locations for fine reasons, for example, orientation upon assignment to a US base in South Korea. The institution favored foreign language training, especially, with proven effect for those small and specialized military communities and with institutional language training capabilities. The default cultural preparation into the early post-9/11 years was country-specific just-in-time pre-deployment training: "a valuable but incomplete solution" (Abbe, 2014, p 33) for general-purpose forces as opposed to the small, specialized forces. Traditional operational culture studies – physical environment, economic system, social structure, political structure, and beliefs and systems – co-exist with newer developmental thrusts that reject the historical approaches as too fixed, misunderstood or misapplied (Salmoni & Holmes-Eber, 2008; Abbe, 2014)., 2007).

Since 2001, the US military has been engaged in the longest duration of conflict, with multiple rotations of units to Iraq, Afghanistan and neighboring countries affording access to logistics and air bases, among others. During this period, a new Army focus on developmental programs for the socio-cultural competencies needed for mission performance motivated an Army Research Institute study on the topic (Caligiura et al., 2011). The study was based on two factors, long-term cultural learning gained in multiple forms, and cultural agility developed through experience. Its findings pointed to a hybrid learning approach that incorporates multiple learning models over time through multiple types of treatments. Drawing on anthropologists, industrial/ organizational psychologists, education and management scholars, it concluded that cross-cultural learning develops through a continuous variety of formal and informal courses, programs, job experiences, self-directed learning, and social interactions.

Since the mid-2000s, Allison Abbe has worked with Army Research Institute and the Center for Army Leadership to analyze the contemporary environment and propose culture-general military preparation. Referring to generalized abilities that enable service members to operate effectively in different cultures, culture-general training and education reflected the strains of academic and management studies of the past decade. “Whereas language and regional expertise provide the depth to operate in a specific culture, cross-cultural competence provides leaders the breadth to operate in any culture” (Abbe, Gulick & Herman During that period, incremental changes in Defense Department policy for general-purpose forces, with language including as a critical enabler, “language, regional expertise, and culture” (Sands & Greensands, 2014). The Human Dimension White Paper (2014) identifies culture, regional expertise and language education as a specific action across the Army to support “human performance optimization” through investment in education programs focused on the development of cultural and regional expertise prioritized to potential conflict areas, and an officer requirement for minimum language proficiency. Just-in-time country-specific training and language skills echo an entrenched model.

In 2007, Abbe, Gulick & Herman surveyed more than 30 years of academic and empirical studies to understand the indicators of cross-cultural competence, or, in their words: Predictors of Intercultural Effectiveness. Indicators included agreeableness, bicultural identity, cognitive complexity, conscientiousness, coping and stress management, cultural distance, cultural knowledge, emotional stability, empathy, extraversion, flexibility, frame-shifting, gender, initiative, interpersonal skills, language ability, need for cognitive closure, non-ethnocentrism, nonverbal decoding, openness/intellect, perspective taking, prior experience, self-efficacy, self-monitoring, tolerance for ambiguity (Abbe, Gulick & Herman, 2007). The sheer

range of dimensions informed this author's decision to select the mixed-dimension theory of cultural intelligence that selects for a "cocktail" of cross-cultural competence indicators: cognitive indicators (cognitive complexity, cultural knowledge), affect/motivation (empathy, initiative, need for cognitive closure, non-ethnocentrism) and skills (coping, emotional stability, flexibility, frame-shifting, interpersonal skills, perspective-taking).

The 2007 Abbe, Gulick & Herman research survey team further developed a review of cross-cultural measures. These measure personality traits, and are largely based on self-reporting: (1) the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire correlates with general personality constructs; (2) the Intercultural Adjustment Potential Scale focuses on indicators of adjustment in foreign assignments; (3) the Intercultural Sensitivity Inventory combines trait-based and culture-specific measures; (4) the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory assesses personality traits and intercultural communication detection/decoding skills. Measurement instruments for cross-cultural behavioral competence depend on interpretation by third-party observers: (5) the Behavioral Assessment Scale for Intercultural Communication Effectiveness captures displays of respect, interaction posture, and tolerance for ambiguity, among others. Scenario-based assessments include the (6) Situational Judgment Test for Cross-Cultural Social Intelligence, which purports to measure empathy and ethnocentrism but empirically correlates with cognitive ability. The (7) Cross-Cultural Adaptability Scale is a self-reporting measure developed to select military members for peacekeeping operations. A host of business management instruments, to include the (8) Global Leadership Life Inventory and (9) the Prospector, were designed specifically to mid-level corporate managers. As an alternative to the preponderance of self-reporting measures, (10) the Gesture Recognition Task and several related instruments rely on interpretation of emotional and non-verbal communication, and the (11) Implicit Association

Test objectively assesses reactions times in a categorization task to measure attitudes toward others. Validity was yet to be established for many of these instruments. Both applicability and validity had yet to be established for these with military populations (Abbe, Gulick & Herman, 2007).

While the Defense Department has noted the requirement for more culturally astute general-purpose forces, and literature has identified characteristics of cross-cultural competence, there remains a gap in understanding the cause and effect of cross-cultural experience and cross-cultural competence, and validated correlations of development efforts and effects. A very large institution like the US military may point to pockets of innovation, but implementation of new training and education approaches requires measured decision-making based on proven models. The first cross-cultural development model used within DoD was the Interagency Language Roundtable model to assess language and intercultural communication. A more comprehensive effort was the 2008 Defense Regional and Cultural Capabilities Assessment Working Group's product, a list of 40 cross-cultural elements of knowledge, skills and personal characteristics. In 2012, the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) further developed the 2008 product into a developmental framework expected to guide cross-cultural competency training for the DoD uniformed and civilian workforce. For now, the proposed 3C developmental model exists conceptually (Greene-Sands & Sands, 2014).

### **Assessing cross-cultural competence**

There is no consensus as to an appropriate assessment tool to measure cross-cultural effectiveness or competence, but there are multiple instruments that include a wide variety of personality traits and behavioral skills. An accepted research tool is, however, a critical element of discerning whether an educational intervention has influenced cross-cultural effectiveness.

The four-factor Cultural Intelligence Scale was developed as an objective evaluation tool (Ang, Van Dyne, Koh, & Ng, 2004). In 2003, Hammer, Bennett & Wiseman introduced a 50-item paper-and-pencil instrument, based on the DMIS theory. The Intercultural Development Inventory (2003) is linked to constructivist learning assumptions about melding prior experience with current educational interaction. House's team developed a complex set of measures of effectiveness, but the instrument of measure was interviews with the subordinate leaders who work directly for CEOs in international settings; the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) project's strength is the size of the study, using more than 250 investigators across all continents but nonetheless relying on analysis of subordinate reporting (House et al, 2014). Despite the high degree of interest in the topic over the last two decades, the instrument of choice for measuring effectiveness remains self-reporting or subordinates' assessments.

### **Summary of arguments and issues**

The literature revealed the tension between the long-standing faith in culture-specific training, such as immersion experiences, language training and behavioral modification training, and newer appreciation for cultural-general sensitivity and adaptivity. There is no consensus today about what characterizes effective cross-cultural training and development, yet there is growing recognition that educational intervention can enhance cross-cultural effectiveness, as reflected in various models across the globe. Despite studies suggesting that cross-cultural effectiveness incorporates multiple factors of personality and behavior, knowledge and values, many programs address only one or two of these. But through the years, academic studies have indicated the value of a combination of approaches, especially in recognizing the multiplicative effect of months or years immersed in another culture. More recent studies suggest that some

degree of cross-cultural effectiveness that was formerly developed through extended periods overseas can be replicated by internationalized academic experiences on US campuses as happens routinely and deliberately in European management schools. In business, short-term corporate or commercial programs rely on behavioral and cognitive approaches, inferring that near-term cultural adjustment predicates the long-term exposure which deepens and broadens openness and acceptance of other cultures and, in turn, increases cross-cultural effectiveness.

### **Implications for the study**

This literature review positions the study in the context of theories and studies related to the topic, synthesizing previous assessments and findings, and indicates the gap in understanding that the study was designed to fill. There is a gap in understanding about the effectiveness of graduate management programs in developing more than familiarity and behavioral responses but the openness, readiness to find commonality and communication skills needed for leadership and management in cross-cultural settings. Trends toward practical application by business programs and cross-cultural commercial training programs address relatively superficial orientations that seemingly anticipate that on-the-job experience will “fill in the gaps.” U.S. trends toward ‘internationalization at home’ may be effective in overcoming stereotypes and deepening Big Five traits such as openness, but do not approach the critical thinking and problem solving demands of leadership in a globalized world community. European business and management schools have embraced the idea that internationalization of policies, attitudes, and behaviors should be integrated throughout the curriculum – indeed is an accreditation criterion. Trends in research point to increasing complex and nuanced assessments of developmental effects; trends in methodology reflect a shift from the formerly popular self-reporting on cultural mindset and competence (Ang et al., 2006; Hammer et al., 2003) to use of survey instruments.



Yet, an objective accounting for cross-cultural effectiveness as a function of leader behaviors is consistently reported as a gap in research that has traditionally relied on self-reporting by those whose cultural effectiveness is in review (Hunter et al., 2006).

There is opportunity to learn from a study of the academic experience of multinational student cohorts in U.S.-based educational settings in an effort to identify the pedagogical and social approaches that best support development of effective cultural knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. This literature review is a tool, then, in shaping the study of the perception experience of senior military officials in a one-year graduate program in national security studies as to what curricular and experiential actors influenced their social-cultural intelligence, as registered by one of the accepted instruments. The hypothesis is that specific elements of the educational experience are perceived by military officer/students themselves – both US and foreign – to be relevant to modifying or influencing their views with respect to working as partners with counterparts in other countries. A cross-comparative analysis of two groups of students, for example, U.S. Army combat arms officers and Arab nations' Army officers of similar military backgrounds, could be expected to indicate the relevant influencing factors for U.S. officers and for foreign officers and, in turn, suggest a model of best practices. To do so, this literature review is structured to identify relevant theories and review insights from studies associated with international education and, by doing so, reveal patterns of thought and potential gaps in understanding the phenomenon of developing culture acuity relevant for international work.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

Around the world in 2016, Army forces are operating in 140 countries; engagements in most of those countries are supporting the United States' current policy of regional engagement and 'building partner capacity' (JCS, 2015; Marshall, 2011). The future of multinational defense relationships depends in part on senior military leaders prepared to assess and understand a cross-cultural situation, and to collaborate and negotiate with partner nations' leaders about shared interests and strategies to achieve the agreed-upon ends (Yukl, 2013). Senior military leaders are best prepared for strategic responsibilities -- to communicate, negotiate, build consensus to attain cooperation and support from other nations, operating across complex networks of overlapping and sometimes competing counterparts -- when they operate with the attitudes, motivation and behaviors that characterize cultural intelligence (USACAC, 2006).

The complexities of developing senior military leaders' readiness to represent the United States and to interact effectively with leader counterparts in other nations can include language readiness and culture-specific knowledge, but a general cross-cultural competence is the ideal goal for senior leaders (Ang, Van Dyne, & Rockstuhl, 2015). Although language skills and intensive cultural knowledge can be useful tools, the time investment to develop these is an uneasy fit with the demands on leaders whose responsibilities transcend knowledge and skills for a specific culture. Current themes in cross-cultural research underscore the need for a culture-general mental readiness that incorporates knowledge about varied cultures, thinking about the effects of cultural differences, motivation to learn and adapt for interactions with other cultures, and the planning and agility requisite for adaptive behaviors (Abbe, Gulick, & Herman, 2007; Perry, 2011; Caligiuri et al., 2011; Deardorff, 2015; Presbitero, 2016). The role of developing

these factors is appropriate to the role of higher education, guiding students to suspend judgment in order to learn about other cultures, consider new perspectives, and reflect on their roles as leaders in a globalized world. In the U.S. defense community, professional military education (PME) continues throughout an officer's career. PME culminates for a colonel or lieutenant colonel, with approximately 22 years of experience in the armed forces, in the one of the senior (PME) institutions, among them the U.S. Army War College. When selected for general officer rank, a new set of service-specific and joint educational requirements awaits.

Senior military leaders prepare for global leadership responsibilities through the 10-month graduate program of the war college. The curriculum examines strategic leadership, international relations and regional studies, theories of war and strategy, government processes for developing national security policies, and military processes for developing, in turn, military campaigns to execute national policies. The students are challenged to understand, interpret, and master a "VUCA environment" that is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (Gerras, 2010). The Army's leadership doctrine refers to the strategic leaders who coordinate and lead in multi-service, interagency and international contexts, as the Army's "ultimate multi-skilled pentathletes" with conceptual, interpersonal, and communication skills that enable them to visualize outcomes while maintaining focus on the national command's objective; tactfully communicate respect for others' position while maintaining nonnegotiable positions. These job skills incorporate listening, judgment, persuasive communication, mental agility, recognizing options for compromise, expanding frames of reference to understand new and ambiguous situations, and using dialogue in pursuit of both inquiry and advocacy (USACAC, 2006). Over a career, these leaders develop a frame of reference about the strategic world, through experience, education, and self-study. Evolving a personal knowledge structure by making sense of new

knowledge and experiences is largely an individual initiative -- arguably, shaped by self-efficacy. Interpersonal competencies parallel cross-cultural competencies: persuasive yet willing to compromise; able to build consensus in addition to commanding and directing; listening; diagnosing unspoken agendas; “communicating a clear position on an issue while conveying the possibility of compromise;” “sensitive to nuances of meaning;” care in word choices appropriate to others’ interpretation; persuasiveness ... to build support, build consensus and negotiate successfully ... [despite] a vague, uncertain environment” (Gerras, 2010, p 33). The conceptual, interpersonal and communication skills prized by the Army for its top leaders correlate with the cognitive, motivational and behavioral skills that characterize cultural intelligence (Earley & Ang, 2003).

Recognizing that future operations, ranging from humanitarian operations in peace, to military training partnerships, military exercises, and armed conflict, will be executed in partnership with other nations, the war college student body includes foreign military leaders who study alongside U.S. military leaders. Because other nations are more likely to have armies than air forces and navies, the highest number of foreign military officers enrolled in US-based senior PME study at the Army’s war college where, in turn, the highest number of U.S. military officers are Army. The International Fellows Program of the Army War College incorporates as many as 80 senior Army officers of other nations into the curricular activities and co-curricular social, sports, and associated activities. The USAWC International Fellows Program is a subset of the International Military Education and Training (IMET) Program, a State Department program executed by the Defense Department, ranging across many military schools from technical training to education at the war colleges (Bremer, 2012). The IMET program was authorized by the US Congress in 1976 to encourage effective, mutually beneficial relationships

and increased understanding between the United States and foreign countries; and to improve the defense abilities and self-reliance of such countries (Ahles, Rehg, Prince, & Rehak, 2013). There exists no routine program or process to understand if and how PME at the Army War College influences learning and development of foreign military officers' cross-cultural leadership for post-graduate responsibilities. However, informal measures of effectiveness have included anecdotal evidence of useful US-foreign military relationships; graduates' attainment of high-level accomplishments in their home countries and in multinational operations; and other nations' decisions to support repeated participation (Bremer, 2012; Ahles et al., 2013).

The Department of State determines objectives by region and by country for the IMET program to promote regional stability and defense capabilities. Annually, IMET objectives shift with US security objectives in terms of priorities: in 2016, for example, focusing within Africa on states critical to long-term regional peace and stability; professionalizing defense forces and regional partners with emphasis on maritime security capability within the East Asia and the Pacific region; enhancing regional security and interoperability among US, NATO and key strategic partners within Europe and Eurasia; developing security forces of enhanced professionalism, technical training, and awareness of international norms of human rights and civilian control of the military at a time of change within the Near East; professionalizing regional partner defense forces through English language and respect for rule of law, human rights, and civilian control of the military within South and Central Asia; and institutionalizing professionalism, respect for human rights and rule of law, and partner nations' ability against transnational threats within the Western Hemisphere (Department of State Congressional Budget Justification, 2016).

This qualitative study explored U.S. military officer/graduates' perceptions about how their studies and activities alongside foreign officers at the Army War College influenced their preparation for decision-making, cultural adaptation, and task performance in a cross-cultural leadership context.

Exploration of US graduates' perceptions about the link between their educational experience and their follow-on career experience was expected to offer insights that may be generalizable about what types of learning activities were considered relevant to their cross-cultural leadership capability, as characterized by the cognitive, metacognitive, motivational and behavioral factors of cultural intelligence -- and what collaborative experiences with foreign counterpart provided modeling for necessary motivation and adaptive behaviors. A case study approach was implemented to capture first-person perceptions, code elements of their responses, and identify and assess patterns in the responses within the cultural intelligence framework which addresses metacognitive/understanding, motivation, and behavior factors (Earley & Ang, 2003). The expectation was that categories of these graduate perceptions would reveal insights about first-person, vicarious, and group learning in an educational setting, short of immersive overseas experience, when individuals apply high self-efficacy to observe, reflect, and adapt in terms of thinking, motivation, and behavior. Language creates structure and in this case, the structure is the common language of the military experience (Yamazaki & Kayes, 2004). The case benefited, then, not only from shared English skills but commonalities across military organizational cultures, permitting this study to examine factors other than language.

This research project was positioned within a body of studies about identifying, measuring and developing cross-cultural competence. This study was designed within a framework that interlocks cultural intelligence theory and social cognitive learning theory. Cultural intelligence

theory characterizes the key, desired metacognitive/understanding, motivation and behavior factors of cross-cultural competence for culture-general responsibilities of senior military leaders (Early & Ang, 2003). Social cognitive learning theory proposes understanding of those learning factors applicable to developing cultural intelligence. Set against the historic backdrop of military training, education, and operational approaches for developing culturally-agile professional soldiers, the study was expected to focus on an educational setting to offer further understanding of curriculum, pedagogy, and associated factors that enable military officers to enhance individual effectiveness in cross-cultural settings through PME (Deardorff, 2015; Perry, 2011; Presbitero, 2016; Atkinson, 2014; Turley, 2011).

### **Setting**

The Army War College is the Army's center for education at the strategic level of national power. It offers a single master's degree program and multiple professional certificate programs for selected senior leaders of the U.S. military and national security agencies and foreign nations' military leaders; and it contributes research, studies, and war-game analysis to inform policy makers and strategic military leaders. The senior school in the Army's educational system, it has at times been called "the generals' school" because senior-level PME is one of several prerequisites for Army officers' selection to general officer ranks. (Selection additionally requires Joint Professional Military Education-level II certification, embedded in the Army War College education; and joint assignment experience.) The Army War College is one of four senior service colleges, along with the Navy, Air Force, and Marine; several joint senior PME institutions, include National and Eisenhower war colleges, among others. Located since 1951 at the Carlisle Barracks Army base, the college enjoys a mutually beneficial relationship with the neighboring liberal arts college and law school in the college town of Carlisle in south-central

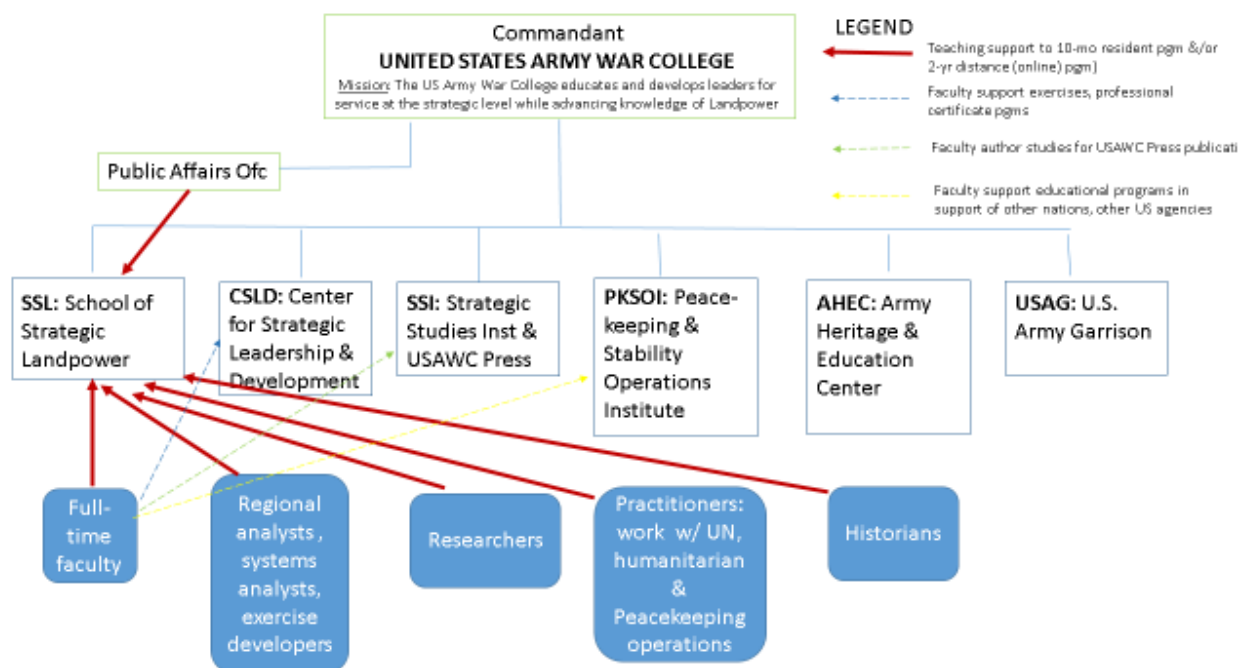
Pennsylvania. Equally important is its two-hour proximity to Washington DC, making possible frequent interactions with leaders and experts of the Pentagon, Congress, State Department and other federal agencies while apart from the high work tempo and commuting distractions of the National Capital Region.

Established in 1901 by a general order of the US Congress, the Army War College has existed for most of its history as professional school for senior Army officers, and has developed into an academic institution accredited to grant master's degrees and joint PME certification, and offer strategic level military education through a range of delivery styles and specialized course to the senior leaders of the U.S. and other countries. During the past few decades, the college established the additional organizations that complement the mission of the degree-granting School of Strategic Landpower, much as a research center complements the colleges of a university. Since 2000 the master's program has been accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. The war college's five major entities are informally referred to as the school, the war-gaming center, the research arm, the peacekeeping institute, and the history center (these descriptors parallel the left-right alignment of the formal names in Figure 1, Army War College organization). The core entity, the School of Strategic Landpower, offers a master's degree in Strategic Studies through two delivery methods: a 10-month resident education program, and a two-year online, distance education program with two short resident phases. US students of the master's degree program are senior military officers of the US Armed Forces, with the preponderance from the Army; they are board-selected by their service headquarters based on career achievements and potential for service in senior leadership positions. The majority have previously earned a master's degree. The resident study body of 2016 included 280 U.S. military officers of the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, 24 senior



civilians of US agencies, and 79 international officers competitively selected by their service, their agency, or their country, respectively.

Figure 2. Army War College organization



The school employs full-time faculty and ‘borrows’ part-time faculty from the other war college entities. The faculty team includes “professors of scholarship, research and practice,” the former two groups with terminal degrees and the third comprising senior military officers with experience working at the strategic level. The third group is overwhelmingly US officers, with one or two foreign officer faculty each year. The core faculty work full time in the School of Strategic Landpower, and a wide range of researchers and staff with full-time duties in other USAWC institutes contribute their specialized expertise as part-time instructors of elective courses, certificate programs, and outreach programs. Almost all these part-time instructors are engaged in research, staff work, and/or external collaboration that complement the slated

faculty's fields, for example, cyber security, homeland defense, history, communication, operational psychology, and geographical regional studies, for example, Middle East, EurAsia, China, and more.

The mission of the U.S. Army War College is to educate and develop leaders for service at the strategic level while advancing knowledge in the global application of Landpower: The war college focuses its assets and capabilities on the realization of a shared vision: Producing strategic leaders and ideas invaluable to the Army and the nation. While the vision describes a future state, the intent statement explains the conditions necessary to achieve it: Gold standard for strategic leader education and development - our graduates are highly valued, respected and in demand; Vanguard of the Army's strategic renaissance - our scholarship, service and support to the force are highly regarded, influential, and focused on national security issues at the strategic level; Source of valued intellectual and practitioner support - our staff, faculty, and students engage externally as scholar and practitioners in the global application of Landpower; Home to a thriving and supportive military community - our post and local community create a positive, developmental environment for staff, faculty, students, and families. (USAWC, 2016, 4).

The Army War College academic pedagogy incorporates seminar discussion of readings and case studies, academic field trips, and experiential education elements such as policy development and campaign planning as group projects. "Education at the USAWC conforms to an inquiry-driven model of graduate study.... Core courses provide a base of knowledge that allows student to exercise professional judgment on strategic choices relating to national security. Additionally, they provide a venue for student debate on controversial and complex topics. Finally, they exercise students in how to think rather than what to think." (USAWC,

2016). Student seminars progress through six months of core academic courses with their base cohort - a carefully balanced mix of representatives of all armed services, with active and reserve component representation, civilian managers from national security agencies, and four foreign officers. Teaching strategies rely on daily reading as the basis for class discussion, with little lecture other than guest speakers. Teaching strategies include case studies, small group exercises, role-play, observations, site visits (staff rides), diagramming and debate (Sackett, Karrasch, Weyhrauch, & Goldman, 2016). Experiential learning is incorporated into most courses, and includes three “national security staff rides” for first-hand interaction with the environment of the Gettysburg Battlefield; with the senior leaders of New York City-based government entities and corporations and country missions to the United Nations; and with DC-based Department of State and other federal agencies think tanks, and media organizations. The school made an alternative curriculum available to selected students during the 2009-2013 academic years included in the study; after approximately two months with the core seminar, approximately 18 students selected from across the student body create a new seminar, the Advanced Strategic Art Program, that accelerates certain elements of the core curriculum and adds material focused on strategic planning.

The school encourages participation in extracurricular activities, reminiscent of the range of activities on American college campus: fitness, competitive sports, social events, family-oriented events and activities, religious activities, resiliency-development programs, wellness programs, and more. Every foreign officer is teamed with a US student sponsor from the seminar who serves as a liaison for assistance on academic and institutional matters.

Faculty describe their role in facilitating the graduate experience as one of guiding students to new mental habits, to include breaking cultural bias, and especially US-centric

cultural bias. Two experienced faculty members who lead the courses related to command, leadership and management offered insights about pedagogy and the student seminar composition.

It's not just the [International Fellows]. It's the diversity across all the participants that I think helps facilitate the Socratic method of instruction. But even with the diversity in the seminar across ethnic, racial, gender lines you still have sort of a basic US perspective. We have a common cultural bias in the United States that is, really, only cured by foreign students.... What they bring is an entirely different cultural perspective normally than what is being held by most of the US students. That really comes clear when they start down a path where they have mutual support for a common perspective and the international fellow gives a different perspective. When you're the superpower, pursuing your objectives, it's easy to forget just how that can undermine the relationships that are important for long-term stability in that region or that country.

[The IF countries] send their best here, and they go back to influential positions. Not only an opportunity for them to give us a different perspective, they also get a different perspective and you see it in their writings ... more balanced.

From the first week, in the process of introductions and opportunity to share best experiences, the US students see that the US view is not the only one. For any issue, especially if ambiguous and with high-impact, one needs to think critically and that begins with understanding points of view. What you understand depends on where you're sitting. We think we are unique in our exceptionalism. We find they care about family and country in common with us, despite not having the freedoms and values....

The idea of shifting frame of reference is the biggest thing we offer our students – to get exposure to a breadth of experience and to open their apertures to understand other perspectives in international relations, for example. When US students dismiss IF, it tends to be those countries with limited resources and little experience on the world stage – balanced by those IF with vast experiences, several languages, who could run a major headquarters as well as or better than a US officer. The art of process about thinking of equitable partners is to get past the idea of equal shares. For the war college students, they must understand they are a prisoner of their experiences and we help them recognize what they can learn from one another over time. And, we offer personal evaluation [instruments] and 360-degree assessments: we give them a chance to make a choice to be more valuable to themselves and others. The seminar and faculty will confront all with the need to change frames of reference, but there will be some who do not change the views they already hold. (E. Filiberti & C. Allen, personal communication, March 12, 2014)

### **Participants**

This case study was designed to create a rich description of how USAWC graduates report their own perceptions about exposure to and experience with foreign officer counterparts within a bounded system (Merriam, 2009). The case, or bounded system, was a subset of the Army War College resident graduates of the Security Studies program, and supported in-depth study of the actors who reported their perceptions of the US student learning experience when exposed to and working with international students. Because all the military officers in the student body were selected by their country at 20-24 years into their careers based on past success and potential for success in future assignments that may be expected to be positioned in

multinational/interagency environments, the case minimized variables associated with age and experience. Prior to selection for the Army War College, all officers had completed a basic officer course upon commissioning into the officer corps, an advanced course at approximately four-to-six years of experience, the command and general staff officer course at 10-to-12 years of experience. They share a common military organizational culture, generally.

The study planned to select prospective participants using criteria relevant to the problems being studied, that the US military expects senior military leaders to represent US equities in positions of cross-national and cross-cultural responsibility and negotiation with counterparts in unplanned settings for which immersive experience and extensive culture-specific training is infeasible. The ideal candidate was determined to be a graduate who had worked, since graduation, with foreign leaders while leading or influencing partnership activities. The rationale for selection, then, was to identify actors who shared similar ages and career experiences prior to the international educational experience, and whose rank and career field and brigade-level command suggested a likelihood of future assignment to significant responsibility that would require communication, coordination, planning and decision-making with other-than-U.S. Army leaders. Age and military rank are indicators-in-common linked to duration of military experience. Conferred through competitive selection, command is a special assignment that carries with it authority and responsibility for 3000 to 5000 soldiers, for example, an Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Army, 2014). Army brigades are designed to be capable of independent operation, with correlated responsibility to represent the United States in inter-national and cross-cultural coordination and negotiation (Army, 2015). The study sought colonels who had completed a brigade-level command since graduation, rather than those officers who had already been selected for flag/general officer rank. The number of years

between war college graduation and selection for general-officer rank introduced likelihood that graduates at the general officer rank would be unable to distinguish educational influences from post-grad experiential influences. Further, those graduates within the general officer ranks would have attended the school when IF numbers were fixed at a lower IF-US ratio with, arguably, a lesser level of interaction than in the years starting with academic 2009 when expansion of the IF program increased the potential for US-IF interactions.

The current officer promotion system selects the general officers who are most likely to assume such cross-cultural leadership responsibilities from among successful brigade commanders, and those from among the set of successful battalion commanders; selection for the war college, too, is based on successful battalion command. Although the Army War College includes officers of all the nation's armed services, limiting participation to Army officers was expected to minimize differences among participants in terms of military education and experience (short of eradicating differences). Further, Army-only participation was expected to limit the study to those more likely than Air Force or Navy officers, for example, to engage in coordination and negotiation with other countries because of its land-based operations. This could be said of Marine officers but the percentage of Marines in the resident class is low, and their operational experiences are likely to differ from Army combat arms officers. To further bound the case, certain types of career fields are deselected because these officers are more likely to be specialized advisors to commanders, for example, attorneys, medical officers, personnel and intelligence officers. Therefore, the case drew from U.S. Army officers whose post-graduate career included command responsibility, drawn from combat arms (Infantry, Armor, Special Forces, Field Artillery) and logistics career fields. This homogeneous sample was selected for perceptions of multiple individuals who have experienced the educational studies and activities

alongside foreign officers and can relate the educational experience to their post-graduation responsibilities as brigade commanders operating in foreign countries. Rosters of former brigade commanders who have been further assigned to significant responsibilities were accessible from the Army War College, which sponsors post-graduate education for key categories of senior Army officers. This research was authorized by the Army Research Institute (ARI), for a sample size of 5 to 9 graduates of the resident education program of the Army War College, expected to offer a range of responses adequate to understand the program from the users' perspective, and yet few enough to make possible detailed interviews and the subsequent coding and analysis of those interviews.

The ARI authorization to interview Army personnel supported the IRB request for exemption. The study was designed so that disclosure of identifiable information would not place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation. Further, the research data was planned to be recorded by the study author in such a manner that the subjects would not be identifiable. To reduce the probability and magnitude of harm from negligible to none, the researcher explained to each interview participant the data to be collected, and the method for recording, identifying and disposing of data.

The researcher is a staff member in the college headquarters; the School of Strategic Landpower which offers the master's program in Strategic Studies is a subordinate organization. The researcher works directly for the college leadership, and supports faculty and students from an assignment position outside of the school. Following the lead of other staff members within the college who have pursued studies related to normal education practices, the researcher accessed public graduate lists, reviewed publicly available records of commands, and accessed



selected graduates through the DoD enterprise email system. Follow-on coordination for date, time, and location of interview was completed by email.

## **Data**

A graduate officer's decision to participate in the study may have been shaped by their perception of the benefit of the study and their trust in the researcher. The invitation to participate identified potential study insights, how that knowledge will contribute to the field of study, and how the knowledge might benefit future students with respect to developing cross-cultural competence.

Interviews were scheduled at times and locations of the participants' choice, for example, an in-person interview at their workplaces or remote interview via phone or an Internet-based communication. One-on-one interviews of approximately one hour each followed a semi-structured questioning approach to explore the graduates' perceptions about the 10-month resident educational experience alongside foreign officer counterparts. Oral interviews were selected as preferable to emailed responses so as to elicit unguarded responses, rather than edited responses; and to give adequate time to get past superficial responses, ask for examples, and encourage the participant to reflect on what those examples meant to the participant.

Data was collected through the interview interaction with individuals, using a written interview protocol of three open-ended interview questions to guide the interview, and a smartphone voice recorder for later transcription. The interview-style interactions were designed to capture the individuals' opinions: characterization of their activities, interactions and behaviors with and around the foreign students. The semi-structured approach was desirable to encourage participants to voice their thoughts yet avoid unstructured stream-of-conscious

commentary by embedding in the plan an expectation of examples, anecdotes and stories to corroborate their opinions.

Participants were apprised of the opportunity to review a preliminary draft of analysis of themes as a validation step, in addition to the use of rich, detailed description as a validation strategy. The email roster was maintained separately from the interview data, for which a random identifier was assigned in lieu of a personal identifier.

### **Participant rights**

Prospective participants were advised of the right to be treated as autonomous agents, that is, they were afforded adequate details about the study with all their questions answered enabling them to make an informed, voluntary decision about participation. Each participant was advised in writing about the research procedure of a one-hour interview, face-to-face if feasible, with audio recording and note-taking; the selection for prospective participants; the person responsible for the research; the purpose, risk and anticipated benefit; and the right to not participate, to ask questions, and to withdraw at any time.

The informed consent document noted that participation would be voluntary, and clarified that refusal to participate or decision to discontinue participation would entail no penalty or loss of benefits to which the participants was otherwise entitled. There was no element of coercion available to the researcher, to include reputation and grades, and no payment for participation. The invitation to participate addressed participants' well-being by including description of the benefit to which they can contribute: better understanding of how the school curricular and co-curricular elements influence the cultural readiness of fellow US military leaders and, as well, the larger benefit to the success of the United States in international cooperation. The researcher agreed not to identify participants by name in any reports using information obtained from the interview, and

there is no reason to believe that confidentiality will be lost. Subsequent uses of records and data are subject to standard data use policies that protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions. Risks were neutralized by adequate provisions to monitor and secure the collected data; and, anonymous reporting of findings by pseudonym. Further mitigating risk to participants, the open-ended question methodology was designed to permit the participant to determine his own emphases and the details to share in the interview. Participants were advised as to the approximate number of subjects involved in the study, to increase their confidence in anonymity.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

The problem addressed in this case study was a lack of understanding of how the professional military education (PME) at the Army War College influences learning and development of U.S. military officers' cross-cultural leadership for post-graduate responsibilities. The context of that problem is the international security environment in which senior US military officers can be expected to lead, coordinate, collaborate, and negotiate with senior military counterparts of other nations in a variety of allied, partner, or adversary relationships. The study was bounded in time and place. The study examined perceptions of a set of senior Army officers who graduated from the war college graduate program within the past three to seven years. At the Army War College, approximately 200 senior US Army officers with an average of 22 years of military leadership experience pursue a graduate degree in Security Studies and level II certification for Joint Professional Military Education over the course of 10 months, alongside as many as 80 foreign military officers of equivalent rank and years of experience. While at the college, foreign officers in the student body are referred to as International Fellows, or IF, therefore participants variably referred to IF or international officers, and this chapter refers to IF. The purpose of this study was to explore U.S. military officer/graduates' perceptions about how their studies and activities alongside foreign officers at the Army War College influenced their preparation for decision-making, cultural adaptation, and task performance in a cross-cultural leadership context. The findings were expected to offer insights about professional education as an environment for developing cross-cultural competence. The terms "the graduate school" or "the school" in this paper refer to the Army War College resident graduate education program.

**Background of the researcher.** The author is a former Army officer with initial active Army background in military intelligence, and subsequent Army Reserve experience in civil affairs, training management and professional military education. Working currently as a public affairs officer, responsible to inform and educate the American public about its military, she has served in multiple Army organizations, to include Army Headquarters and her current assignment at the U.S Army War College. She is a veteran of the Army orientation training in Germany having lived eight years at multiple locations in Germany. She is a graduate of the Army War College distance education program.

**Issues surrounding the case.** Every participant was interested in contributing and unguarded in comments, yet those comments suggested different levels of reflection about their interactions with the experience. The free-form character of the interviews resulted in uneven attention among the interviews to the research questions. Some seemed more observant and reflective about the educational experience itself. Some offered more detail than others about the influences they recognized in their post-graduate assignments. Two of the participants had shifted midway during the resident education core courses to the Advanced Strategic Art Program (ASAP) US-only seminar, although both spoke in detail about their IF interactions and/or their post-graduate reflections on those interactions. Seven interviews, then, produced seven utterly unique interviews that are less useful in identifying common reflections about the post-graduate influences than they are in exposing metacognitive commonalities.

### **Study participants**

The author identified participants in accordance with the intent to interview those Army officers who are graduates of the Army War College and whose success in follow-on assignments made them possible candidates for the highly competitive selection for general

officer. While every general officer has completed a senior PME education or equivalency, the pool of competitive officers is narrowed by effective performance in post-graduate assignments as well as by selection board members' assessment of potential. Candidates for this study had graduated within 7 years of their interview, as members of different annual cohorts from AY 2009 to AY 2013, having had at least three years' service since graduation that included command and at least one other assignment. Each had served post-graduation as brigade-level commanders, and had performed well in command as indicated by follow-on assignments to nominative positions. Nominative assignments are by-name selections from a small pool of candidates to significant assignments working as first-line assistants or advisors to general officers. As a further distinction, each of the graduates had completed at least some of their post-graduate assignments, typically the command assignment, in a foreign country, working with military and political counterparts of another country or, in some cases, more than one other country. This study focused on US Army officers; the IF to which the participants referred were army officers in their home country.

Despite multiple commonalities among the study participants, unique elements of their experience base and the unique character of their US-IF exchanges created seven very different experiences, as described in the interviews. While all seven participants met the criteria for this study, they can be described by additional commonalities and by unique characterizations. They were commissioned as US Army officers coincidental to graduation from the US Military Academic or other US undergraduate college with parallel completion of a Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program. Their "company grade" years as 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant, 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant and Captain, extended an average of 10-12 years, and were followed by 8-10 "field-grade" years

**Table 1. Study participants' assignments in or with foreign nations/military units**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>COMPANY GRADE</b>	<b>FIELD GRADE</b>	<b>BATTALION CMD</b>	<b>BRIGADE CMD</b>	<b>OTHER, POST-WAR COLLEGE</b>
<i>Irish</i>	14 years in US Pacific Command; 2 exchange experiences; participation in military operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti	Iraq; Afghanistan	Iraq	Afghanistan	infantry division chief of staff
<i>Falcon</i>	personal travel	Europe, Balkans	Iraq	Afghanistan	Africa Command
<i>Gator</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> Gulf War, Iraq	2.5 years of foreign exchange; Germany assignment; Balkans operations	Iraq	Iraq	Afghanistan; US-China exercise
<i>Buckeye</i>		3 years Europe; work with French Foreign Legion	Afghanistan	US-based: created exchange program with multiple nations	Korea
<i>Husky</i>		4 deployments to Afghanistan, included working on Afghan base	Afghanistan	US-based: created exchange program with another nation	Afghanistan
<i>Lion</i>	Kuwait	Kuwait; Iraq, 15 months	Iraq	Afghanistan	Sinai, Cuba
<i>Bulldog</i>	Korea; exchange training in 2 Latin American countries	US Pacific Command	Iraq	Europe	

as Major or Lieutenant Colonel, and selection for senior grade rank of Colonel on or about the time of the selection for war college attendance. Each would have received a formal evaluation called the Officer Evaluation Report, or OER, at least once a year for which a supervising and rating officer and his/her supervising officer, a senior rater, assessed the officer's achievements to date; commitment to a set of Army values; and potential for success at a higher level of

responsibility. For each, an official personnel record with officer efficiency reports and other documents had been reviewed competitively by a centralized selection board for promotion to each rank and for some schooling opportunities like the war college. The process became more selective as they advance through ranks because the Army's requirements at each rank tapers as does a pyramid. Each study participants had completed an officer basic course and the officer advanced course for their respective Army branch, for example, Armor or Infantry, as did all their peers during the company grade years; and they were competitively selected for attendance at the Command and General Staff Officer Course at the rank of major, and for the war college as lieutenant colonels or colonels. Although a high percentage of the US military officers in the academic 2017 student body have served in operations in or supporting Afghanistan or Iraq (74 and 81 percent, respectively), all seven study participants had worked in Iraq and/or Afghanistan theaters at least once in their careers. Table 1, Study participants' assignments in or with foreign nations/military units, offers a snapshot of their assignments entailing recurring engagements with military counterparts of other nations. The experiences ranged geographically from Central America, across Europe and the Middle East, to multiple locations in the Asia/Pacific region. They included exchange assignments with foreign militaries, and multi-year assignments in foreign countries. Military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan included varied levels of interactions with host nation militaries or partner militaries in the operation, from little to extensive. As students of the war college, their experiences with IF were wholly distinct. Depending on the war college year group, each study participant would have spent six months in a cohort, a core seminar, with either two or three IF. All participants attended the war college during a period of transition when administrative adjustments expanded the number of IF in each resident student body, from 53 in 2009 to 78 in 2013. The deliberate distribution of IF across



seminars is implemented to ensure that the IF in each seminar are representative of different regions of world, for example, one seminar included a fellow from Afghanistan, Finland, and Taiwan alongside the US officers and an interagency civilian. As exception that has not been repeated, a pilot program reported by one participant re-distributed students to new seminars mid-way through the six-month core courses, doubling the number of IF exposures for each US officer in that academic year. Equally notable, two of the participants were selected after two months in core seminars to leave the core seminar and join the specialized ASAP program that included no IF. All participants were majority/Caucasian, an unplanned coincidence with unexpected implications; Kim & Van Dyne (2011) had identified stronger effect on cross-cultural contact experiences for majority members than for minority individuals for whom cross-cultural contact occurs more frequently.

### **Study design and execution**

This qualitative case study was designed as a contemporary bounded system explored through in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of interview information. It was completed during the period of August-November, 2016 with seven participants. The author emailed an invitation to each of the prospective participants, introducing herself, outlining the purpose and scope of the study, identifying the UNE contact for further information and the Army Research Institute authorization to interview Army personnel. The interviews were conducted on seven separate occasions, at one hour each. Six of the seven interviews were conducted in person, and one by phone. Each was recorded on an iPhone for subsequent transcription. All invited candidates accepted the invitation to interview, and each signed the informed consent prior to the interview.

The study participants, referred to in this chapter as ‘the graduates’ or ‘the participants,’ were provided three broad questions and encouraged to address each question in their own way, to use their own words and examples, and to address the three questions in their own order of attention. The author provided in-process prompts to ask the participant for details about faculty role(s) in ‘setting the seminar,’ i.e., shaping group development and norms development; for details about relationships with specific IFs in the student body; and for their memories of the regional studies elective and the negotiation exercise. The list, here, identifies the explicit questions shared with the participants. The author listened for the examples, observations, and insights that related to the sub-questions, incorporated into the list.

**Question #1.** When you were at the Army War College, there was an emphasis on learning about international relations and national security partnerships. Tell me how you experienced those academic approaches of curricular studies and seminar discussions and how they influenced you, then and in later assignments?

*Prompt 1.1. Did the curriculum about international relations national security strategy, and military security cooperation goal influence your understanding about the US role in the world and the reason/ nature of US-foreign military partners*

**Question #2.** Your academic experience included both core courses with a faculty team of 3-4 academic professors and a set of elective courses each with its own faculty. Can you describe how their unique styles influenced US-IF student interactions then, and if you recognize enduring effect in your later assignments?

*Prompt 2.1. Did you perceive that your faculty member had any influence on how you/your US colleagues interacted with IF in the seminar? Did your seminar-developed norms influence your interactions with IF? Did any US officers have a different*

*relationship with IF than you did, for example, student sponsors?*

*Prompt 2.2. How do you remember an IF's contributions to seminar learning, positively or negatively?*

**Question #3.** The Army War College designs the program of study to include experiential exercises and projects for which you worked alongside international fellows, and encourages/enables extracurricular interactions like sports, social activities, social experiences in which you would have played sports, socialized, and worked on extracurricular activities alongside the International Fellows.

*Prompt 3.1. What projects put you on the same 'team' with one or more IF, for example, theater analysis/campaign planning, negotiation exercise, sports team, social activity planning?*

*Prompt 3.2. Describe your sense of commitment to the project, and to collaboration with the IF.*

*Prompt 3.3. In what way did other nations' perspectives influence/affect your/your group's problem analysis and strategy development during exercises and case studies?*

*Prompt 3.4. How do you remember the negotiation exercise and skills used during it?*

### **Preparation and organization of the data**

To maintain the anonymity of the interview participants, each participating graduate was assigned randomly a working designation for the study report: Irish, Falcon, Gator, Buckeye, Husky, Lion and Bulldog. Each designator, borrowed from college football teams, has no correlation to the participant. They were created during the transcription phase, and the participants are unaware of these designators. Further, if an anecdote to be used in this report referred to a person or country that is sufficiently specific and unique as to indicate the identity

of the participants, the name of the country is referenced here by region, for example, if the example was Costa Rica, the descriptor could be “Central American country.”

All data were organized electronically in computer files: six transcribed interviews in six Word files, with a coding matrix created as a spreadsheet in Excel. As analysis unfolded, these became source documents for a Word document series of tables, initial descriptions and observations (big ideas), interview themes, and conceptual framework analysis.

Each interview was transcribed in full; each transcription was assigned by-line numbers. Transcription was completed by hand, enabling the author to simultaneously develop a preliminary exploratory analysis, captured in an initial set of patterns and themes. Not all initial perceptions survived the subsequent refinement of analysis.

**Coding.** The coding process, to make sense of the text data, served as an inductive process of narrowing the data first into nine categories and, then, to recognize patterns that emerged from the data. Each of seven categories referred to a subset of interview information about how the graduate related to the category: academic knowledge; faculty intervention; group dynamics; interaction via experiential education; IF exposure time/type; personal interactions; extracurricular/family interactions. The interviews revealed unanticipated information that inspired addition of two information categories: US-student purpose; and cross-cultural career elements. As the matrix was completed, each cell included a comment relevant to the category, with an identifying letter, as in G for Gator, to enable cross-reference to the full context within the interview.

**Analysis.** Multiple levels of analysis took place. The first level of analysis consisted of an iterative process of developing the coding, assessing disparate interviews for similar interviews for similar observations and insights, noting not only what participants said but how

they said it, noting terms and phrasings replicated across the interviews. The second level of analysis arrayed responses against the three interview questions to further refine relationships among the data and identify emerging themes about participants' personal sense of purpose, value of relationships, and preferences for learning experiences of enduring impact. The third analytical level integrated the analysis of levels one and two, presented within the frame of the two theoretical concepts suggested by the literature. A deliberative cross-walk of perceptions about each of the three elements of social cognitive learning theory as applied to each of three elements of cultural intelligence offered insights relevant to the research questions.

### **Description of the data: Presentation of results**

The following paragraphs describe with interview data, first, how the graduates perceived their purpose at the school and how the US-IF interaction fit with both their purpose and worldview. The chapter continues, second, with discussion of how the graduates remember the influence of faculty interventions, peer actions, academic studies and curriculum design on US-IF interaction. Finally, the chapter captures the participants' reflections on personal relationships, extracurricular activities, and family activities. The three sections present the study participants insights about developing awareness, understanding, empathy, and metacognition for professional cross-cultural exchanges.

### **Professional purpose and opportunity to 'learn from others' influences US students**

The participants considered the purpose of their graduate education to have been professional development, anticipating acquisition of knowledge, skills and attributes that can be summarized as strategic mindedness. Strategic mindedness is reflected in a depth of understanding of strategic-level issues and the thinking, interpersonal and problem-solving skills adequate for the complexities of the international security environment.

Irish described “tremendous capability for those who really want to grow while they’re there. I wanted to grow and knew there were options for me there.” His remarks captured the essence of strategic-level focus:

[The school] was a change point, the decision to broaden in a different direction... I wanted to learn about the strategic realm... to learn the policy that drove the strategy that drove what I actually did [as an operator] ... I was able to ... truly think strategically -- not just the operational impacts, but the political impacts, the international influencers, the stakeholders, all of the things required to truly provide best military advice, accomplish military objects, reach some sustainable political end.... What the war college did was help me talk more at the strategic level ... [about] larger problem sets like operating as part of the United Nations, or thinking through alliances like NATO or [Australia-Britain-Canada] that made for richer discussion at [the strategic] level. (Irish)

The graduates reported awareness that their career purpose would intersect with the multinational, multicultural character of modern warfare and security assistance operations to strengthen security in key regions of the globe. Upon arrival at the school, the participants had been shaped by the military experience of the past 15 years, since September 11, 2001, through their own experiences, vicarious experiences, and the collective lessons within the military culture. “We’re never really gonna fight alone. We gotta maximize our interoperability and our day-to-day combined operations around the world.... Education is one component.” Irish characterized the continuum of 21<sup>st</sup> century experiences of his military peers, as context for the war college educational experience when he said, “We did partnership operations my entire career. So, to me and several of my friends, it didn’t seem like rocket science when we started doing this formally in Iraq or Afghanistan. It was just, now, contested.” Buckeye clarified the

transition in Army culture from the early, post-September 11, 2001 emphasis on kinetic warfare that was supplanted in Iraq and Afghanistan by a balance of kinetic and stability operations, the latter requiring work with the local citizens, officials, and security forces. “One of the reasons we were so bad early in the war is we were focused on killing. That’s what the Army did before COIN ... and it took a while to transition, but now ... all of our senior leaders have gone through the last 15 years of conflict and it’s slowly trickling down [to] even junior soldiers,” he said, referring to counter-insurgency operations (COIN). Lion addressed the shift over time to today’s reality:

Culturally in the military we’re more adept at working with international military members now than we were 15, 20 years ago. It’s what we do. In my first 10 years ... if you wanted to work with foreign militaries, you went FAO, whereas everybody [now] for the most part has experience working with international peers... I watched my superior leaders who did dialogue when I was a plus-one to a key leader engagement. I would watch them do very similar [interactions. The school] just added to my level of experience of interacting with international leaders. (Lion, with a reference to specialized Foreign Area Officers)

Other participants noted the iterative nature of learning to work with foreign military counterparts. Bulldog reflected a sense of humility about “miles to go” and Lion offered his assessment that the continuum of experience included not only military operations and partnership training, but education as well:

I think I would have [realized that without education] after a couple of missteps or a few hard lessons.... My battalion command time was in Iraq when we had passed over sovereignty back to Iraq and we were in the security assistance role, training them how to

provide security and ready for handover.... So, I already had quite a bit of experience, a full year experience working with Iraqi officers.... I probably hadn't learned all the lessons I needed to. (Bulldog)

Another participant responded that:

Empathy is like wisdom. It comes from understanding and repetition. By being deployed, you get repetitions of working with non-US senior leaders and you develop more empathy in that regard. Does education matter? The answer is yes because we're all products of our experience. My experience at the war college, which included international fellows, gave more reps at working with peers in the U.S. military but more importantly peers who are international fellows. (Lion)

The graduates reflected their history and their army's, noting the deep effects of coming to terms with combat operations that succeeded and yet did not achieve desired effects. The resultant refocus on stability operations, and working relationships with military and political leaders, created an openness to educational effects they expected would deepen necessary skills and mental models.

**Prior experience primed US students to understand the multinational security environment.** During the interviews, participants indicated contemporary understanding that cultural intelligence would be a requirement of their professional future. Not a single participant expressed surprise or doubt, during these post-grad interviews, that cross-cultural competence would be an objective of the educational experience. To the contrary, they acted as collaborators in determining what experiences heightened the educational goal cultural sensitivity and agility that they accepted as a given. Gator pinpointed a necessary outcome for cultural intelligence: "With 15 years in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, people are seeing that there



is value to having other militaries and more accepting of the fact that they're going to have their own agendas. I don't know why we should expect differently.”

The school set expectations about the knowledge, skills and attributes of strategic leaders, but characterized the IF presence as, primarily, an opportunity to develop relationships that might pay off later in careers, they said. “The school set conditions for [interaction with internationals] to happen but it was really up to the individual to determine how much they wanted to invest into it,” said Lion. Falcon said he had, “... no memory of encouragements or expectations about the IF. Perhaps we should, he said about bringing attention to the mutual US-IF objectives for studying together. Gator recommended a more focused approach to setting expectations about the purpose and value of US-IF interactions:

There was nothing that, when I decided to go to the Army War College, made me think: Oh, I'm going to be able to have this great experience with international students. I kind of knew there'd be international students there, but it would be good to set expectations better.... I had just come out of three years of [command, training, deployments]. I consciously went to the Army War College based on the fact that I wanted to spend time with my family ... and everyone said, if you go to the Army War College, you'll get a lot more family time. I didn't really base it on academics or anything else but when I got there it turned out to be a tremendous experience for me both academically and socially and for my family. (Gator)

Regardless of the school's messaging about creating shared experiences with international and interagency members of the student body, another graduate echoed the thought that he had not recognized that the IF were more than study colleagues. Their comments suggest that it is in post-graduate retrospect that they reconsider the existing opportunities to learn about

themselves and the strategic environment by deliberately pursuing dialogue, if not relationships, with IF.

We need to prepare students better, earlier on in the course, for the overall purpose of the exchange. When I got there, it was just, like, hey, there's three guys here. Unless I fell asleep in the class, nothing said, hey, here's why we do this, here's how much we spend, here's the goal.... [Make it] one of the terminal learning objectives and the reason they're here, because without that it appears that this is just for other nations to be able to experience the war college. You kind of know that it needs to be broader and deeper, and it really goes back to the cultural awareness that is so critical that we messed up big time in the first five years of the war.... (Buckeye)

**IF added perspective of region and experience to knowledge-based discussions.** The first interview question asked participants to describe curricular studies and seminar discussions related to international relations and national security partnerships. They offered few comments about the study material, but, rather, discussed in detail the influence of US-IF interaction in enabling a deeper, reflective understanding of the study topics. Their comments suggested that some IF were regional resources, some served as mental checks on their assumptions, and some engaged in ways that helped deepen colleagues' learning. The IF proved a daily reminder that their own perceptions were but a single data point.

The [academic] experience would have been totally different [without IF]. It's kind of like the immersion you never got. When I think about how I potentially advanced my cultural awareness at the war college, obviously one of the big things that jumps out at me was having the foreign students in the class ... so you're already in an environment that senior leaders will be in. [Since few US officer go to foreign war college ... The

closer you get an educational environment to the environment you're preparing for, the better. (Buckeye)

Husky discussed this matter as well, indicating that --

... the other pretty sobering thing that we don't get a whole lot of -- how we're viewed as by other countries, not just our culture but how the US military and US in general is seen. That's kind of helpful to see ... we're always the one hundred-pound gorilla, the United States. We've got the biggest military. We have a large global presence. And what you learn through [the IF] is that your own views of the military and the way you believe other people see us is not always very accurate. I don't know if we're believing our own propaganda, but -- this thing that we're the biggest, best, most capable military -- and, so, what we don't ever look at very critically is the ways we haven't done things as well as could have been done.

This participant offered additional perspective through empathy with an IF colleague's experience:

Our [African] added some great context to this when we were talking about building partner capacity.... They do peacekeeping throughout the continent of Africa, and they've been doing it for many, many years .... But he said, when partnered with US forces ..., they were completely insulted by the fact that they got treated like they had never done it.... 'We realized we knew much more about this than [the US force] did, and certainly knew much more about doing it in Africa than they did.' It's really helpful to have that kind of context in the classroom with you. (Husky)

The participants' comments reflected much of the faculty's perceptions about breaking the US-centric bias of US students. Faculty and students approached the seminar interaction with

different purposes however – the faculty intent on engendering curiosity and openness so as to overcome deeply embedded mental models/ certainty about knowledge based on relatively limited experience, and students on a mission to seek new knowledge if it fit their picture of their professional future. Breaking rigid thinking and bridging to what they hadn't sought to learn (hadn't known they needed to learn) was iterative through multiple examples and discussions, as one suggested:

Having IF in the classroom with us was invaluable in terms of forcing us to cover the course material and see it through different perspectives. All Americans in the room, whether State Department or Air Force or Navy or Army, were looking at much of it from the same lens but having international students there -- clearly there was a different lens they were looking through in many cases either from their cultural background or the history of their region or country, or current events of their region or country. (Bulldog)

Graduates' descriptions suggest a serendipitous nature to some interactions with IF, although the seminar structure itself influence quantity and quality of interactions. Everyday proximity increased the likelihood, quantity and quality of information exchanges between a foreign and US officer, triggered by discussions of current events, study topics, or growing trust. Study participants singled out the structural elements of the graduate program responsible for more 'reps' of IF-US engagements: each seminar of 16-17 students included two-three IF (depending on the academic year as the numbers increased across these years). One described that faculty established a seating plan up front, and change it midway, thereby increasing daily exposures to those in a neighboring seat, with opportunity for direct personal contact that transcended group dynamics. In one year, the seminars "flipped" half-way through the six-month core course, students shifted to new seminars. Doubling the exposure to different US and

foreign students, the one participant from that year group called it a “phenomenal” investment in creating adaptive senior leaders. Additionally: “Depending on the electives you take, you get a chance to work with different international students,” said Lion, offering more repetitions, or reps, of US-IF exposure and engagement and additional opportunities to reflect on their perspectives.

If we’re supposed to be adaptive ... What I think about when I think about how I may or may not have developed culturally... when I think about how I potentially advanced my cultural awareness at the war college, obviously one of the big things that jump out at me, probably the most simple, was having the foreign students in the class with you because they’re right there so you’re already in an environment that senior leaders will be in.

[The seminar structure] exposed me to six different foreign officers ... so of course you have a lot of one-on-one conversation and ... it was very good for me specifically with strategic thinking because I sat next to the Pakistani officer and having served in Afghanistan on the Pakistani border, from which we were attacked many times by forces that were allowed to operate in Pakistani battlespace, it was really good to get his perspective on what that was occurring.... It was good to see, to shift my understanding... That was phenomenal. (Buckeye)

Bulldog recounted an interaction that was not well received, initially -- an indicator of the educational challenge in guiding mature, experienced leaders to deliberately question and modify their frames of reference when their hard-won experience resisted.

I also remember the Egyptian officer speaking in a completely different context about what was going on in Iraq and Afghanistan and how we as Americans shouldn’t be trying to solve things over there, because we were just going to muddle it up, because we didn’t

understand the context -- and needed to work with countries, like Egypt, to be the voice of the Middle East [for] a regional solution to the problem, whatever that may be. I think in many ways that he was probably right, but I think I might be somewhat unique.... If we go in without that regional perspective or without regional partners being the face on many things, we have the potential to just immediately make people against us because we're the Americans trying to butt in. I don't think some understood that. It was still fresh; many of us were just coming out of that, one or two years being home, some coming right out of there and some going straight back. And we obviously have all lost friends there, either Iraq or Afghanistan, and we have members of the command who have been lost, a lot of skin in the game for over there. And, to hear the perspective that we're muddling it up just because we're Americans and that we came in with American biases and American ego? You know, that hurt a little bit. (Bulldog)

In the same vein, Gator reflected on his and his colleagues' disinterest in a regional development that was outside of their experience base, as he remembered a European officer who anticipated the actions that Russian has since taken while his fellow US students were focused on the Middle East.

'K' always had a real, good grasp and he was able to bring another viewpoint into our discussions based on his experience in Europe; he would give us that European flavor, lens, perspective.... If I look back on it, 'K' was fairly predicting Putin and what we're seeing in Russia now. At the time, I think everyone in the military kind of agreed with him but at the same time we can only do so much.... (Gator)

The school emphasized the concept of learning from one another, and the essence of that idea was reflected by all participants. Lion characterized the interaction with IF: "They bring

another perspective, another lens to look at a problem, and they offer that in almost every discussion ... value is added on a daily basis.” Bulldog expanded by saying:

There is only so much experience you can get being a brigade commander. You’re going to learn everything there is to learn about being in that brigade or in that particular staff function or in that particular headquarters, but it doesn’t give you the chance to look at the enterprise as a whole, as well as getting the experience of your peers that are sitting there who have come from experiential learning in a number of different areas that you haven’t been in. (Bulldog)

Lion remembered that his IF interaction consistently increased the value of his seminar experience.

We had international officers from Denmark, Vietnam, and El Salvador. I thought working with them in seminar was valuable, very valuable, ‘cause their perspective -- it’s just going to be different than the predominant army. Yes, you’ve got some other services and maybe even DA civilians -- but they bring another perspective, another lens to look at a problem and they offer that in almost every discussion .... [Speaking of the Vietnam officer’s insights about how his nation’s leaders perceive US actions], you cannot get there anywhere else unless you happen to serve in the East. (Lion)

It really wasn’t ‘til [recent] years ... that I realized there was more to our international partners and allies than the just following our lead. Certainly [the school] taught that, projected that, used case studies, especially in the strategic leadership block [of instruction]. Not all of [my peers] learned it, although they learned to parrot it back.

When they got to the field, as a brigade commander as I looked to my left and right, you

could tell those who were in it for themselves and their unit above all else and those who ... understood the importance of the team and the bigger organization.

As a colonel coming back [to school], I realized what [the IF] had to offer in terms of their perspective and their view of the world and the various regions, and the complexity of the world dynamics in terms of politics international power and all the rest. That was invaluable to the experience. I knew I had just as much to learn from their input as they did from ours, so that was something I learned over an 18/20-year difference between captain and colonel.

All Americans in the room ... were looking at much of it from the same lens but having international students there, clearly there was a different lens ... either from their cultural background or history of their region or country, or current events of their region or country.... When you are working with allied or partner nations, having that understanding that they're looking at things from a different lens: it was helpful to go in there without the assumptions that they'll come to the same conclusions we would with the same set of facts. (Bulldog).

**Cross-cultural expectations influence US students' academic choices.** Purpose influenced the participants' interaction with the academic material, they noted. Each made a unique set of decisions about investing time and interest and reflection. Several identified a tendency to keep in mind their next assignment when listening for specific regional insights. Falcon noted that the likelihood of calling on strategic mindedness increased the student's interaction with the IF, as well as students representing other federal agencies. If you go to a geographic combatant command or SOCOM, you will get a chance to use [it], and wow, now it makes sense," he said, referring to US Special Operations Command.



I knew I was going [to an international command] ... so I had in my mind, looking for nuggets to talk about partnerships with other countries and with our allies.... I relished the opportunity to have a chance to have nothing expected of me other than to think and to read and to learn ... at the time we were doing a lot of [discussion] on the Senkaku Islands and fishing rights and the 9-mile line ... [which] resonated with me 'cause that's where I thought I was going....

'Cause I thought I was going to [Asia], I made a concerted effort with [an Asian] officer to get his regional perspectives ... I made a real effort to talk with him about stuff, and China, and about how they perceive Japan which was interesting, and relations with North Korea, and ASEAN, and the other countries, I spent a lot of time picking his brain on stuff like that. Had I known, I probably would have done the same thing with the Bulgarian officer about NATO and that sort of thing. (Bulldog)

Gator offered a similar viewpoint:

I took a regional studies elective for Asia ... no experience with the region.... When they do the regional things, the international students from that region are in the course, and that's what happened to helped me out a lot: the Korean and the Japanese.... I ended up doing three years in [the region] and interacting as much as two times a week so I thought it was good that the experience I had at the war college definitely helped me with that. ...

I thought they did a very good job relating the history to the current situation/ (Gator)

Participants addressed personal choice when discussing the Regional Studies Elective (RSE), eliciting a variety of memories linking history and culture. Every student, other than those in ASAP, identified why they selected a particular region of the world for a survey course in history, culture, economics, politics and current international objectives and relationships in a

geographic region, for example, Russia and Eurasia, Asia-Pacific, Africa, Europe, and others. An RSE was considered effective when it used history to explain current situations; for example, a long view of Russia gave meaning to its arctic strategy today for Lion; gave context to the Chinese-Japanese geo-political issues of today for Gator. The Af-Pak RSE deepened background understanding about Afghanistan for Husky, who had lived with Afghans during one of his previous four deployments to the country but nevertheless sought more knowledge in preparation for yet another. Four graduates remembered that experience through the lens of applicability to their follow-on assignments. The participants' drive to prepare for their profession was relevant even when electing to study a region wholly because they had no experience and minimal knowledge. National security priorities of the Obama Administration's "rebalance to Asia-Pacific" had left these officers with information gaps, given the years they'd invested in the Middle East. Bulldog explained why his choice had to be relevant to his near-term future: "I knew where I was going to in brigade command. ... as you know there's just so much reading you can do, not just the required reading but the additional reading, so I did try to focus... I really sought out my regional study."

Gator shifted from his original choice of Europe to Asia, once he learned that he would command a brigade within that part of the world. Consistently, the participants noted that the IFs enrolled alongside them in an RSE were key to bridging the knowledge-behavior gap. Gator noted the importance of the Korean and Japanese officers in the Asian RSE, and expressed surprise when he learned that the college encourages IF to consider taking an RSE other than their own, enabling them to expand their own knowledge. Yet, he drew distinctions between the immediate value of country-specific tips and the later value of a deeper understanding about the Chinese mindset -- despite a multi-year gap before he tapped that knowledge:

I had never been to [x country] and I had no experience with the region. To be honest, for me it was about understanding the China-Korea-Japan relationship.... They did a very good job relating the history to the current situation.... So, I got some understanding of [how cultural differences become relevant]. The international students from region are in the courses, and that's what happened to help me out a lot: the Korean and the Japanese.

We had a whole two-day session on the Chinese - the way they think and why think ... in a follow-on assignment.... [Years later, in a US-Chinese disaster relief exercise] I got to sit down on a couple of occasions, brief some of the Chinese officers, just discuss with them. It was very helpful ... Even though it was three years removed from the college, it was still fairly close to what they taught us, that the Chinese do not view the US as their enemy ... they do view the US as a competitor. That was good to know going into that.

Part of it you just kind of pick up, too: it's not like they prepared me 100 percent. You have to go there being adaptable but at least I had some ideas of the cues to pick up on. (Gator)

The most interesting comment linked to agility came from the graduate, Bulldog, who had prepared for a follow-on assignment with the Asia-Pacific RSE, only to be diverted to a European assignment. His subsequent command experience suggested that it is the general openness to adapting behaviors that matters, rather than learning specific behaviors for specific countries or situations:

A favorite slogan [of the school] is, 'We don't want to teach you what to think, but how to think,' so I had memorized the answers to the test I would face in [Asian country] but instead I had learned enough lessons that would serve me in any international command

or wherever I went.... I had been preparing for that the whole time, thought I was going to be with the [Asian country] community, but all the same lessons mattered -- different language.

Unless they're in a Special Forces command ... I don't know of preparation prior to you getting there. They may have a little quick immersion class ... a welcome class once you arrive but you don't get the opportunity to get prepped ahead of time unless you figure a way to do it yourself. Going back to 'learning how to think not what to think' -- so, you understand when you go into a country that I've got to try to learn to say hello and goodbye and a few other niceties, and I've got to learn some culture, a little history. .... Whenever you know you're going somewhere, it's a quick crash course.... I think the principle is the same, if you understand you have to know all those things, you're prepared mentally to jump into it and as professionals, we're going to make the time one way or another to make as much as we can with the time allotted to us. (Bulldog)

**Faculty set norms and role-modeled interactions.** The second interview question asked participants to address the role of faculty with respect to US-IF student interactions. They recognized that faculty pressed for inclusion of other voices, for examination through multiple perspectives, and for in-depth exploration of complicated problems. The norm for core courses is daily three contact hours in seminar to collaboratively deconstruct, assess, evaluate, and synthesize topics. When Bulldog contrasted the value of lessons learned through experience with those from education, he described dynamic learning from an environment with varied perspectives. "Learning through experience can get you in-depth quicker but at small range and focus.... Through education you'll learn about the whole enterprise and get the lessons learned from other officers' experiences about areas unknown to you" for a multiplied effect, he said.

Irish echoed other participants' refrain about applying learning to current and emerging issues. "We all did the book work, which anybody on the planet could do, but then we'd ... branch off into discussion," he said, about discussion that benefited from a variety of voices in the seminar. The school explicitly identifies the education model as one in which the highly-experienced students will teach each other. "The faculty are absolutely necessary to facilitate the level of discussion that the college is looking for... they were the subject matter experts for the course topics so they could help steer discussion," said Lion. The faculty were important for guiding the student discussions to a depth that the students would not otherwise achieve, often, by ensuring that all voices were heard, that assumptions were examined. "I think the good instructors that I remember were very intuitive in terms of what was happening in the role ... to be able to never overlook the foreign voice," said Buckeye, who reflected the common conclusion that seminars worked because of effective faculty facilitation.

The graduates singled out certain faculty members for their skills in driving the seminar to rich dialogue, that is, discussion of cases and topics in great depth and at the strategic level – even to the point of "dragging out" individuals' thoughts on challenging subjects, as Irish put it. In fact, one explicitly recounted the senior faculty member's commitment to set a seminar ethos where everyone's ideas were valued: "I had tremendous experience in seminar.... Great facilitators created an ethos inside that seminar that everything you threw out was completely okay.... It may take a little longer for the international students to realize they could just say whatever was on their mind.... When someone would bring up a point or a counterpoint ... they would kind of run with it, at the same time staying close to what we wanted to discuss," said Gator. It may take longer for international officers from some parts of the world to see that they could say anything, be critical, and criticize the US - but they got it, thanks to the faculty, he

said. When the faculty member could guide the group to in-depth examination, it represented a major shift from the way the US officers interact with information in an operational setting. Irish remembered thinking that he could probably reduce Thucydides to a few briefing points, but the faculty instructor demanded a deeper examination of the issues in that classic. “We all run in the fast lane, used to reading 3-5 lines, 3-5 bullets -- and you have to make decisions like this (snapping fingers) ... but this wasn’t intuitive to me and, so, as the dialogue went on, now things start shaping,” said Irish, about the faculty pressure on the seminar. Multiple reflections on the perceived value of IF contributions inferred the unseen hand of the faculty who guided the seminar’s norms and depth of discussion.

Irish was candid in describing his initial reaction to the seminar members, and then, to the faculty member’s ability to move the US students past the stereotypes associated with what he called, bucketing:

[My faculty lead] set the ground rules up front. I remember the intros around the room and then [he] said ‘this year’ [Gen.] Odierno sat there and in ‘this year’ [Gen.] Casey sat there and in ‘this year’ president whatever of whatever country sat there and so, right from the very get go you realize these guys in this room I may be working with for a very, very long time and their predecessors have gone on to great things so even if I don’t work with them, there may be a rocket scientist sitting in this room.

I do remember during that introductory session starting to create my buckets: here’s who’s really engaged ... we can have some good debates.... I’m not looking for confirmation of my thoughts; I’m developing thoughts I want to see who would argue and knock off the rough spots.... There were a couple [students] I didn’t identify that, over time, I pulled over into the group that I would actively debate with. I remember

there was one guy ... a limited-experience wallflower. But over time, he drifted over to the group and debate.

We've all built teams so you know what's going on. Everyone in that room is bucketing, everybody, and somebody probably looked at me and said 'infantry meathead' .... But [the faculty member] was good then, and throughout the year, to ... harness people's expertise or what their interest was.... But everybody thinks and communicates in different ways and so although he would pull everybody in, and there was always something of value, the extent to which it was valuable was different based on the people.

(Irish)

Irish was not only one who addressed the concept of what the IF would bring to the debate, or discussion, or project, if prompted by faculty and trusting of the team. He was drawn to 'M,' for example, because it was never a cursory discussion with him: "Somebody like 'M,' if he was asked a question, there was a richness, a depth and understanding in the way he would respond or speak with the group," said Irish. Husky and Gator noted:

The international fellows were very smart ... The [European] officer and the [African] officer were probably the two smartest people in our seminar, and so they had a lot of credibility right up front just in the way they presented themselves and presented their ideas. It was very clear to all of us that they operated at a much more strategic level coming in to this experience than we had. The way they looked at international treaties, their assignment history -- I just realized right away, it prepared them much more for the types of things we were talking about than my own experience had. (Husky)

'F' was very intellectually engaged. He had a good appreciation of American culture -- picked up on social cues really well.... Although I had worked with other militaries, I had

never worked with F's military so I learned a lot there ... He was very intellectual. He was a really smart guy. When he engaged, people really listened because they knew it was going to be very well-thought out kind of discussion. (Gator)

**Faculty experience influenced team-building.** Seasoned faculty were effective in shifting responsibility to the seminar members and, typically, their interventions were barely noted and sized up, by several, as intuitive. In hours of interviews, there were few references to faculty lectures in seminar. Instead, Irish and Husky highlighted faculty whose mastery of the subject materials enabled them to shape a student's interaction with the material and their colleagues, to new effect. When Irish referred to a new awareness of strategic level constraints and Lion pointed to broadened perspectives, and Falcon underscored the need to better understand the role of the ambassador in other countries, they reflected a strategic mindedness rather than specific knowledge sets. When Husky singled out one faculty member's effectiveness, he noted the 'N's mastery of the academic material: "He could just keep us going down the path because he knew everything so well ... it's easy to get other people involved." If strategic mindedness is the ability to think critically, creatively and systemically; to employ ethical reasoning framework; to evaluate contrasting viewpoints, to apply historical lessons; to assess assumptions and biases; to draw valid conclusions; and to drive innovation and change in complex organizations (Rapp, 2016), then faculty interventions to develop a mental evolution are critical. Some graduates spoke with deep conviction about the value added by the 'seasoned' instructors, often by name despite many years since graduation, noting in some cases that they stay in touch.



Skillful facilitation worked the curricular design to advantage. Both Husky and Irish recognized the faculty modeling to leverage IF experience and expertise early in the seminar timeline and to shape students' interaction as team members.

I think it's an atmosphere that's reinforced or underpinned by trust with that group of people. The instructors can influence that by how quickly we get there.... Up front, there was a little more effort to make sure that they got involved early, and that their voices were being heard. The great thing is that you start with topics that are broad enough. Strategic Thinking is probably a great thing to begin with because you're better able to integrate your international students into those kinds of discussions, whereas later on you're doing [US-specific] military policy stuff, or you're going through corps-level operations.... Where the topic is clearly in the strategic realm, and the topic is broader, they're more easily brought in. (Husky)

The second major core course, Theories of War and Strategy, included readings from Thucydides. Irish suggested that the Thucydides discussion, among others, provided role-modeling for students as to how and why to consider an issue, challenge, or problem from multiple viewpoints. "Talking about ancient history made our national links irrelevant ... touched on empathetic understanding of the nature and causes of war," said Irish.

Of the many faculty mentioned by name with specific anecdotes about the value of their intercessions, all were faculty with extended experience and all but three (among several dozen) were former military officers, some with PhDs. Two were long-time faculty members with no military experience; one was a current military officer who was singled out because, as a foreign area officer, he was intuitive and culturally aware. "If you want the effect, look hard at who's doing facilitating. If you want bigger effect, put more time and effort into who is selected [for

faculty] and how long they stay,” said Buckeye. Lion noted that, “I saw coaching from the senior faculty within the [faculty] team, providing course correction.” Buckeye’s description of two from his faculty team belied the small interventions that made faculty effective facilitators: ‘H,’ a foreign area officer, “was already culturally aware in many ways,” and ‘A’ is “a phenomenal leader ... great personality, very intuitive, in tune with people more than most of your instructors.” In the seminar room, both faculty and students thought in terms of team; for former military officers-turned faculty, it was a natural fit. Irish recounted how he selected his choice of war colleges: “I wanted to go to Army because I wanted to be with the people I knew I’d be fighting beside and the people that I had fought beside.” Although he had been referring to US colleagues in his statement of intent, faculty norm-setting and role-modeling laid a foundation for recognizing that their future was one of multinational team building.

The graduates spoke of team work, and often referred to “our IF,” as if to confer membership on the team. Irish remembered faculty agility in sharing the lead with students. “The faculty allowed students to set the agenda, keeping us on track but allowing what we wanted to discuss,” said Gator. As a former exchange officer with another country’s military, Gator volunteered to be an IF sponsor and gave pointed attention at the time to the US-IF interactions. “I think the faculty and other students really took a great interest in making sure they felt they were part of the experience,” said Gator, referring to collaboration among students and faculty not just for discussion sake but to create an environment of trusted participation. “The instructors do a good job of making sure we ... help the IF get integrated and leverage what we perceived to be their strengths,” said Husky. Falcon observed that peers played a role in drawing out IF insights, especially foreign area officers and students from the State Dept. who were experienced in cross-cultural engagements and role-modeled for others. Lion spoke of the

way the group approached roles for IF in exercises as one of seeking to maximize their comfort and leverage their expertise, in keeping with their own leadership skill with respect to developing effective teams characterized by respect and inclusion as ways to engender participation and collaboration:

[IF] would get the right of first refusal .... If I was an international fellow at another nation's war college I would hope they would give me that so I could be as valuable as I possibly could in the group setting I was in, and by getting the role that I could best play, that would make me more comfortable. So ... that was one way as students we created a good job in creating inclusion and ... with inclusion you get interaction and you get the desired learning from each other. (Lion)

Perhaps Irish captured the essence of seminar-based educational collaboration when he said --

It all comes back to the word, partnership. As their partner, you want to help them achieve these gates but, also, broaden their aperture or help them to think: Is there something more, something different? The thing I take most pleasure in in the Army is leader development.

[About an early career experience with a foreign military unit:] My counterpart and I found ways that he could push his organization; I could push mine. We could both become better-stronger-faster and more effective.... The war college just continued to refresh that [developmental mindset] at a strategic level. Now, it was beyond small unit capability and interoperability. It was larger problem sets like operating as part of the United Nations, or thinking through alliances like NATO or [Australia-Britain-Canada] that made for richer discussion at that level. (Irish)

### **Experiential learning offered the promise of US-IF teamwork**

The third question sought to learn about the influence of collective agency by asking about working and “playing” alongside international fellows, but the participants’ comments broke cleanly into two lines of thought: working alongside IF in curriculum-based experiential learning projects and exercises; and participation in extracurricular activities, to include family activities. Participant descriptions of experiential learning match the scholar’s description of a pragmatist approach to concrete learning that is particularly powerful in adult learners. The graduates expressed preference for projects and exercises as more likely to be remembered, more rigorous, and more realistic. To the point of this study, experiential learning opportunities within the curriculum pose opportunity to transcend the seminar dialogue characterized as US-IF exchange of knowledge and perspective, and to approach a working project characterized by US-IF collaboration and negotiation across cultural differences. In other words, experiential learning enables one to actively explore abstract concepts through dialogue among equals. Further, social cognitive learning suggests that profound change in an individual’s motivation to work with others of a different and even difficult cultural background is influenced by the interplay among self-perceptions about ability to work with others, vicarious learning from others’ experiences, and collective experiences (Bandura, 2006). Experiential learning offers the promise of cross-cultural development when the learning project requires cross-cultural collaboration or negotiation. The next three paragraphs address specifically their remarks about worked with international fellows.

The participants expressed overwhelming individual preference for learning by doing. “That’s the way I learn,” said one. Another noted the value of a mix of experiential and academic elements at the war college for adding variety and perspective and for reaching people

differently. And one highlighted the enduring value of experience: “When I think of a lesson learned, nine times out of 10 it’s not a class I was sitting in. It was something that actually happened to me,” said Buckeye. Contrasting training and education, one noted that training creates expertise, or muscle memory, for repetitive tasks, while education presents “a ton of problem sets ... continuous exposure and broadening of the mind to handle that which you cannot train for because it’s so complex, so wicked, so agile, so rapidly changing,” in Irish’s words. Experiential learning mimics life, they believed. The school’s focus on addressing complicated problem sets matches the environment in which they expect to lead. The school at one time coined the phrase represented as VUCA: volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous international security environment. The graduates valued most the knowledge, awareness, relationships, processes, and experiences that they perceived as related to their future responsibilities and challenges. “The closer you can get the education environment to the environment that you’re [preparing] for, the better ...,” said Buckeye. The school offered for many years a comprehensive exercise to apply learning to consolidated sets of realistic strategic-level scenarios. For those graduates who took part, it was deep experiential learning on an individual basis. Named the Strategic Decision-Making Exercise, Irish called it awesome because it forced him to “broaden my aperture and understand or try to and empathize or try to with international conditions and all of the DOD; it was no longer an Army problem.” Husky correlated rigor not just with an exercise but with his role: his Strategic Research Project, the negotiation exercise, and his public speaking class - all of which required active learning and personal commitment.

In multiple discussions, graduates made the argument that academic challenge, or rigor, is heightened for them when the experiential learning requires the student to not only test a

model or theory but to create resolution between opposing modes of adaptation, as in a collective exercise environment. The graduates' commentary identified opportunities missed, in terms of challenge and realism. The participants who spoke of projects and exercises as the ideal opportunity to duplicate the interactions, collaboration, and negotiations that would characterize an actual version of the same problem, didn't experience that ideal in the academic year. "We're not going to fight by ourselves again, so we really need to accelerate the interoperability between us and all of our friend nations ... nations we are not friendly with or are developing relationships like we're doing with the Chinese now," said Buckeye, as context. "More exposure to more foreign nationals ... if our weighting criteria for senior officers is focused in that regard, and I think it needs to be: we'll not fight alone again." Their experience with experiential learning did not, however, bear out the level of cross-cultural exchange they idealized. Instead, they described a series of work-arounds with respect to IF participation in experiential learning endeavors. Three described specialty courses intended to enhance either strategic planning or joint planning, or both. The specialized ASAP seminar applies a different pedagogy to emphasize strategic planning, and two of the seven study participants had been selected for the alternate seminar, and reported no IF in the student group. Despite conjecture about reasons, for example, classified resources or prominent guest speakers, the ASAP grads noted that the parallel strategic art program for Army majors studying at Fort Leavenworth includes foreign students; and that long-time allies, like Brits and Canadians, can be given access to US classified material, with considerable added value. Similarly, the Joint Warfighting Advanced Strategic Program focused on campaign planning in a joint environment, but the participant who took JWASP remembered no IF despite his argument that the US military will fight "joint," as in multiple US services, and "combined" with other nations. Ironically, the two graduates who

spoke of the valuable SDME experience were unable to describe the role of any IF during that major, multi-day exercise, despite their insistence that the internationals should be leveraged to maximize the reality of working with other nations, to include incorporating IFs on US staffs, as happens in life. Buckeye role-played a top military leader during the exercise. “I was so focused, I didn’t pay a lot of attention to how the IFs were used. I almost guarantee there was an IF in my cell but I can’t remember ... those guys ought to be maximized in that exercise,” he said. One offered an alternate view, that functional contribution would trump relationships when a task was at hand.

It became less about the fact that they were an international student and more about assessing their individual abilities .... I don’t think we ever had to make special concessions about [the two smartest people in the room]. For [the other IF], a person maybe not quite as talented, if efficiency was the goal, maybe we didn’t make him central to the task. (Husky)

Yet another perspective prioritized relationship over task when he offered an empathetic consideration of another culture’s response to potential embarrassment.

The foreign nationals were handled with kid gloves. If not comfortable, they could opt out, and that’s right, because of relationships with home countries, the fact that they’re linked with high officials in their country of origin and the fact that those from some countries are known to avoid leaving their comfort zone and risk embarrassment.

(Buckeye)

Two described the value of realism in potential exercises, essentially voting for an

integration of relationships and realistic educational tasks. Buckeye proposed a cross-war college exercise: “You don’t deploy to do it but you use virtual constructive gaming like we’re learning to do in a depressed resource environment.” Gator proposed --

We know the value of working with other militaries, and are more accepting of the fact that they’re going to have their own agendas. I don’t know why we should expect differently.

If they really wanted to be realistic on these exercises, it would be the fact of them having information they couldn’t share with us and us having information that we couldn’t share with them, ‘cause that happens out there. You have your NOFORN, you have your FIVE EYES [authorizations to access US classified information] and try to navigate.... I think that would have been very helpful because that is what I found to be very difficult in a joint environment. (Gator)

Every graduate remembered the Strategic Leadership Negotiations Lesson and its embedded exercise. “Negotiating has implications across everything we do: not just dealing with foreign armies but dealing with business decisions, procurement, people,” said Irish, representing his colleagues whose memories focused on the tactics of negotiation. Only Lion remembered a cross-cultural objective in the faculty-guided discussion about the exercise.

We collectively discussed the differences, getting after the desired effects of developing not only a greater understanding of negotiation as an art, but broadened understanding of the others’ role, goals, expectations and end states. That gets after the desired effect of the program: That we develop a greater understanding of negotiations as an art and that we broaden our understanding of what the co-negotiator goes through: what they bring with them for goals expectations, and end state. (Lion)



Another participant specified that:

I don't remember a cultural component to it .... I didn't remember ever connecting the dots of that exercise to engaging ... people of another culture.... I think [the negotiation exercise] would be noticeably different against someone who thinks differently, which would be a great learning objective. (Buckeye)

And another identified the ideal learning outcome:

It's about trying to find that common win -- easier said than done. It takes a little bit of being able to see a bigger picture and not be ... self-centered or only out for yourself or unit or organization - but to be able to see the perspective of the other side and understand what they need and what they want, and be empathetic to that.... How can we get to 'us?' ... not a 'this for that' but, 'Let's build a relationship and eventually as this relationship develops, we'll start to see each other's view and maybe we'll come around to an understanding'. (Bulldog)

Several participants recommended enhancements, again, pursuing realism: a day to understand the mechanics of negotiation coupled with a day to experience cross-cultural negotiations; or, added complexity requiring "negotiators" deal with a complex, developing situation. It's not surprising that a series of interview specifically focused on cross-cultural experiences would elicit culturally-focused responses from high-achieving individuals. What's more intriguing is that thinking about cultural implications led to reflections realism, by several participants. Most things are not that clear-cut [as the situation in the negotiation exercise], said Gator, among those pressing for more complexity:

I think whenever they try to make a wicked problem, [the situation should continue] developing. For the [problems] that actually happen out there, there's a lot more 2<sup>nd</sup> order, 3<sup>rd</sup> order effects. (Gator)

The graduates' emphasis on recommendations paralleled the realist expectations for like-minded requirements in their future, underscoring the drive for learning they considered relevant preparation for follow-on assignments. Clearly, experience and this education indicated that cross-cultural interactions are an inevitable future. The negotiation exercise reveals a gap in empathy that is essential to effectiveness with "others" but only if addressed, suggested Lion: "Otherwise, it's a transactional exchange - and that doesn't interest me." Some will be transactional forever but the exercise should drive toward a higher terminal learning objective. Empathy comes from understanding and repetition, said Lion:

By being deployed, you get repetitions of working with non-U.S. senior leaders and you develop more empathy in that regard. By now, [drinking chia] is a common language: you have to have chia to establish relations. But if you're talking to someone from the Far, East, that may not be the case... But the fact that we have at least gone through one rep and one learning experience ... we're more inclined to at least think through and empathize with the other senior leader no matter where we go, whether it be to Canada or to South America or to the eastern European theater. (Lion)

### **Participants' perceptions about relationships**

Positive comments about extracurricular activities were repeated throughout the interviews, reflecting the participants' recognition of mutual benefit. Falcon underscored the program objectives for IF and families to learn about America. Who? Discussed the fact that

family things made it easier .... And Husky connected the dots between extracurricular activities, trust, and effective US-IF exchanges in seminar:

It's an atmosphere that's reinforced or underpinned by trust within that group of people.... All of these great [extracurricular] experiences -- and I think of boatyard wars, and very early on it takes everybody out of their comfort zone. There's nobody that's more subject matter expert on that than anybody else .... These opportunities are not just curriculum-based but social in which, one, they're become more comfortable with us and [two] we're building relationships that in the classroom lead to more candid conversations. (Husky)

In addition to the seminar dynamic incorporating IF voices, the participants reported one-on-one seminar-based relationships of varied depth and endurance. In all cases, the graduates had not thought of US-IF relationships as a professional objective but a few discovered valued relationships serendipitously. None of the grads, to include Irish who highly valued his relationship with an IF during the academic year, continued relationships on a deliberate basis. They did engage loosely in email or Facebook exchanges that others in the seminar initiated, with a frequency of two or three times annually since graduation. For context, it's worth understanding that their working definition of relationship may be more like acquaintances; several spoke of lifelong colleagues in the base seminar yet their characterization of those relationships was much like the social media-equivalent of an annual Christmas letter exchange. Bulldog launched his interview with an in-depth recommendation about nurturing valued relationships created during the war college year: "There are general officers in [the Pentagon] who have close personal friends in X army, or close professional friendships in armies scattered across the world, but we don't necessarily have a data base or a tool to find out who those people

are when we need them.” Not every participant recounted a personal relationship with an IF in the class, but for those who did, relationships were uniquely formed. Across the duration of a year, each participant had multiple opportunities to form relationships, with any of the two or three IFs in the base seminar; several from the region in the RSE; and any number from 0 to 10 in electives. On the low end of exposures, those in ASAP studied alongside IF for two months in the base seminar before transferring to ASAP, yet one of those described a US-IF relationship in the deepest detail.

Perhaps an emphasis on relationships is a characteristic of the Army, which distinguishes itself traditionally from other military services by its focus on the human domain. The interview questions were not designed to solicit this response, but seven of seven participants spoke about the strength, value, or interesting elements of their personal relationships with IF. They described very different degrees of relationship, but it proved an important way of relating their experiences. Falcon, an ASAP member, reported a year-long family focus in addition to the rigorous demands of ASAP studies. Bulldog, a single officer, was satisfied by in-seminar interactions. These four study participants offered details.

Irish described how and why he invested effort in a one-on-one relationship with an officer from a Latin American country. He reflected on his habit to make quick judgments of others' combat experience, leadership of big units, and passion for the profession, yet he described a rewarding relationship with an officer who shared only the latter trait. “As you learn and grow, you really sharpen your sword when you float your ideas and try to see if you can get a debate going with ‘M’. ‘M’ and I had lot of solid debates and we sharpened each other through those debates.” And, “I can’t say that what we talked about changed my development or my application with foreign military because I’d spent so much time already in foreign countries,”

he said. But he valued the opportunity to sharpen ideas with someone smart and willing to debate and challenge and, in doing so, sharpen each other. He wasn't looking for that to be an IF. In fact, Irish noted early in his interview that he chose the Army school because he wanted to study with those US officers he had fought with, and those he would fight with, echoing other comments about trust-based relationships. But 'M' was an exceptional match for depth of discussion, he said. They shared a combat arms background and a passion for the profession, appreciating the history and national culture that informed the development of M's country's army, to include the Army's efforts to learn from a deeply troubled military history. The survey participant spoke with interest, with empathy, and with admiration despite the fact that he and the IF had no common experiences and are unlikely to ever work together.

Lion had served as an exchange officer with an allied country and formed lessons from that experience, applicable to the war college he said, that people should relate on a personal level to overcome stereotypes and prejudgment. He was the study participant who described asking the IF to identify the roles they preferred in group projects, noting that that's what he'd want to happen. He was the only one to remember a seminar discussion about cross-cultural distinctions during negotiations. While he retained lifelong friends from that experience, his relationships at the war college were valued but not lasting. He sponsored an IF, he and that officer participated in the cycling group, their families bonded, and he described a relationship that crossed academic lines into family, social, and more. The extracurricular activities helped students relate on a personal level, he thought. "It's hard to get cultural interaction inside the classroom. When playing softball, volleyball, they were there and it helped break down cultural barriers." He expressed respect and appreciation of the East Asian officer who gave him insights he considered impossible to acquire, short of working in or near that country. He developed a

deep relationship during the year with an officer from northern Europe. “He would give us that European flavor, lens, perspective that we wouldn’t necessarily have. (L101).” He readily acknowledged a common core background with a European officer, but most appreciated that he was always prepared, always grasped the material, and always offered unique perspectives from his experience, his country and his region of the world.

Buckeye celebrated the multiple opportunities in his year, and his career. His provided context for his own understanding, that education is one component of experience. He seamlessly discussed engagements across a continuum of experience: the seminar colleague from Southwest Asia who explained his country’s point of view about a policy that caused harm to US troops and their allies; the opportunity to engage French jungle warfare experts in the language he’d studied; the Chinese officers he’d worked alongside in a pre-war college experience, and his post-war college experience preparing young Soldiers in S. Korea to be respectful in foreign culture; and, creating new exchange opportunities with several countries. His family was young and he participated in few of the extracurricular activities. But, he referred consistently to the value of the range of engagements during the war college year -- the year when seminars shifted midway, making possible exposure to twice as many IFs. He underscored the value of an education environment that duplicates the complexity of the environment they’re preparing for. “It’s kind of like the immersion you never got,” he said about maximizing interactions so that they can understand culture. More interaction means more relationships and strategic insights that would not have happened without the seminar structure.

Husky described a pre-war college background of intensive experience in Afghanistan, to include an assignment living and working on an Afghan base. He described the tactical years preceding the school year as so busy that, in comparison, he found no problem making adequate

time for family time, socializing with the seminar in addition to study and a full slate of sports involvement. He noted particularly that the IF were most interested in soccer among sports options, and that drew him to it, as well. He described regular, respectful and appreciate interactions with the 3 IF in his seminar, underscoring the intelligence and contribution of two of the three IF, and described in more detail than others the role of the faculty in setting the seminar on a path to trustworthy camaraderie and collaboration. He indicated in multiple ways the priority he placed on relationships with the IF, but did not retain relationships with any IF after graduation other than semi-annual social media checks. In contrast, he maintained relationships with several of the faculty about whom he expressed admiration for their intelligence and facilitation.

### **Participants' perceptions of extracurricular activities**

Study participants universally considered extracurricular activities, identified in Table 2, Extracurricular choices of survey participants, as critical to furthering relationships, cultural awareness and understanding, and appropriate behaviors. Across the seven study participants, the level of extracurricular participation ranged baldly from two ASAP students who participated only in that which was mandatory to two who reportedly participated in virtually everything, to include all family activities. The two who reported family-first decisions noted a tension between choosing seminar versus family activities after long years mostly spent away from home. Unknown, but possibly the ASAP studies required more reading and preparation, as well. But others identified the family-seminar tension, including the one who chose to attend the war college specifically because of the promise of maximum family time.

Over the course of the interviews, it became clear that the extracurricular activities enhanced and deepened those made in the seminar room -- and more. It appeared that the early

extracurricular events were deliberate devices to “kick-start” relationships unfettered by skewed levels of knowledge or expertise as might be apparent in the seminar room. And, especially in the first two months described by Irish, curricular and extracurricular activities were carefully integrated for maximum exposure and opportunities to learn to develop trust, and to develop

**Table 2. Extracurricular choices of survey participants**

	<b>social</b>	<b>sports</b>	<b>1-on-1</b>	<b>family focus</b>
Irish (ASAP)	mandatory events, e.g., boyard wars, family picnic	mandatory softball	extended relationship with M began in class, and extended into class breaks, coffee	Know Your World evening event; otherwise family-focused
Falcon (ASAP)	mandatory events	softball		holiday retirement-home visit, Know Your World; family-focused year
Lion	Know your world	cycling		YMCA
Buckeye			seminar-based only	
Husky	all social	all sports; soccer with IF	seminar-based only	‘everything,’ including lots of exchanges in each other’s homes with family
Gator	air/shipwreck ‘ball’	softball volleyball JTSD	sponsor	potlucks US-IF activity, US-IF kid relationship at school & at home
Bulldog	seminar trivia night	softball volleyball	neighbors, occasional carpool	single

tolerance if not appreciation for differences. Several offered specific insights about such integration:

In just two months, shared experiences range from Thucydides and Clausewitz to softball, socials, the team boat race, family Halloween parade, couples’ ballroom dancing. (Irish)



Extracurricular important and, yes, a bit forced at times but that's okay. I'm okay with some forced fun and the war college did a great job setting it up and making enough of it mandatory but not too much: people interact in both work and social settings, and balance is important. (Lion)

Some reflections were analytical, inferring the dimensions of time and varied engagements in creating opportunities that spanned courtesy, curiosity, and genuine interest in others.

I think [interaction outside the classroom] helps a lot because, one, it's hard to get cultural interaction in the classroom. You can get some of it but, it's an academic setting.... When you're out playing softball or volleyball, our two international students were involved in everything we did, they participated in everything, whether they didn't know how to play softball, it didn't matter, they were out there. It helped a lot. I think it just kind of helped break down cultural barriers. It's hard to describe, but I didn't feel there were any barriers between international students and US students in seminar.

(Gator)

Another participant suggested the benefit of neutral, noncompetitive territory, so to speak, and benign interactions:

You're socializing with them as well, what their background is, their family, and where they've come from, and what experiences they've been through so I think that's important. 'Cause [the IF] certainly felt more comfortable at least initially in the social situation to open up versus trying to open up about army doctrine, or US doctrine or national security, which they may be trying to do the catch up. They certainly know everything about what they've done in their lives.... It's a way to ease into the more complex and technical discussions. (Bulldog)

The implications of the consistent responses about icebreakers, team building, and social engagements outside the seminar room suggested a pathway: from tolerance to awareness to interest, empathy and appreciation – first outside the seminar and then in seminar dialogue and exercises for which an IF would be respected regardless of or because of the unique nature of his contribution. for a unique sort of contribution.

...It's all about relationships. I think my colleagues got it [that it's all about relationships] but they got it mostly through extracurricular. And, what's so expensive about what we do outside the classroom? I wouldn't drop any of it. Still do that pirate thing? We would do potlucks over at someone's quarters; they were not expensive things. It was nice, we had fun at the 'air shipwreck ball' and the Jim Thorpe sports days. I think it was mandatory to do softball but we got I think 2<sup>nd</sup> in volleyball. We had our volleyball team but all the rest of the seminar would show up to our volleyball games. I think that would be the worst thing they could do is to get rid of the extracurricular activities - they should always encourage them. That's where you're really building those relationships. (Gator)

Husky related the bridging between social interaction, respect in the seminar, and ultimately teamwork reflecting the seminars' varied abilities and strengths:

I don't remember how quickly we came together as a team although I do think we came together as a team fairly quickly. The experience did provide a lot of opportunities to interact together socially, I just felt, and I make the assumption that it's true for a lot of seminars, that we became friends. We're pretty close. Not only are you spending all your time together in the classroom but you're doing something social, whether it's drinking beers in downtown Carlisle it includes the same people. You're spending a lot of time with this group so you just become very comfortable, and I will tell you in the classroom,

you appreciate more about their intellect. I think it's outside the classroom where you truly gain more of an appreciation for culture -- social culture, not professional culture.

The worse thing that could happen to an international student is to lose credibility early on, for any number of reasons, whether not smart, not a hard worker -- so probably, [faculty] learned over time, how is it you take somebody who has to overcome culture, language, all those kinds of things, to be treated like an equal, valued member. And, so, I think probably the instructors are tuned into that early on and know that they have to do some things. They had a requirement early on to do some this-is-my-country kind of spiel to all of us. I'm sure that was in part done to get them out in front of everybody, talking about something they're comfortable with, they're truly subject matter expert on, to spur this process along. It became less about the fact that they were an international student and more about assessing their individual abilities. (Husky)

The participants' comments about family activities belied a similar admiration for the ideal, in contrast with their actual experience. One connected the dots between IF's family and richness of their experience. He noted that the IFs, for whom this year is an immersion experience, arrive typically with their families, for example, M's wife was a similar age as his wife's. He brought his wife and kids to meet M's wife and kids at Know Your World event, at which the M family shared elements of his nation's history, culture, character. Table 4C captures the range of extracurricular options. Social options included the "Boatyard wars" team-building event concurrent with the family welcome picnic, "air/shipwreck ball", Know your World IF-sponsored cultural event, Oktoberfest, holiday retirement home visits, chili cook-off, New York City trip, Joint ball. Sports options included softball, volleyball, army-navy football game, basketball, Jim Thorpe Sports Days (3-day competition with 13 different athletic events), US-IF

soccer game. Additional opportunities to get together were developed within the seminar. Only the boatyard wars and softball were mandatory; both are presented as team-building events and positioned early in the college calendar. Lion captured the iterative effect:

The more you interact both in a work and social setting helps to develop relationships ... the school set conditions for [IF interaction] to happen but it was really up to the individual to determine how much they wanted to invest into it. At the international event ... the social events ... organized activities for spouses ... My family did some but not as much as others ... [young kids and lived off post] (Lion).

### **Participants reported post-grad influences on career choices**

Several offered comments about decisions and programs they linked to the US-IF educational experience. “A year later in Afghanistan with [an Afghan commander], in a lot of ways it helped me understand, and helped me see things through his eyes, their eyes as the Afghan military, as they had dialogue with the Americans,” said Lion. [What worked was] definitely the strategic leadership [course] and moving out of the tactical leadership level and creating consensus and working with organizations that didn’t necessarily work for you, but still building that consensus and getting that plan to work. That was instrumental in my [overseas] command,” said Bulldog. Buckeye subsequently created an exchange program for his command, swapping several multi-year assignments within his command with members of foreign militaries, noting, “I might not have thought of that if I had not had the foreign students sitting next to me. In terms of being culturally astute, I tell you: That works.” And, Husky created an extensive training exchange program:

We built it into something bigger and much better in terms of partnership with a [foreign] brigade commander.... We did some social things together. Nothing formalized

[beforehand] and really had to push it because division headquarters wasn't necessarily enamored with these efforts. This was ... great appreciated by Soldiers who wanted that experience.... I think I was much more open to even engaging them because of my war college experience: very positive. (Husky)

### **Summary**

The case explored perceptions of high-achieving senior-level leaders whose responsibilities make them accustomed to, and responsible for, setting objectives and assessing major programs. Problem solvers, program managers, and highly experienced leaders, the graduates' ingrained approach to an issue is to note bias, test assumptions, identify objectives, evaluate processes, and manage the resultant responses to outcomes. To a noteworthy degree, the participants identified with the problem and the purpose of the study; they became active participants in determining, in Army After-Action Review fashion, what was supposed to happen in their educational experience, what did happen, what actions/ processes should be retained, and what needs improvement.

Study participants, given free rein in how to address the questions, relayed that the educational environment facilitated a continuum from cultural awareness to understanding, and from understanding to the empathy appropriate to cross-cultural competence. One graduate offered a summary statement. "It's basically about prepping senior leaders to be culturally aware, astute and prepared -- so that you don't ruin relationships, you're able to build bridges, and gain whatever the U.S. needs you to do as a senior leader, but all in support of the national security strategy" (Buckeye). Analysis of the study data arrayed against the three interview questions revealed insights about participants' personal sense of purpose, their perceptions of value in relationships, and preference for collective, experiential learning. The graduates perceived

themselves to be purposeful learners who, although tied to a six-month core curriculum common to all, found myriad ways to customize their own learning experience in preparation for anticipated career responsibilities. They acknowledged the critical interplay among curricular knowledge, faculty facilitation, and in-depth collaborative evaluation and analysis of theories and issues as a tool for developing strategic mindedness. To the extent that academics, faculty interventions and engagements with IF were recognized as a means to an end, the graduates remembered and appreciated them. The faculty were reportedly effective when their interventions subtly, astutely shifted responsibilities for individual learning and collaborative effort to the students; they suggested that that happened only with the seasoned instructors -- intuitive team-builders – who knew that educational objectives transcended knowledge transfer. The IF colleagues in seminar were reportedly effective when they were adequately confident in sharing regional and country perspectives that they would inject value into discussions, case studies and exercises. Using familiar training terminology, several referred to the value of “reps,” or repetitions of exposure and interaction with foreign officers, although they described in rich detail a phenomenon unlike the repetitions that built muscle memory and more like the challenges that cause one to break and reframe mental models based on new information. And they conveyed certainty in the ideal of initiating and deepening relationships with IF through extracurricular and family activities, with payoff in more candid seminar discussions and in their own family’s satisfaction with the war college year.

As similarities emerged from the data, so too did key distinctions linked to individual’s interpretation of the educational environment and their ability to shape their own educational experience. One thought the war college experience with IF was better than earlier engagements because of the higher quality of foreign colleagues; another pointed to his own maturity as the

causal factor in his ability to better benefit from their presence. Yet, the consistent assessment of faculty as critical facilitators suggests that both are true. Only a single US-IF one-on-one relationship was described in any detail and, when compared to others' more superficial relationships, suggested merely that interpersonal relationships are a function of far more factors than environment. Despite an avowed appreciation for extracurricular activities as catalysts for relationships, most study participants recounted low levels of participation themselves unless the activity was required and/or considered beneficial for US family togetherness. Several linked their distance from extracurricular activities to a family-first focus. Finally, participants referred to the military officers' lifelong career experience with collective exercises that duplicate a reality and require active, meaningful commitment by the individual in contrast with active seminar dialogue about differing perspectives. One summed the ideal, alternative, and more deliberate environment for cross-cultural development: "The closer you get the education environment to the environment that you're training for, the better," said Buckeye.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

This chapter will cover the findings from the data, address the research questions, and reference the theoretical framework selected from the literature. It will as well identify study limitations and recommendations for further research.

Current cross-cultural research underscores the need for general cross-cultural competence for senior leaders who will work in an international environment. This mental readiness incorporates knowledge about varied cultures, metacognitive thinking about varied cultures, thinking about the effects of cultural differences, motivation to learn and adapt for interactions with other cultures, and the planning and agility requisite for adaptive behaviors. The role of developing these factors of knowledge, motivation and behavioral agility can be considered the role of higher education. This study intended to explore U.S. military officer/graduates' perceptions about how their studies and activities alongside foreign officers at the Army War College influenced their preparation for decision-making, cultural adaptation, and task performance in a cross-cultural leadership context. As such, it offers additional insight about the efficacy of an educational setting to influence a general cross-cultural competence for senior leaders.

#### **Findings**

Five findings about educational development for cross-cultural leaders support a conclusion that a graduate educational experience alongside international counterparts can influence military leaders' cross-cultural competence. Underlying the five findings is a general valuation of relationship-building as both tool and outcome of a cross-cultural education. Institutional relationships, based on common language, thinking skills and planning processes,



do not test and stretch the mental models and interpersonal skills requisite for cross-cultural agility.

**Finding 1.** Education is effective in developing cross-cultural knowledge and metacognition about cross-cultural implications when the student perceives a link between cultural agility and professional purpose in forming effective cross-cultural interpersonal relationships.

**Finding 2.** Direct and meaningful engagements, as with project work or team sports, deepens student motivation for cross-cultural engagement: serving as building blocks for developing the sophisticated skill and mindset required for negotiation across cultures, nations, and competing objectives or priorities. Program design about “how to think rather than what to think” created a level of collaborative learning beyond casual contact and beyond transactional information exchange by instilling critical thinking, empathetic thinking and collaborative problem-solving skills in an environment of daily, routine exposure over six or more months; repeated exposure to differing perspectives; expectation to learn from others; and collaboration in academic projects.

**Finding 3.** Skillful faculty facilitation is critical to the norm-setting and role-modeling that position US-IF relationship-building as an explicit learning objective, and shift IF-US interactions from transactional information exchanges to transformational professional development events.

**Finding 4.** Multiplicity of cross-cultural experience types affords benefits perceived as on par with cultural immersion, when the interactions are purposeful and meaningful to the participants. Conforming behaviors linked to national/cultural differences were far less important than shared military cultural commonalities and objectives. Each contact builds on another as the

student thinks about prior interaction, and develops mental maps for dealing with cultural distinctions. Extracurricular US-IF engagements, especially social engagements as “icebreakers,” were valued as low-threshold opportunities to initiate or enhance relationships as an indirect strategy for enriching academic interaction, rather than on their own merits. Engagement through team sports emerged as an exception to general disinterest in elective extracurricular activities; pseudo-work environments team sports create interdependent relationships in collaboration toward shared purpose.

**Finding 5.** Experiential learning with realistic conditions like the multinational conditions of military operations is considered the gold standard by these adult learners, where motivation to deal with cross-cultural differences is a muscle that gets stronger by challenging that muscle. The ability to test skills and behaviors in a variety of settings is tied to experiential learning that duplicates the trials of cross-cultural differences, complexity, and reality of the environment for which they are preparing.

### **Application of findings to Research Questions**

**RQ 1:** “What types of learning activities of the Army War College graduate program do US military officer/graduates link to cross-cultural leadership capability, as characterized by the cognitive, metacognitive, motivational and behavioral factors of cultural intelligence?”

The environment was designed by structure and schedule to enable cross-cultural interactions in formal seminar activities, personal relationships, collective exercises, and extracurricular interaction. The student body was structured to create daily exposure and to insert new exposures by changing seating charts, mixing compositions for group projects, and inviting IF to enroll in electives. Some electives did not, however, attract IF. Across the academic year, the school schedules group projects and exercises, noontime lectures, additional academic

offerings as well extracurricular sports and social events. The environment did not seek to duplicate cross-cultural leadership experiences; US students and IF are peers in a deliberately collegial environment. In fact, the military officers are given the option to wear coat-and-tie rather than uniform, and all discussions are on a first-name basis regardless of differences in rank or faculty-student relationship. (The student body includes lieutenant colonels, colonels and, among the IF, brigadier generals.) There is little expectation for cross-cultural leadership among the US students and IF but, rather, for collaborative cross-cultural learning by experienced leaders.

The student body was primed, through faculty facilitation, to recognize the IF in the student body as resources who could enrich US students' learning. When the IF contributed value and the US students listened, reflected, and learned, the cognitive learning deepened and became more relevant because it was perceived as relevant to the study participant's future. The graduates reported that their metacognitive context, i.e., thinking about cultural implications and about senior leaders' responsibilities regarding cross-cultural engagements, was not generated but heightened by the school interactions and the reminders throughout the year of the value of relationships. The language across the participants about considering others' perspectives, viewing old problems through new lenses, and valuing relationships were adequately similar as to suggest exposure to the same phrasings during the war college year, regardless of seminar group. The graduates' comments suggested low motivation (or competing demands) about forming professional and/or personal relationships with IF during the academic year. Yet two anecdotes suggested direct linkage to motivation in subsequent assignments. Several referred to application in immediately subsequent or later responsibilities. One initiated an exchange program in a follow-on assignment specifically because of the value he perceived in his school

experience. The participants made few direct observations about influences on behavior. With one exception about country-specific behavioral cues of immediate post-graduate use, several referred to the general behavioral agility that benefited them in later assignments. They identified a host of influences on their own behavioral agility that they linked to daily awareness, to incidences that increased empathy generally, and to sensitivities about behavioral norms that they had acquired in experiences prior to the war college.

**RQ 2.** “What types of collaborative experiences with foreign counterparts, in and out of academic settings, did U.S. Army War College graduates identify as influential modeling for personal motivation and behaviors in cross-cultural leadership settings?”

Study participants reported in detail about the potential for collaborative experiences in extracurricular activities, yet admitted low levels of personal participation apart from required events, like the boatyard wars team activity, the ice breaker social, and softball, all designed as team-building activities. They saw value for themselves, for IF, and for their own families in the Know Your World event sponsored by IF families for US colleagues as a cultural exposition of music, dress, food, drink, historical significance and travel destinations. The year at Carlisle is explicitly understood to be an immersion experience for the IF and their families. For the US student, every extracurricular activity is a personal choice. Those who described themselves as marginal participants did, in fact, participate across the spectrum of required activities but deliberated the professional payoff and family tradeoff when choosing activities. Team sports were reportedly an appropriate selection. One reported a deeply satisfying professional US-IF relationship but made family a higher priority than extracurricular opportunities. Another stood out by his consistent focus on relationships, recounting his own experience as an exchange officer, and the added pleasure of participating with his family.

As to collaborative academic experiences with foreign counterparts, in and out of academic settings, the participants were adamant that collaborative, experiential learning experiences are their preferred learning style, are best able to replicate the operating environment to which they'll return, and yet, are not incorporated with the degree of cross-culture challenge that is possible.

### **Research implications**

This final analysis looks at the same qualitative data through yet another lens, that of social cognitive learning, to identify implications about cross-cultural development in a professional military education setting. Social cognitive theory explains human behavior as a matter of interaction and influence among the person, personal factors, and environment, i.e., the individual as agent in control of one's life. The critical element of social cognitive theory is that cognitive processes influence human motivation, affect and action (Bandura, 2006a, p. 65). The analysis incorporates the research question findings as well as multiple comments not directly aligned with interview questions. About half the interviews, on average, were used by the participants to address issues beyond the scope of the question and, in doing so, reveal several sets of insights, particularly about self-efficacy and social modeling with respect to motivation to deal with the difficulties of cultural "otherness." The study design was informed by a framework that interlocks cultural intelligence theory and social cognitive learning theory; the framework shaped the research questions and the analysis of the data. Cultural intelligence theory characterizes the key desired metacognitive/understanding, motivation and behavior factors of cross-cultural competence for culture-general responsibilities of senior military leaders (Earley & Ang, 2003). The theoretical framework analysis offered further understanding of the policies,

pedagogy, and internal work processes that enabled PME to enhance individual effectiveness in cross-cultural settings.

**Table 3. Insights about Social Cognitive Learning for Cultural Intelligence**

<b>Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) of Learning</b>	<b>Cultural Intelligence Knowledge:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Thinking</b></li> <li>• <b>Learning</b></li> <li>• <b>Strategizing</b></li> </ul>	<b>Cultural Intelligence Motivation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Self-efficacy, confidence</b></li> <li>• <b>Persistence</b></li> <li>• <b>Values congruence</b></li> <li>• <b>Affect for new culture</b></li> </ul>	<b>Cultural Intelligence Behavior:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Social mirroring</b></li> <li>• <b>Behavioral norms</b></li> </ul>
<b>SCT Self-efficacy factor</b>	1. High leader efficacy drives thinking & metacognition about cultural implications	2. High leader efficacy heightens confidence & persistence to overcome differences & maximize value of differences	3 High self-efficacy focuses attention toward social cues & determination to master behavioral norms
<b>SCT Social mediation factor: modeling &amp; interventions</b>	4. Curricular design & seminar structure influences thinking & metacognition about cultural implications	5. Faculty model benefits of persistence in cross-cultural situations; quantity & quality of cross-cultural contacts enables recognition of common values, affect for disparate perspectives, & predilection for cross-cultural interaction	6. Social mediation/ modeling influences metacognitive responses, i.e., ‘how to think’ about expectations for behavioral agility
<b>SCT Collective agency factor: group action, experience-based learning</b>	7. Collective, experiential learning enables mental modeling for actual situations	8. challenging cross-cultural learning experiences offer opportunity to test & reflect on relationships, skills, and problem-solving, within a social setting	9. learning experiences linked to cultural challenges are expected to influence metacognitive development vs specific behaviors

Table 3 summarizes the associations between each of the social cognitive learning factors and each of the cultural intelligence indicators. Nine relationships are analyzed through the graduates’ perspectives on the environmental factors and school interventions to leverage or heighten the influence of the social cognitive factors of self-efficacy, social modeling and

collective action. The paragraphs following the chart describe in more detail the nature of the association between the learning agencies (self, social, collective) and the target cultural intelligence indicators. Table 4 offers observations about the school's interventions to leverage the learning agencies for best effect influencing cross-cultural competencies, and identifies additional opportunities to further address the learners' self-efficacy, social mediation and collective agency to advance cross-cultural competence as expressed through indicators of cultural intelligence theory.

**Cell 1. Self-efficacy influences new knowledge from academic study and dialogue.**

The graduates believed that they were self-organizing/ self-motivated managers of their own education, able to master complex relationships and process, and intrinsically aware of the value of others' perspectives without prompting. School interventions to leverage and direct self-efficacy include orientation, convocation remarks, faculty direction, and the design of the seminar composition to explicitly identify the purpose and value of considering other perspectives, developing relationships, and creating a collaborative seminar environment. Considerable time is committed in the first two weeks to setting expectations and setting, or norming, the seminar.

**Cell 2: Self-efficacy influences on motivation for working with other cultures.** Self-efficacy correlates with motivation to invest effort and persistence in difficult interpersonal situations that can be characteristic of cross-cultural relationships. The study participants reflected a set of preferences as to the US-IF engagements that would contribute to their own perceived personal gain. Confrontation with perspectives that challenged both personal assumptions and US positions created the dissonance that served as catalyst for collaborative discovery and problem-solving for those who were intellectually engaged and professionally

motivated to listen and learn -- even when reflection was delayed and graduates recognized in later years the value of their IF colleagues' perspectives. Participants perceived that the school set conditions for purposeful learners to multiply learning outcomes in an environment of routine exposure, expectations for interactions, and the trust that develops over time and repetition.

**Cell 3: Self-efficacy influences on developing behaviors and skills for other cultures.**

Individuals' cognitive judgments about one's capabilities are predictive of changes in performance (Bandura, 1977), and high efficacy developed through a history of adaptiveness in other settings positioned the study participants, they believed, to be adaptive again. College interventions underscored the value of openness to experience, and emphasized learning 'how to think not what to think' as an underlying theme to every course and most lessons. Their observations about general cultural agility (rather than knowledge of specific behaviors for specific countries or situations) are particularly significant since an impetus of this study was to determine whether education is relevant for developing senior military leaders' general cross-cultural readiness for assignments for which they cannot fully plan and prepare.

**Cell 4: Social modeling influences new knowledge from academic study and dialogue.** A network of social norms and behavioral indicators such as approvals, rewards and disincentives characterizes social modeling in which students observe and evaluate others' experiences, others' reactions, and others' cues to create new knowledge, motivation and/or behavior. College interventions to address strategic studies in terms of learners and social modeling, norms and cues are linked to explicit expectation management and guidance to students to leverage the composition of the seminar, with otherness embedded by way of IF, and leaders from other-than-DoD federal agencies. The orientation forums include the College leaders' introduction to the student body, the formal academic convocation, the informal seminar



“icebreaker” socials, the “boatyard wars” team-building/social event and family picnic, and the faculty members’ structuring of introductions within the seminar, norm building and enforcement.

**Cell 5: Social modeling influences motivation for working with other cultures.**

Social environments shape exposure and opportunity, especially if characterized by challenge and difficulty. College interventions to address motivation for cross-cultural interactions include faculty and peer modeling of respectful consideration of all seminar members’ contributions. Interview comments suggested three sets of tensions between conflicting goals. While encouraging students to leverage opportunities with foreign students, the college seeks to create a stable, trusting and collegial seminar environment, as reflected in anecdotes about missed opportunities to increase US-IF exposure. Further, uneven levels of faculty skill created an uneven experience across seminar faculty teams with respect to modeling active learning with IF as opposed to merely gathering nuggets of information or perspective they might drop into a discussion: the distinction between gathering knowledge and developing empathy. Finally, participants described a gap between ideals and behavior when family was factored in to the additional exposures possible through extracurricular activity.

**Cell 6: Social modeling influences cross-cultural behaviors and skills.** Social mediation provides incentives and disincentives for behavioral choices. Few study participants recalled experiences related directly to developing behavioral acumen. College interventions to address behavioral agility in cross-cultural interactions included opportunities to leverage combined, collaborative efforts toward learning, for example, the integration of regional IF in the Regional Studies Electives. Another tension arises between leveraging IF contributions to a

richer US student understanding of a region that complements faculty expertise versus encouraging IF to make independent out-of-region learning choices.

**Cell 7: Collective action influences on knowledge from academic study and dialogue.**

Collective agency through group action, or a group dynamic, is the third agency that Bandura (2002) identified as an influence on one's ways of adapting flexibly to diverse environments. Participants' comments about experiential learning reflect the collective belief in specific, time-tested approaches to individual learning tied to collective learning, expressed in the phrases "experiential learning." The military community's evolution from combat operations to counterinsurgency operations (COIN) that emphasize relationships, was a silent partner in the educational experience, priming students' expectations for targeting learning in preparation for future multinational operations of many types. The school's curricular design for experiential education as a vehicle for acquiring knowledge includes exercises that complement on-the-ground experience in a continuum of experience. The negotiation exercise stood out as a potential collective study in empathy with a high degree of relevance to the cross-cultural negotiation that may be the most sophisticated skill for a senior leader working with foreign counterparts. Few experiential learning activities met the promise of cross-cultural challenge and understanding through active experimentation.

**Cell 8. Collective action influences on motivation for working with other cultures.**

For graduates, Iraq and Afghanistan and the transition from the kinetic fight to the cross-cultural connections of counterinsurgency (COIN) was a profound experience, whether directly or vicariously through the US military community experience. Against that backdrop, the participants reported a gap between the potential of the school to create a collective learning event that enables students to test concepts and relationships against those of other nations and

develop mental models for working through difficulty that duplicates real cross-national challenges, such as national caveats, restrictions to security access, and developing situations with second and third order implications. To make the point, one urged the challenge of, “continuous exposure and broadening of the mind to handle that which you cannot train for because it’s so complex, so wicked, so agile, so rapidly changing.” These characteristics parallel the social cognitive learning point about the value of dissonance and challenge in creating new understanding and motivation.

**Cell 9: Collective action influences behavior and skills for other cultures.** Study participants addressed the idea of collective learning of behavioral agility, rather than culture-specific behaviors. Basing multiple recommendations on the concept, “train as you fight,” they recommended a new level of learning experience that focused more on collective action than on personal action, and on realism.

### **Summary of findings with respect to educational interventions**

Table 4, the Summary of findings with respect to educational interventions, relates the case findings about the influence of graduate school study with foreign colleagues to a corresponding set of observations about the effective educational interventions and the opportunity for additional, additional interventions. The premise of cultural intelligence theory is that cross-cultural competence at the senior leader level is a function of knowledge, motivation and behavioral agility. Relevant knowledge includes understanding of the strategic environment; of senior leader roles as negotiators, planners, and leaders; and of processes by which political decisions are shaped into strategy concepts and in turn into operational plans created with and executed with allies and/or short-term partners. Relevant motivational factors include the commitment to coordinate, collaborate and negotiate with counterparts of different nations

and/or different cultures who may make decisions based on criteria and national or military objectives that differ from those of the United States. Relevant factors of behavior agility are captured in the participant comment that senior leaders must be culturally aware, astute, and prepared to maintain relationships, build bridges and advance US objectives in support of the national security strategy. Across the graduates, there was no expectation that immersion experience or in-depth language training would be necessary for the responsibilities they anticipate, despite their collective experience working across a wide selection of countries in every region delineated by DOD: Africa Command, Central Command (Middle East, Afghanistan, Pakistan), European Command (Europe, Russia, Israel), Pacific Command (China, Japan, Korea, the Pacific Rim, Australia & New Zealand); Northern Command (Canada, USA, Mexico); and Southern Command (South America, Central America, Caribbean nations).

The role of efficacy was relayed clearly by the purposeful high-achievers in the case who were deliberately guided and shaped by college interventions. Purpose drove most decisions about study focus, elective selection, relationship building, and participation in extracurricular activities. Their professional educational objectives were influenced by the college and presented to students through readings, case studies, and guidance from faculty and college leadership alike. College interventions defined the set of knowledge, motivation and behavioral agility necessary for senior leaders operating in a strategic environment. The officers interviewed as graduates are not representative of the student body. They, are, however, representative of the subset of the student body that will be selected for the top tier of US Army leadership and management, as general officers. High efficacy within the small set of high-achieving graduates of the school accounted for much of the drive to choose the experiences and relationships in and out of the seminar room that were likely to maximize the value of the educational year in terms

of developing knowledge, skills and attributes for assignments at the strategic level. Despite believing in their own wisdom to make those choices, the interview comments reveal an interplay between high drive and school interventions to shape those choices; they recognize upon arrival that they do not fully comprehend what knowledge, skills and attributes they'll need at the strategic level. Expectations set by leadership guidance and curriculum design shaped the objectives they sought and strategies they selected to achieve those objectives of professional development. Knowledge introduced by faculty and readings, and evaluated through dialogue with similarly experienced seminar colleagues, ingrained new understanding of leadership in environments for which they had little experience. Their comments suggest that much of the curriculum targets knowledge and motivation through lessons and case studies and exercises in senior leadership, international relations, policy development and strategy development.

College interventions, especially through modeling by leaders and faculty, and by exposure to international peers, were notable in encouraging respectful consideration of foreign colleagues' contributions to the U.S. graduates' development. As resources, IF were highly appreciated. Mutual partnerships in trust and endurance were rare or fleeting. Competing objectives emerged. Exposure through a variety of social, sports and other activities outside the seminar room is believed to ease initial relationship-building, and to deepen the value of interactions within academic discussions. Yet, several chose to limit participation in any extracurricular activities because the school presents the academic year as an opportunity to renew family ties, recognizing the high tempo of deployments of the students' recent past. International officers are often likely to reach out by email or social media to stay in touch with fellow graduates, and may be encouraged by their nations to do so, but neither the US military nor the US graduates deliberately maintain these potentially valuable relationships. A participant

**Table 4. Summary of findings with respect to educational interventions**

<b>Findings</b>	<b>Effective educational interventions</b>	<b>Education interventions, proposed</b>
(1) Leaders develop cross-cultural competence in a US-international student environment when they perceive a link between cultural agility and professional purpose	Educational leaders structure the curriculum to link cross cultural interactions to the desired skills & attributes of senior leaders	Educational leaders can leverage efficacy by explicitly identifying “developing relationships” as a learning objective
	Educational leaders & faculty encourage reflective practices with respect to cross cultural interactions/ perspectives, as well as in study materials	
(2) Leaders develop cross-cultural competence through direct and professionally relevant academic engagement with international peers	Educational leaders structure assignments & seating to increase one-on-one exposures to peers from other cultures	Educational leaders can open all course openings to international students
	Educational leaders create extracurricular settings to facilitate engagements apart from the stress of academic settings	Educational leaders can explicitly guide cross-cultural leaders to consider family participant to accomplish dual purposes of family time and informal cultural relationships
	Educational leaders invest in developing faculty skills in leveraging, and role modeling to empower all to share expertise in the seminar, even when contributions are not overtly valuable	
(3) Leaders maximize the educational opportunity for cross-cultural development with effective faculty facilitation	Effective faculty facilitate seminar norms, collegiality and respect across all students, and a collaborative environment for discussions, cases, exercises	Explicit faculty development can be enhanced for new/short-term/military instructors with respect to both process and purpose for US-IF engagement
(4) Leader develop cross-cultural persistence and agility over time, on a continuum of operational & educational experiences	Educational leaders sponsor and encourage intramural team sports as US-IF collaborative experience	Educational leaders can incorporate formal assessment metrics that guide graduates to reflect on learning associated with cross cultural skills & attributes
(5) Leaders learn in educational environments that recreate the challenge, complexity and collective action of post-graduate requirements		Educational leaders can incorporate into experiential learning the complexity and stressors of working across cultures

suggested that the query in security clearance background checks about foreign ties is a disincentive for maintaining ties. Given that the selected US officers thrive on challenge, the

school might benefit from examining the messages to students about developing US-IF relationships to be explicit educational objectives.

The old Army adage, ‘train as you will fight’ is a given for the senior leaders who have been responsible for the design and/or conduct of collective, unit training. That explains why comments about experiential learning at the war college were often presented as recommendations for improvement. Their preference is strong for learning in an environment that duplicates the mission analysis, planning, coalition building, negotiation and other activities executed with other nations. They know the opportunity is there, if only because of the highly-appreciated experience of two graduates with an exercise that is no longer conducted.

### **Limitations of the study**

This study included a small set of participants who invested one hour to express enduring perceptions about their educational experience alongside IF, with varied evident levels of reflection prior to the interviews. While intended to be representative of the set of graduates eligible for promotion into the general officer ranks, that selection process incorporates a host of subjective factors that cannot be reproduced in this selection.

As a tool to fill the gap in understanding about the effect of a cross-cultural educational experience on an individual’s cross-cultural proclivities, or cultural intelligence, a few factors stand out that could not be controlled. First, the role of the faculty was a profound influence; it is not possible to retroactively determine the process by which the “seasoned faculty” became adept at incentives and behavioral cues with respect to IF. The absence of comments about the military faculty, whose faculty term is of a finite assignment duration, may suggest that mentoring and/or experience in addition to faculty development explained their higher skill in facilitation. Second, the college is dynamic in terms of updating curriculum and increasing the

number of non-military students. The seven participants, of different year groups, met different experiences in terms of exposure to IFs and relevant curriculum. A big distinction between graduates was linked to the deletion of the major exercise that two participants discussed glowingly because of its ability to foreshadow the real challenges that await them in terms of complicated problem sets.

Therefore, the value of this study is tied to the consistent elements of purpose, guidance, and exposure – matching well the social cognitive construct of leveraging self-efficacy, social modeling, and collective agency. The data suggests strongly that efficacy and social modeling are strong influencers when guided by the college, and that collective agency is an influencer with more potential for developing cultural intelligence for the high-achieving students who will inherit high-impact responsibilities with other cultures and nations.

The variety of perceptions about a specific case were undoubtedly shaped by a variety of leadership roles they've taken; a variety of inter-cultural and international experiences since graduation; and variation in metacognitive effects of the educational experience. What is impossible to specify from this study is the actual relationship among the educational experience, operational experience, and metacognitive responses to one or all experiences. Further, while all related some degree of prior experience living or working among other cultures, this study did not develop insights as to the relative influence of different degrees of contact or working relationships.

### **Recommendations for future research**

Future research could continue to examine the concept of campus-based cultural immersion within any US-based educational setting, with additional attention to the role of extracurricular activities as a relationship-building tool intended to initiate or enrich the



academic relationship; and to the value of duplicating the collective action of actual cross-cultural workgroups in leadership settings. Opportunity exists for more focused study of objective setting, referring to the school or faculty signals and expectations with respect to transcending contact relationships toward working relationships. Additionally, further research might explore the applicability of social cognitive learning interventions in developing cultural intelligence in healthcare leaders, business leaders, or leaders in other communities for which cross-cultural interactions has significant implications. Notably, sophisticated new language acquisition programs may make it possible to bridge the gap as it's currently perceived between culture-general competence and the considerable advantage of language mastery, thereby opening new avenues of investigation.

Additional work within military communities would examine the implications on efficacy and social modeling that would arise from a major turn in national security objectives and events. As one student noted, a current predilection to consider cross-cultural competence as a set of desired leader knowledge, skills and attributes has been shaped by the shifting US military operational focus between kinetic conflict and stability operations/COIN. In the eventuality of a near-existential threat to the United States, for example, that crisis would arguably increase complexities and shift sensibilities to strike a new balance between violent means to achieve objectives and cross-cultural leadership requirements with allies and potential partners.

## **Conclusion**

This study concludes that an educational experience within the United States can operate as a pseudo-immersive experience for developing cross-cultural competence as a component of strategic-mindedness. The study identified these factors in cross-cultural development: high-efficacy leader/students, foreign counterparts with comparable experience or accomplishment, an

assignment structure that creates regularly recurring and direct contact, multiple extra-curricular opportunities to initiate and develop personal relationships, skillful faculty facilitators to model classroom dynamics for peer-to-peer collaboration, expectation for collaborative cross-cultural effort, and explicit expectation management with respect to relationship-building as a learning objective. The study suggests that additional opportunity for cross-cultural development lies in leveraging self-efficacy and collective agency through collective, experiential learning that duplicates the challenges inherent in cross-cultural or international interactions of the post-graduate professional environment.

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