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TRANSFORMATIVE PREPARATION: MEASURING THE INTERCULTURAL
COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND STUDENT
AFFAIRS (HESA) STUDENTS AND EXPLORING THE INTERCULTURAL
LEARNING EXPERIENCE ACROSS ASSISTANTSHIP SITES

A Dissertation Presented

by

Rafael A. Rodriguez

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ABSTRACT

Today's college student body reflects, among many things, the outcome of policies geared towards increasing access and diversifying the academy, efforts to recruit international students, the vast social, political, and economic disparities among marginalized populations, and the extreme cultural polarization of our times. Students on campuses have broad and individualized perspective, approaches, and values, which are culturally rooted, embedded within our socialization and often times conflict with the experiences of other students or the student affairs professionals tasked with supporting students. Student affairs practitioners must enter the field possessing a degree of intercultural competence, defined as an appropriate skillset and mindset, to effectively work across difference and support today's college student. While the development of intercultural competence is a life-long learning process, master's-level preparatory programs serve as a critical space for aspiring student affairs practitioners to engage in intercultural learning and skill development. Utilizing pre and post data result from the Intercultural Development Inventory and information gathered from post-graduation interviews, this mixed-methods study examined the intercultural competence development of students in Higher Education within a student affairs master's level preparatory and their intercultural learning experiences at the assistantship site. The study found that across assistantship sites and observed developmental change, intercultural learning was dictated by the three themes: influential relationships, impactful factors, and depth of engagement.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Gloria Franco, for her endless love and support in all of my endeavors. To my siblings, Hector Rodriguez, Sonia Franco, and David Cortez. To my brother-in-law and my beloved sister Linda Cortez who always believed in me; promise kept sis I know you are here with me and I miss you. To my nieces, nephews, and god children, may this serve as an example that there are no limits to what you can achieve. Above all else, this is dedicated to my ancestors upon whose backs I am able to claim this victory and to all marginalized peoples whose stories, truths, and scholarship are too great to be bound by the stringent and narrow boundaries of the academy. Sí se puede!

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Student affairs professionals provide services, guidance, and support that address the needs of a diverse and expanding student body, enabling the growth and development of the whole student. Reynolds (2009) shares that "as long as there have been colleges and university campuses there have been individuals who have adopted [this] role" (p. 5). Over the course of our early history, the responsibilities held by student affairs practitioners have shifted due to changes in the landscape of higher. Among them: (a) federal policy reframing the scope of institutions and affirming the rights of students; (b) increased access into higher education; (c) the specialization of student services that meet the needs of a diverse student body; and, (d) an understanding of the value of student affairs as integral to the success of students, to name a few (Reynolds, 2009).

In its modern-day manifestation, the field of student affairs is informed by a set of philosophies evolved from historical movements and educational reforms and guided by a set of ethical standards, values, and norms that include a commitment to access and justice, resource stewardship, and dedication to student learning. These philosophies and core values are rooted in a theoretical basis that includes psychosocial development, social identity development, cognitive-structural development, holistic development, typology, student learning theories, organizational approaches, student success, as well as other continuing and emerging theoretical perspectives (Schuh, Jones, Harper, & Komives, 2011). These philosophies and core values also ground master's level graduate preparatory programs for aspiring student affairs professionals. Student affairs preparatory master's programs, commonly named Higher Education and Student Affairs

(HESA), typically last two years and aim to develop the next generation of professionals in the field. The core components outlined above frame the academic and paraprofessional experience of a HESA student.

HESA programs often consist of academic coursework, paraprofessional work, and a cohort experience. In addition to course work, aspiring professionals enrolled in many HESA programs are provided assistantship or internship placement in student affairs offices or other areas of the academy as a means of both earning money and acquiring substantive and tenable work experiences. These experiences also provide HESA students the opportunity to apply theory to their practice, often referred to as praxis. Such comprehensive approaches to HESA programs provide aspiring professionals the fundamental skills and tools needed to effectively support and serve an ever growing and diverse college student. The knowledge acquired at these assistantships, specifically intercultural development and learning, is at the center of this study. The comprehensive nature of these preparatory programs and the practical experiences offered at assistantship sites can significantly shape an aspiring student affair's intercultural development, preparing them to effectively across difference.

HESA students, upon successful completion of their master's degree, enter the field and begin their work of supporting the development of the whole student. But are these professionals equipped with intercultural capacity skills and mindset needed to support today's diverse college student body, and are they prepared to deal with the current societal climate facing our campus, country, and the world? Answering such questions demands a foundational understanding of the history of student affairs,

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comprehensive overview of today's college campus, and an examination of intercultural competence as a necessary skill for student affairs practitioners.

History of student affairs. Early manifestations of student affairs have existed since the founding of the earliest institutions of higher learning in the United States. During this early period, "College faculty, tutors, and presidents were not only charged with achieving the academic mission of their colleges but also expected to manage the seemingly inconsequential at the time social, athletic, and co-curricular lives of the student" (Dungy & Gordon, 2011, p. 61). Acting *in loco parentis*, or in the place of parents, faculty, tutors, and presidents enacted highly regulated and strict institutional policies and schedules that upheld and aligned with the institutions social, moral, and intellectual values (Dungy & Gordon, 2011). "The doctrine of *in loco parentis* empowered universities to manage students closely, as students were viewed as emotionally immature and requiring strict adult supervision" (Long, 2012, p. 2).

Shifts in responsibilities over the management of students began following two significant developments. First, early colleges, initially conceptualized as exclusive spaces reserved for the economically elite, gave way to the growth of liberal arts colleges, technical colleges, and women's colleges (Dungy & Gordon, 2011). Throughout mid-nineteenth century, various versions of the *Morrill Land-Grant College Act* of 1962 provided state and federal resources for land grant colleges, public colleges, and some of the first Historically Black Colleges and Universities, resulting in increased access into higher educations for certain underrepresented populations of that time (Dungy & Gordon, 2011). Second, a shift inspired by the German research model changed the focus and landscape for faculty (Evans & Reason, 2001). "European universities viewed

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faculty's exclusive responsibility to be the training of intellect. Subsequently, American faculty began to earn doctorates in large numbers, developed expertise in specific disciplines, and maintained active research agendas" (Long, 2012, p. 3). The expansion of colleges, both in size and in access, coupled with a shift in faculty functions towards a Eurocentric approach focusing on research, made it necessary to hire staff to manage "student unrest, discipline issues, housing administration, and other duties" (Dungy & Gordon, 2011, p. 63).

During the early twentieth century, the role of student affairs expanded beyond the management of students and ensuring policy compliance. The concept of developing the whole student began to emerge and continues to serve as the cornerstone of the profession to this day. "The basis or foundation of the profession was the original concept of higher education concerned with the development of the individual to be a well-rounded, balanced citizen who had a foundation in education and social and moral convictions" (Dungy & Gordon, 2011, p. 64). During this period, the role of deans emerged as stewards of holistic student development.

Student affairs professional organizations, in the early twentieth century, developed standards and structures for delivering student services and functional specialization (Evans & Reason, 2001). The mid-twentieth century ushered in yet another major shift in the landscape of higher education and the student affairs profession. The end of World War II and the G.I. Bill resulted in unprecedented enrollments in higher education. During this time, the field of student affairs grew significantly to serve the unique and varying needs of the new and growing college-going population (Dungy & Gordon, 2011). The decades to follow bared witness to significant domestic events that

further compounded and impacted, among other things, the field of student affairs. The 1960's saw rise to civil unrest and movements that marked a shift in disposition towards authority in the face of injustice. Student activism and the Civil Rights movement personified the decade, and colleges were not immune to the impact of these movements. *Dixon v. Alabama State Board of Education* was one of many consequential cases that altered and redefined the relationship between college students and institutions. This 1961 decision "defined a person over the age of 18 years as a legal adult" (Long, 2012, p. 4). The Dixon case, and others that followed, also recognized students' right to due process under the law (Lee, 2011). Colleges and universities receiving state or federal financial tax payer support, are considered state actors, therefore students attending such institutions are entitled to due process protections (Lee, 2011). Subsequent cases upheld and reinforced the Dixon decisions. "Consequently, student discipline, diminished as the student affairs professional's most crucial role; instead, the critical purpose turned to educating the student on making appropriate choices and decisions" (Long, 2012, p. 4).

After the Dixon decision, the doctrine of *in loco parentis* gave way to a new approach in working with students. Student development, conceptualized as proactive intentional programs and interventions intended to educate students and provide them with the tools to make the best decision, became primarily the role of student affairs practitioners and continued to define the profession to this day (Dungy & Gordon, 2011). The student development movement began to apply scholarship and theory to the field of student affairs as well as develop and refine the field's professional standards (Dungy & Gordon, 2011). Federal legislation continued to contribute to the changing demographics of students attending college and the protections offered to historically marginalized and

underrepresented populations via affirmative action laws following the *Regents of the University of California v. Bake* decision, as well as Title IV of the Higher Education Act, Title VII and IX of the Civil Rights Act, and other regulations (Dungy & Gordon, 2011). Compliance with federal statutes often aligned with college administrators, while support and advocacy for historically underrepresented groups on campus was often overseen by student affairs practitioners.

This growth and expansion of new colleges and universities, moments of drastic increases in enrollment, consistent and ongoing diversification of the student body, shifts in capacities and responsibilities of faculty, significant case law and legal statutes has yielded the profession of student affairs as it exists today. Student affairs, grounded in its foundation to educate the whole student and acting as an agent within the student development process, exists in nearly all college campus across the US. The focus on the whole student rejects the premise of student affairs as service providers, but is rather integral and supportive in the student's learning process and psychosocial development (Sandeen, 2004). This role continues to be expanded and developed by the complexity of the changing needs of college students and larger societal contexts.

While student affairs organizational structures may vary based on institutional size and contexts, student affairs programs consist of a "diverse set of functional areas that provide student services and academic support" (Long, 2012, p. 15). On any given campus, student affairs' functional areas may include:

- (a) academic advising

- (b) admissions and enrollment management

- (c) campus ministries

- (d) campus safety and police services

- (e) career services

- (f) commuter services

- (g) community and service learning

- (h) deans of students

- (i) disability support services

- (j) Greek affairs

- (k) health and counseling services

- (l) housing and residential life

- (m) student conduct

- (n) leadership programs

- (o) multicultural student services

- (p) orientation and new student programs

- (q) recreation and fitness and

- (r) student activities and student unions/centers. (Long, 2012)

The field of student affairs has grown exponentially in scope and advanced in purpose from its early conceptualization where college presidents and faculty managed the social and moral character development of students through discipline and structure. Today, many aspiring student affairs practitioners take part in master's level HESA preparatory programs. HESA programs provide aspiring professionals the fundamental knowledge, skills and tools needed to effectively support and serve an ever growing and diverse college students. The history of student affairs comprises part of the knowledge

shared in HESA in order to ground aspiring professionals in the field of study. To effectively support students, aspiring student affairs professionals must have a clear understanding of today's college student.

Today's college campus.

Colleges are enrolling a complex microcosm and cross-section of societal representation, thoughts, and needs. Shifting national demographics in the US, increasing access into higher education, the internationalization of campuses, and the rise of nationalism coupled with political and social polarization are some of realities existing in today's college campuses. Aspiring and new professionals in the field of student affairs are tasked with supporting and serving a campus community and student body with complex, diverse, and often conflicting needs and expectations. In the last decade alone, the number of international students has increased by 85 percent, half of whom attend from India and China, and the remainder attend from Nigeria, Taiwan, Spain, Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, and various countries around the globe ("Open doors 2017: Executive summary," 2017). "International students represent just over five percent of the more than 20 million students enrolled in U.S. higher education" ("Open doors 2017: Executive summary," 2017).

Domestically, the number of students of color attending higher education has also increased. Higher education enrollment for the categories of Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Other students has increased 25 percent between 1980 and 2014, and account for 44 percent of admitted students with a skewed overrepresentation of enrollment in community colleges (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). The category "Other" includes "American Indian/Alaska Native, two or more races, and non-resident alien"

(U.S. Department of Education, 2016, p. 23). Latino students represented the largest

growth in admission at 13 percent, with students identifying as Asian, Black, and Other

each increasing by 4 percent (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). In addition to racial

diversity, colleges and universities continue to enroll larger numbers of students with

various cognitive, emotional, and physical accessibility needs, students with limited

financial resources, and students that do not conform or identify with the gender binary.

Today's college students "are demanding official recognition of their identities, whether

racial, ethnic, sexual, [gender], first generation, low-income, or [citizenship]" (Pappano,

2017, p. 1). Pappano (2017) suggests that today's college student is a "generation of

socially connected students for whom the personal becomes political" (par. 13). This

truth has visited many campuses since 2016. Chessman and Wayt (2016) summarize this

fact as follow, "colleges and universities around the United States and Canada

experienced perhaps the biggest upsurge in student activism since 1960's" (par. 1).

Chessman and Wayt (2016) draw a parallel between recent students' demand and similar

social justice movements made 50 years ago. In comparing various student demand

letters, Chessman and Wayt (2017) identified frequent items of students' demand lists:

changes in institutional policy; calls for institutional leaders to play an intentional and

larger role in issues if diversity and social justice; requests for additional and equitable

distribution of resources; increases in diverse representation of students, staff, and

faculty; training for faculty and staff; changes to the curriculum; and greater support

services Against this backdrop, not only is the "personal" truly political for today's

college student, but the political is also ever more polarized. Glatter (2017) writes,

"freshmen are more politically polarized today than they have been in the last 51 years"

(par. 1). Representative of our current societal and political climate, students are distinctly polarized prior to attending college. Glatter (2017) suggests the partisan divide "isn't limited to a liberal-conservative axis – it's also a function of gender" (par. 6). With incoming 41 percent of freshmen women describing themselves as far left of left of center as compared to only 29 percent of men identifying as such, one can imagine how this impacts the issues on a college campus (Glatter, 2017).

Campuses are continuously growing and becoming more diverse. Efforts to increase access to historically underrepresented groups continues. Moreover, student bodies reflect the expansive societal and political ideology, tone, and sentiments of the times we live in. Today's college campus is a complicated microcosm that aims to be the birthplace of learning, problem solving, and creativity. What is the role of student affairs practitioners in this process?

Student Affairs in Today's Context

In the field of student affairs, the two-primary organizations represent the profession: College Student Educations International (ACPA) and Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA). In 2009, both organizations convened a joint task force to establish a set of professional competencies for student affairs practitioners. The result of the task force was published in 2010 with a subsequent update published in July of 2015 (NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education & ACPA: College Student Educators International, 2016). The task force publication *Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Educators* (2010) includes a framework that identifies 10 competency areas with attached outcomes tied to specified proficiency levels--foundational, intermediate, and advanced. Both professional

organizations recognize their responsibility in addressing the needs of a diverse, polarized, and underserved student populations. The Social Justice and Inclusion competencies is one of the 10 professional competencies for student affairs professionals. Broadly speaking, socially just and welcoming campuses cannot merely exist in the service of students if there is no active participation and engagement in the goals and the process on the part of educators. The Social Justice and Inclusion competency recognizes both the work involved and ever-changing nature of our student demographic suggesting that we "must develop a sophisticated range of multicultural competencies: appreciation for diversity and a thorough, deep knowledge of the cultural values of the students at their colleges and universities" (Long, 2012, p. 10). While developing deep knowledge of cultural values is important, I argue that multicultural competencies refer to the development of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics known as intercultural competence (Bennett, 2009). These sophisticated skills, coupled with deep knowledge of cultural values, can better position student affairs practitioners to meet the needs of diverse groups.

Research Topic

At Green Mountain State University, the HESA program admits 16 to 20 master's-level students each year. This program is designed to prepare aspiring professionals to apply specific knowledge and skill sets including multicultural and social justice principles to create environments "conducive to students' growth and development" (HESA: The department of leadership and developmental sciences, n.d.). Reynolds (2009) states, "Cultural issues are central to most of the important conversations on our campuses, such as admissions policies, core, curricula, campus

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violence, and how diverse student groups relate to one another" (p. 111). After completing a HESA program, graduates assume entry level positions working at institutions and with students with broad, complex, and differing cultural values, needs, and perspectives. However, little evidence exists to demonstrate whether students who graduate from HESA programs have learned and/or developed their capacity to navigate such complex cultural issues. Studies exploring intercultural competence development in higher education have primarily focused on undergraduate students that participate in study abroad experiences. These studies often explore either the effectiveness of pre-travel preparation programs for students who plan to study abroad, the intercultural competence development of students who returned from studying abroad, or both. Franklin-Craft (2010) explored intercultural competence in student affairs through her dissertation. In her work, Franklin-Craft (2010) sought to define intercultural competence and introduce a new theoretical construct and tool for assessing intercultural competence. She compared intercultural competence of student affairs administrators across several variables including (a) years of service in the field; (b) amount of intercultural trainings and development; (c) time spent outside the US; (d) experiences with diverse individuals; and (e) demographic information of the participant (Franklin-Craft, 2010). Franklin-Craft (2010) laid an exceptional foundation for this type of research and Craft's is the only work examining intercultural competence in student affairs.

While Franklin-Croft (2010) focused on student affairs practitioners in the field, this current study will seek to examine intercultural competence development during master's preparatory programs, before student affairs practitioners receive formalized training for the field. Specifically, this study will focus on the intercultural learning

occurring at assistantship sites. Assistantship experiences are immersive experiences where HESA students connect, learn from, and work with students and other professionals. While the classes are often limited to the members of the cohort, assistantships provide access to a broader population. Moreover, assistantships sites are the main sources of praxis for aspiring Student Affairs Professionals.

Research Statement

Aspiring student affairs practitioners must be equipped with the tools and skills to effectively work with today's diverse college student. The paraprofessional work experience, commonly referred to as an assistantship, provides HESA students with the opportunity to work with diverse students and peers, develop practical skills, and apply the information and knowledge into their work. This study examines changes in the intercultural competence development of HESA students, as assessed by the *Intercultural Development Inventor* (M. R. Hammer, 2012) in order to purposefully explore how intercultural learning was experienced across assistantship sites.

This study explores the intercultural competence development of HESA graduate students. Specifically, I analyze the pre- and post-*Intercultural Development Inventory* (IDI) results to determine the magnitude of change in comparison to the population. I also conduct interviews to determine the extent to which intercultural learning occurred across assistantship sites.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following two questions using an explanatory sequential mixed methods design. The first question was addressed in the quantitative phase, where

findings informed the case selection for the qualitative phase that aimed to answer the second and third research questions.

1. What is the change in intercultural competence, as assessed by the Intercultural Development Inventory, of Higher Education and Student Affairs students between entry and graduation?

    a. What, if any, intercultural development change is observed for the sample population?

    b. What is the magnitude of intercultural developmental change for each participant?

    c. What, if any, intercultural development patterns exist across assistantship sites?

2. How did HESA students experience intercultural learning at their assistantship site?

3. What were the intercultural learning experiences of HESA students according to magnitude of developmental orientation progress outcomes?

Summary

Student affairs practitioners are expected to effectively work with and support all students whose ideological perspectives, identity, and needs vary across a continuous and non-linear spectrum. Further complicating the matter is the responsibilities of graduate education to simultaneously support students who may be diametrically opposed to one another's opinions or ideas or in conflict with the administration, office, or work of a student affairs practitioner. This is the challenge faced by college administrators, faculty, staff, and senior leaders today. In the field of student affairs what, if any, support,

training, learning, or development is provided to equip aspiring student affairs practitioners to carry out this work? What role might intercultural competence development play in preparing aspiring student affairs professionals? In this context, I suggest that intercultural competence, defined as "a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts" (Bennett, 2009, p. 97), is a critical for student affairs practitioners entering the field given the current climate of higher education today. and will serve as a functional definition this study.

A thorough review of the literature will highlight the variety of terminology and definitions across disciplines and scholars as it relates to culture and intercultural competence. The literature will contextualize and highlight the concept and relevance of intercultural competence, the central component of this study. The literature will then proceed with an examination of various intercultural competence developmental models and approaches. The literature review will conclude with a justification and critical insight into the developmental models that will be utilized as well as clear working definitions to ground this study. The conceptual framework will illustrate the operationalization of the working definitions and developmental models.

The literature on "cultural competence" contains a rich abundance of terminology regarding "intercultural competence" as well as discussions on how they overlap with the concept of "social justice" and its theoretical interpretations. Furthermore, different models and approaches for developing intercultural competence enjoy broad theoretical similarities and procedural overlaps. The literature outlined in this section will provide clarity concerning the terminology, offer insight into the various developmental and theoretical models informing this research, and outline a conceptual framework rooted in the working definitions and developmental models that best support the research questions outlined above.

Terminology and Definitions

Many factors, including the diversification of students and professionals in the field of higher education, have led to an increased focus and attention to cultural diversity issues (Pope, 1993). Pope (1993) accurately identifies the lack of a universal term to define this body of work and its desired outcomes. The most consistent and widely accepted conceptualization of intercultural competency and its terminology can be found in the *ACPA/NASPA Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Educators (2016)*. The list of professional competencies contained therein were collectively developed by the two-primary organizations representing the profession, field of study, and scholarship. They are the College Student Educations International (ACPS) and Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA). Among the 10 professional competencies outlined by these organizations, the term "social justice and

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inclusion" refers to the set of knowledge, skills, and disposition which support equitable participation of a diverse campus community.

Additional terms and concepts needed for a study of intercultural competency include "equity" and "diversity," a focus area of NASPA, which "emphasizes social justice and continued diversification of today's higher education environment" ("Equity and diversity in student affairs," n.d.). Pope, Reynolds, and Mueller (2004) have notably cemented in the field of student affairs, through research and scholarship, multicultural competence as an integral professional competency for student affairs practitioners. The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) lists intercultural knowledge and competence as a core expectation for undergraduate student learning (Rhodes, 2008).

Overall, the language and concepts highlighted above outline various approaches and terms that are aspirational and lead toward similar desired outcomes. In the literature and within the field of student affairs, social justice appears consistently and frequently as a widely held value, an ideal, and a practice. Intercultural competence, on the other hand, tends to be confined to the student affairs functional area of international education or within the scope of research in academic disciplines such as anthropology. In subsequent sections of this dissertation, both social justice and intercultural competence will be further defined, explored through a historical lens, grounded within a theoretical approach, and positioned as critical to this study. However, it is imperative to first review the terminology and foundational concepts the following: cultural diversity, intercultural competence, social construction and identity, dominant identities, and marginalized identities.

Cultural diversity. The term "cultural diversity" has many meanings which illustrates its beauty, complexity, and dynamic nature. This same multiplicity also introduces challenges in establishing common definitions, methods and outcomes. Intercultural competence, a concept not pervasive in student affairs, can present similar challenges. While literature and various theoretical models can inform a broad definition of intercultural competence, any practical definition would prove incomplete without a solid understanding of culture.

Sorrells (2013) cites over 150 definitions of culture captured by anthropologists and contends it is a frequently used term difficult to define, yet central to how one interprets, interacts, and connects with the world. The extent to which an individual's experience and socialization can shape and define culture makes it necessary to examine the impact of power, privilege, history, and colonization for any given definition of the term. Sorrells (2013) provides a meta-level conceptualization of culture by providing (a) anthropological definition, (b) cultural studies definition, and (c) globalization definition. An anthropological definition positions culture as a site for shared meaning, a system handed down generationally through symbols and expressions that enable individuals to communicate, exist, engage, and make meaning of one's life within a given group (Sorrells, 2013). A cultural studies perspective views culture as a site of contested meaning where "culture shifts from an expression of local communal lives to a view of culture as an apparatus of power within a larger system of domination" (Sorrells, 2013, p. 6). Finally, a globalization perspective defines culture as a resource that is conceptualized, experienced, and assembled for economic development as well as to address social problems (Sorrells, 2013). The three definitions offered by Sorrells (2013)

do not align but rather present a comprehensive and conflicting understanding of culture which reflects the complexity of the term.

Intercultural competence. As with other concepts discussed here, no clear consensus exists on the terminology or definition of "intercultural competence"—specific disciplines impact and account for the variance in terminology used (Deardorff, 2011). Deardorff (2011) posited:

> The terms used to refer to this concept vary by discipline…for example, those in social work use the term cultural competence, while those in engineering prefer to use global competence… [with respect to] approach the diversity field uses such terms as multicultural competence and intercultural maturity. (pp. 5-6)

Terminology used in various assessment tools also varied greatly and included, among many others, cross cultural competence, intercultural sensitivity, effective intergroup communication, and intercultural communication (Fantini, 2009).

"In defining intercultural competence, it is important to recognize that scholars have invested effort for more than five decades in developing this concept…and individuals should consider this body of research when proposing a working definition" (Deardorff, 2011, p. 66). Bennett and Bennett (2004) broadly define intercultural competence as the "ability to communicate effectively in cross-cultural situations and to relate appropriately in a variety of cultural contexts" (p. 149) while Deardorff (2011) similarly defines it as "effective and appropriate behavior and communication in intercultural situations" (p. 66). The similarity in the definitions provided by these authors and their extensive body of research concerning intercultural competence establishes the basis for a broad working definition of intercultural competence. Bennett

and Bennett (2004) acknowledge that behavior is a major aspect of intercultural competence while stating that "no behavior exists separately from thought and emotion." They introduce the concept of "intercultural mindset and skillset". Intercultural mindset refers to a level of consciousness and cultural self-awareness and a set of attitudes while intercultural skillset refers to an advanced and nuanced capacity to analyze situations and adapt behavior (Bennett & Bennett, 2004).

Social construct and identity. Simply stated, "social construct" refers to an individual or set of ideas that have been created and agreed upon among a group. These groups can be small or can include entire countries and continents. This study will discuss social constructions within the US with a specific focus on social identity groups. In the US and in this study, examples of social identities groups discussed include, race, gender, sexuality, religion, ability, and class.

Dominant identities. The term "dominant identities" refers to the social identities of an individual within a specific cultural context positions a person closer to or further from the nexus of power related to social status, access to resources, influence, and social group membership. Tatum (2000) defines the dominant group as holding "power and authority in society…whether it is reflected in determining who gets jobs, whose history will be taught in school, or whose relationship will be validated by society" (p. 11). Dominant identities refer to those that are afforded unearned privileges based on socially constructed group membership.

Marginalized identities. Also referred to as subordinate or minoritized identities, "marginalized identities" conversely refers to socially constructs that position individuals further from power, and whose experiences, access to resources, and status are defined by those holding dominant identities. Individuals holding marginalized identities often balance resisting and redefining dominant messages and interpretations of their identities or operating within the status quo as a means of survival.

Developing Intercultural Competence

Numerous models exist for framing intercultural competence that are not theoretically grounded in research or substantive literature (Deardorff, 2011). Given the purpose of this study, theoretically grounded and developmental models are essential; in other words, they must outline a growth process. Deardorff's *Process Model of Intercultural Competence* (2006), Bennett's *Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity* (DMIS) (1993), Hammer's Intercultural Development Continuum (2012), and Sorrells' *Intercultural Praxis* (IP) (2013) are grounded in similar and overlapping definitions of intercultural competence, which allows for their comparison. We can compare, contrast and analyze them; further, we can test for congruency within the discipline of student affairs and thereby discuss and utilize existing assessment tool connected to the models, specifically the *Intercultural Development Inventory* (Hammer, 2012).

Deardorff's *Process Model of Intercultural Competence*. The creation of Deardorff's IDC (2006) preceded a Delphi research study which included notable intercultural scholars as participants, that aimed to "define and identify components of intercultural competence" (Deardorff, 2006, p. 243). Results from the Delphi research

informed the "subsequent development of a model of intercultural competence" (Franklin-Craft, 2010, p. 29). Deardorff's first iteration was the *Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence*, later updated to depict intercultural development as both complex and a process (Deardorff, 2006).

The model "envisions a simultaneous interactional process that feeds back into itself but also anticipates several specific sequential causal paths" (Sptizberg & Changon, 2009, p. 32). While an individual may begin in any aspect of the developmental process, their model outlines a path from the individual level to the interpersonal level (Deardorff, 2006). The individual level consists of attitudes and knowledge, comprehension, and skill. The characteristics outlined in Deardorff's (2006) attitude module mirrors Bennett and Bennett's (2004) conceptualization of an intercultural mindset while knowledge, comprehension and skills also mirrors Bennett and Bennett's (2004) conceptualization of intercultural skillsets. Deardorff's (2006) model emphasizes attitude as a foundational starting supporting and motivator for developing intercultural competence (Sptizberg & Changon, 2009). "Motivation is enhanced by the influence of knowledge…and skills" (Sptizberg & Changon, 2009, p. 32). In the model attitudes, knowledge and skills establish the conditions for internal changes such as frame shifting, empathy, adaptability, and the adoption of an ethnorelative view point. Once these internal changes occur, referred to as "desired internal outcomes," the likelihood of engaging in intercultural interactions increases. In addition to increasing the likelihood of intercultural interactions, these attitudes, knowledge, skills, and desired internal outcomes support competent intercultural interaction by allowing for effective and appropriate social communication and behavior—referred to in the model as "desired external outcomes"

(Deardorff, 2006, p. 254). Accounting for the complexity of culture, the developmental

process, and progression of learning, desired outcomes continue the cycle by feeding

back into attitudes and motivations.

Bennett's (1993) *Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity*. Bennett's

Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (1993) "presents a complex model of

intercultural development framed in terms of the phenomenology of an individual's

affective, cognitive, behavior…and response to cultural differences" (Paige, Jacobs-

Cassuto, Yershova, & Dejaeghere, 2003). The model outlines six developmental stages of

intercultural competence, each constituting a different mindset and skillset. The six stages

range from a less complex "ethnocentric" understanding and awareness of cultural

differences and similarities to a more nuanced and complex "ethnorelative"

understanding and awareness of cultural differences and similarities. In the first three

developmental stages—(1) denial, (2) defense, and (3) minimization individuals make

sense of cultural differences through an ethnocentric perspective. In the subsequent three

stages—(4) acceptance (5) adaptation and (6) integration make sense of cultural

differences through ethnorelative perspective. Ethnocentric refers to a perspective that is

"difference avoidant" and "places one's own culture as the filter through which all other

cultures are viewed" (Bennett, 2009, p. 100). Ethnorelative refers to a perspective that

seeks out differences and "places one's own culture in the context of other cultures"

(Bennett, 2009, p. 100).

Bennett's six stages provide significant insights and information for

understanding intercultural competence and approaches for further development. The

significance of the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) lies in its

conceptualization of intercultural competence not merely as a set of knowledges and skills, but also the capacity, effect, behaviors, and responses to cultural differences. The DMIS, firmly rooted in cognitive constructivism (Bennett, 2004), also serves as the theoretical grounding for the *Intercultural Development Continuum* (Hammer 2012).

Intercultural Development Continuum. The *Intercultural Development Continuum* (Hammer, 2012) is a theoretical framework which evolved from the DMIS. It is also notable and important to highlight that the *Intercultural Development Continuum* is the framework measured by the *Intercultural Development Inventory* assessment (Hammer 2012). The major differences between the *Intercultural Development Continuum* include the function and conceptualization of minimization and integration. The minimization stage within the DMIS is conceptualized as an ethnocentric perspective. The IDC conceptualizes minimization as neither ethnocentric nor ethnorelative, but rather suggests it serves as a critical bridge between both perspectives. Secondly, "integration, posited in the DMIS as a stage beyond Adaptation, is not theoretically related to the development of intercultural competence--the focus of the IDI" (Hammer, 2012, p. 119). The concept of integration in the DMIS refers to an identity, where an individual identity is rooted in global and cultural fluidity.

Other differences between the IDC and DMIS includes shift in terminology. Rather than ethnocentric and ethnorelative perspectives, the language of monocultural and intercultural mindsets are used. The term mindset is defined and used as a descriptor of a "less or more complex set of perceptions and behaviors [around cultural differences and similarities]" (Hammer, 2011, p. 2). The change in language and definitions highlights the important role cultural similarities and complexity of perceptions plays

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with respect to intercultural competence. Additionally, the IDC refers to the phases of development as orientations rather than stages.

As discussed, the *Intercultural Development Continuum* framework is measured by the Intercultural *Development Inventory* (Hammer 2012). Both the framework (IDC) and the tool (IDI) are proprietarily and conceptually linked. The IDI is a statistically valid instrument used to assess where individuals or groups fall on the intercultural continuum. The IDI is a "50-item questionnaire …existing in 13 languages (Hammer, 2012, p. 116). When an individual takes the IDI assessment, the online analytical system provides an individual or group profile that places the person of group within the *Intercultural Development Continuum*. In this study, the IDI results serves as a measure of intercultural disposition and skills.

Designing developmentally. Bennett (2009) emphasizes the critical role appropriate facilitation plays in cultural learning. In order to navigate resistance, a common result when experiencing cognitive dissonance during learning, Bennett (2009) recommends balancing the challenge of training (both process and content) "with the nature of support needed to take increase risk" (p. 98). Bennett (2009) calls on facilitators of learning to understand which processes present low vs high challenge and what content presents low vs high challenge in order to balance between the two. At the extreme, Bennett (2009) suggests that in learning opportunities where there is high challenge in both content and process, the learner leaves as they are overwhelmed with challenge. Likewise, if there is low challenge in both content and process then the learner rests. The goal is to introduce an appropriate balance between high challenge content and low challenge process where learners acquire knowledge, and high challenge process and

low challenge content where learners develop new skills. An appropriate amount of balance introduces challenges and supports in a manner that optimizes learning and development. Additionally, learners must be allowed to rest so to avoid, as much as possible, having learners leave. The unique challenge to Bennett's (2009) recommendation is that at each stage of the DMIS or orientation of the IDC, the intercultural learner experiences different challenges. In other words, what is a low challenge process or content for an individual in one orientation may be a high challenge process or content for a person in a different orientation.

Intercultural Praxis Model. Sorrells' (2013) *Intercultural Praxis* is a model of intercultural learning which compliments the intercultural mindset and skillset identified in Bennett's (2004) DMIS and parallels Deardorff's (2006) *Process Model for Intercultural Competence* (ICD). A critical difference is the shift from strict cultural objectivity toward a critical examination of social and political positions of power as an integral part of self-awareness and understanding of the broader global context. The circular and interconnected model has six points of entry, with no linearity or starting point. The entry points include: (a) inquiry; (b) framing; (c) positioning; (d) dialogue; (e) reflection; and (f) action.

Inquiry denotes a sense of curiosity and interest in knowing and learning that inherently involves a level of risk in allowing your worldview to be challenged and changed and an openness to suspend judgement in order to see and interpret people and the world through different points of view (Sorrells, 2013). Framing refers to two perspective-taking options. First, framing refers to awareness of the frame or lenses we carry, the limitation of these frames, and the understanding of who is included and

excluded as a result of these frames (Sorrells, 2013). Second, framing refers to the

realization of both the local and global contexts shaping intercultural situations,

understanding the critical importance of addressing local issues while also requiring us to

zoom out in order to "map out broader geopolitical, global relations of power that can

shed light on the particular and situated intercultural[issue]" (Sorrells, 2013, p. 18).

Positioning "invites us to consider how our geographic positioning relates to social and

political positions" (Sorrells, 2013, p. 18). Moreover, position calls us to consider the

social constructs of inclusion and exclusion that exists on a local and global scale,

understanding where we occupy power, and the impact of such power. In Sorrells'

Intercultural Praxis Model (2013), dialogue refers to a process that "invites us to stretch

ourselves-to reach across-to imagine, experience, and engage" different points of views,

values, and ways of being while being "cognizant of differences and the tensions that

emerge…while accepting that we may not fully understand or come to a common

agreement or position" (Sorrells, 2013, p. 19). Reflection is a critical component of ICD

which showed up across the various models explored. In the ICD model, reflection refers

to "the capacity to learn from introspection, to observe oneself in relation to others, and

to alters one's perspectives and actions" (Sorrells, 2013, p. 19). The sixth point of entry

in the ICD model is action, referring to an intentional decision and active process of

utilizing one's learning to advocate for change that addresses systemic issues on inequity

(Sorrells, 2013).

Synergy Between Intercultural Competence and Social Justice

As stated earlier, within the field of student affairs, social justice appears

consistently and frequently as a widely held value, an ideal, and a practice. Intercultural

competence, on the other hand, tends to align more with academic scholars and the functional area of international education offices within the academy. Both social justice and intercultural competence are rooted within conflicting paradigmatic frameworks. Intercultural competence is rooted in a constructivist framework which sees truth as relative and seeks to expand one's perspective through objective exploration and observation of culture. Social justice is rooted within and is a byproduct of critical theory which asserts that in order to understand truth one must understand systems of power that define and articulate not only what is truth but unpacks the agenda behind what is presented as truth.

Interculturalists' perpetual critique of social justice is its embeddedness and explicit focus on domestic issues that does not allow for broader discussion of difference or exploration of other cultural approaches. Social justice warriors criticize intercultural competence for its explicit focus on developing the capacity to bridge across objective cultural differences without examining the role and impact of power and oppression. At its worst, both approaches could further perpetuate colonialism and oppression. However, the separations between intercultural competence and social justice are rather arbitrary as both approaches are more complimentary than divergent as outlined in Sorrells' *Intercultural Praxis Model*. Sorrell's (2013) states that "intercultural praxis is not only about deepening understanding ourselves, others, and the world…intercultural praxis means we join our increased understanding with responsible action to make a difference in the world, to create a more socially just, equitable, and peaceful world" (p. 20). The explicit incorporation of social justice into intercultural learning makes Sorrells' (2013) *Intercultural Praxis Model* a critical part of this study as it aligns two concepts that are

often discussed in opposition. In keeping with the synergy that can exist, I offer the following working definition for transformative intercultural development and learning. In this study transformative intercultural development and learning refers to the skills and mindset necessary to (a) engage in meaningful self-work, and (b) enhance one's capacity to work across difference, while accounting for the historical and institutional impacts of colonialization, power, and oppression. While explored in a cursory manner throughout this study, the specific set of skills referred to are broadly agreed upon among different interculturalist as outlined in Deardorff (2006) study. For the purposes of this research, the developmentally sequenced set of skills I include in my definition of transformative intercultural development and learning include: (a) patience (b) deep self-awareness (c) active listening (d) openness (e) curiosity (f) tolerance for ambiguity (g) empathy and (h) flexibility.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) for this study, rooted in the literature review, is an interconnected process of learning and development. It begins acknowledging that individuals carry an existing set of disposition and skills. When opportunities to participate in intercultural learning opportunities arise, outlined using Sorrel's (1993) *Intercultural Praxis Model* and as described by Bennett's (2009) *Challenge and Support Grid*, a change can be observed in an individual's intercultural competence. I used this conceptual framework to explore via qualitative inquiry if intercultural learning opportunities were developmentally appropriate.

Intercultural Competence Development of Higher Education and Student Affairs
(HESA) Students
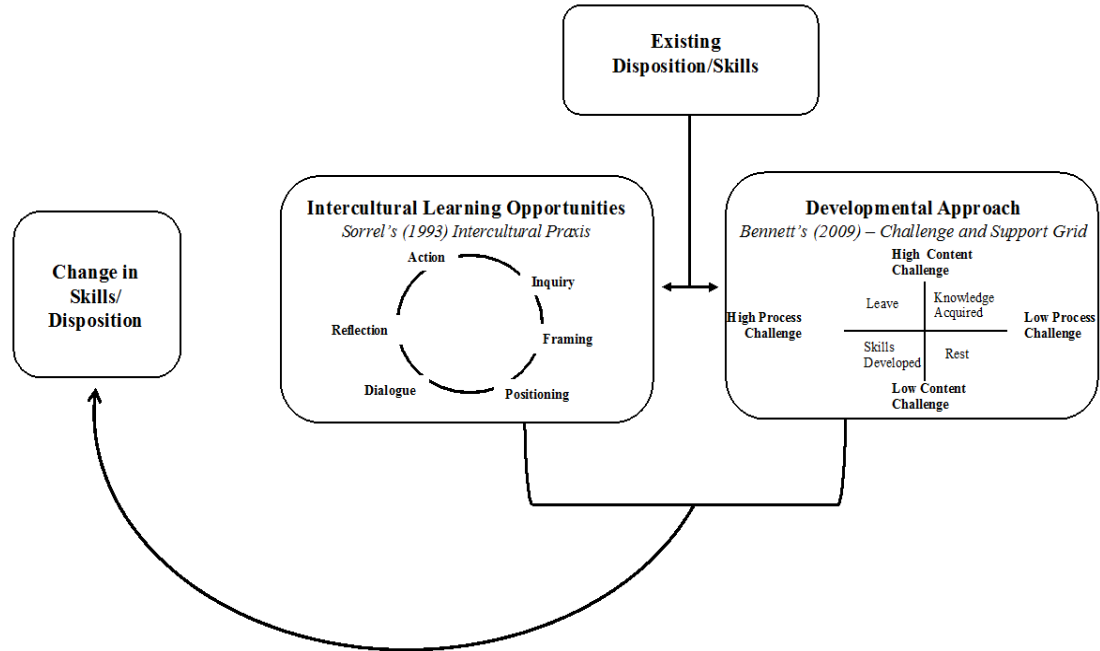
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Deardorff's (2006) Delphi research study, which included notable intercultural

scholars as participants, aimed to both identify a broad definition of intercultural

competence and to identify agreements among intercultural participants regarding the

elements that serve as markers for such competence (Deardorff, 2006). In this study,

intercultural competence is defined as the capacity to work across cultural differences and

similarities, adapting, as necessary, in culturally appropriate ways. The capacity to adapt

is dependent on an individual's affective, cognitive, behavioral temperament and

aptitude, or what I refer to as disposition and skillset (Paige et al., 2003). The set of

disposition and skills explored in this study, and reasonably accounted for in the IDI,

resemble those agreed upon by the participants in Deardorff's (2006) study: (a) deep

knowledge of self/self-awareness, (b) empathy and understanding of others, (c) tolerance for engaging ambiguity, (d) flexibility in thought and behavior, (e) patience and grace, (f) curiosity and discovery, (g) willingness and capacity to listen, and (h) culturally specific knowledge.

In this conceptual framework, existing disposition and skills refer to the attitudes and abilities of HESA master's students shortly before attending the program. Existing dispositions and skills are assessed using the IDI.

Intercultural learning opportunities and a developmental approach. Upon entering the program, participants engage in various opportunities that influence their growth and learning. These intercultural learning opportunities refer to the daily moments, both formal and informal, where we connect with the world through various means such as people, work, course material, culture, music, and media, to name a few (Sorrells, 2013). Participants of this study enter these opportunities through one of six interrelated entry points: (1) inquiry, (2) framing, (3) positioning, (4) dialogue, (5) reflection, or (6) action (Sorrells, 2013,).

Opportunities for engagement exist within a development framework, where a balance exists between process and content challenges as outlined Bennett's *Challenge and Support Grid* (2009). The approach, or in other words the balance between process and content challenge, can influence whether an individual develops skills, develops knowledge, rests, or leaves and disengages from the opportunity to learn and grow. The balance between process and content challenge is intended to mitigate risk to encourage an appropriate level of risk taking and exposure that promotes learning and stretching

preconceived notions but do not cause the individual to retreat out of fear or defensiveness.

        Change in disposition. After nearly two years of engagement opportunities, offering varying degrees of process and content challenge, the study's post-test determines a calculated change in disposition and skills as measured by the IDI. To better understand hypothesized change, it is critical to explore the degree of engagement and experienced balance of challenge and support.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

This study examines the intercultural competence development of HESA students, as assessed by the IDI, in order to purposefully explore how intercultural learning was experienced across assistantship sites. The intended audience for this research includes all individuals that formally or informally play a role in the preparation and development of aspiring student affairs professionals enrolled in a master's student affairs program. This includes faculty of HESA programs across the nation, student affairs practitioners in general, supervisors of HESA students, current HESA students, and undergraduate students considering pursuing a degree in a HESA program. My aim was to shed light on critical aspects of the assistantship experience and introduce substantive strategies that support the professional and personal development of HESA students as it relates to working across difference. The findings of this study have the potential to bring together the academic side of HESA programs with the practitioner side to deliver a stronger praxis experience. Ultimately, my goal is to support undergraduate students in their educational careers as well develop and graduate HESA master's students with the intercultural competence needed to effectively enter the field of student affairs.

Statement of the Problem

As a trained facilitator, educator, and private consultant, much of my work has been concerned with intercultural competence and social justice. My professional development has focused on bridging social justice and intercultural competence paradigms in order to develop training and learning opportunities that meet students at their capacity level and support skill development. As a cis-gendered Latino man that grew up in a poor socio-economic class, I wholeheartedly believe that intercultural

competence and social justice is a life-long process of engaging and learning that is enhanced by a set of cognitive and behavioral skills identified throughout intercultural competence literature. To understand the development of students' intercultural competence requires an examination of institutional, group, and individual systems of power and oppression that advantages some and disenfranchises others. This belief has informed much of my work, including my role as a leader of a large department within the Division of Student Affairs at my institution of higher education.

I formally entered the field of student affairs through an educational program similar two-year preparatory master's program that is at the center of this study. While my path into student affairs was like that of my participants, and while my philosophical and theoretical approach towards diversity and inclusion was clear to me, I lacked any knowledge about the individual intercultural competence progress or intercultural learning experiences of these students. In undertaking this study, my purpose was to better understand trends of intercultural competence progressions, specifically across assistantship sites, and study the intercultural learning experiences of participants.

Given my background and the purpose of this study, I developed the following research questions:

1. What are the changes in students' intercultural competence between entry and graduation as assessed by the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI?

   a. What, if any, intercultural development changes can be observed for the sample population?

   b. What is the magnitude of intercultural developmental change for each participant?

c. What, if any, intercultural development patterns exist across assistantship sites?

2. How do HESA students experience intercultural learning at their assistantship site?

3. What was the magnitude of developmental orientation progress outcomes of HESA students' learning experiences?

Participant and Site Selection

The participant sample for the quantitative phase of this study was drawn from the HESA master's level graduate student cohorts between 2014 through 2018. Green Mountain State University (GMSU) is a state institution in the New England region of the US. At face value, GMSU is a unique site for this study because it is situated in one of the least diverse states in America; 94.6 percent of residents are white ("U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts," n.d.). Additionally, 89 percent of its undergraduate student body are white ("UVM Facts," n.d.). However, within the university and in close collaboration with the Division of Student Affairs, the HESA program has succeeded in recruiting a diverse groups of aspiring student affairs practitioners. The HESA program often recruits a cohort that not only broadly represents difference across race, class, gender identity, sexuality, but also has a demonstrated commitment to equity and justice as demonstrated in their program material (*2018_HESA_Booklet.pdf*, n.d.). The program is well regarded in the field for its focus in social justice and is considered among the top programs in the field (ACPA College Student Educators International, n.d.). Given the program's focus on social justice, espoused through the recruitment process, curricular components, and assistantship opportunities, this is the ideal site to examine how participating in the

program impacted the ICD of its students. In addition, I hoped to identify the experiences

that support or inhibit the intercultural learning of students and unearth practices and

approaches worthy of further exploration and incorporating them into other existing

student affairs preparatory programs. Moreover, most incoming HESA students

participate in orientation sessions, assistantships, and various other developmental

opportunities offered by the Division of Student Affairs. One of these developmental

opportunities is a requirement of all HESA students to take the IDI upon entering the

program as a pre-test, and shortly before graduation, post-test. Given the relatively new

practice of admitting students that do not hold assistantships into the HESA program,

students not participating in an assistantship were not included in the study. While

GMSU served as the single source of data, analysis was conducted across several

assistantship sites.

Methodology and Design

Studying the intercultural competence development of HESA students and

exploring how intercultural learning was experienced across assistantship sites requires a

methodological approach that supports both statistical relationships and contextualization

(Yilmaz, 2013). The tension in conducting research that seeks to gather, analyze, and

interpret data which is both time and context free and time and context bound, is rooted

in the nomenclature and two competing research traditions—quantitative and qualitative.

For the purpose of this study, using both approaches offered additional context which I

needed to capture a rich picture of ICD (Yilmaz, 2013). Situating this study in only one

research tradition would have resulted in the loss of critical information needed to

understand and implement improvements in the ICD of emerging student affairs

practitioners. In order to rigorously explore the complexities outlined in this study, a

mixed methods research approach was necessary. The design required six steps:

1. Quantitative data collection

2. Quantitative data analysis

3. Case selection

4. Qualitative data collection

5. Qualitative data analysis

6. Integration of the quantitative and qualitative results

The required sequencing of these steps, the procedures required at each step and the

resulting products are shown below in the graphic diagram of my research design.

Phase	Procedure	Product

Step one
Quantitative Data Collection

Developmental orientation (T_1),
Developmental orientation (T_2)

- Collect pre and post data from the Intercultural Development Inventory and code according to assistantship sites (IDI) N= 33

Step two
Quantitative Data Analysis

Site SL: $T_2 - T_1 = \Delta$

Site RL: $T_2 - T_1 = \Delta$

Site SU: $T_2 - T_1 = \Delta$

Site OD: $T_2 - T_1 = \Delta$

- Basic descriptive statistic
- Population effect size (r^2, $\sum r^2$) and individual effect size analysis

Step three
Case Selection

N proportional to the number of HESA students at assistantship sites:
- N = 2 for SL, SU, and OD
- N= 4 for Residential Life
          - **and** -
Extreme case selection by site

- Interview protocol development rooted in conceptual framework (Intercultural Praxis and Developmental Approach) N= 5

Step four
QUALITATIVE Data Collection

- T1 and T2 individual in-depth video conferences that are audio recorded
- Email follow-up to confirm accuracy of interview summaries

- Interview transcripts
- Material validation and accuracy check

Step five
QUALITATIVE Data Analysis

- Cycle 1: process and initial coding
- Cycle 2: emergent theme development
- Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis

- Qualitative codebook
- Within and across case analysis of themes

Step six
Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Results

- Joint theme display
- Explanation and interpretation of convergent and divergent findings using merged data analysis

- Discussion
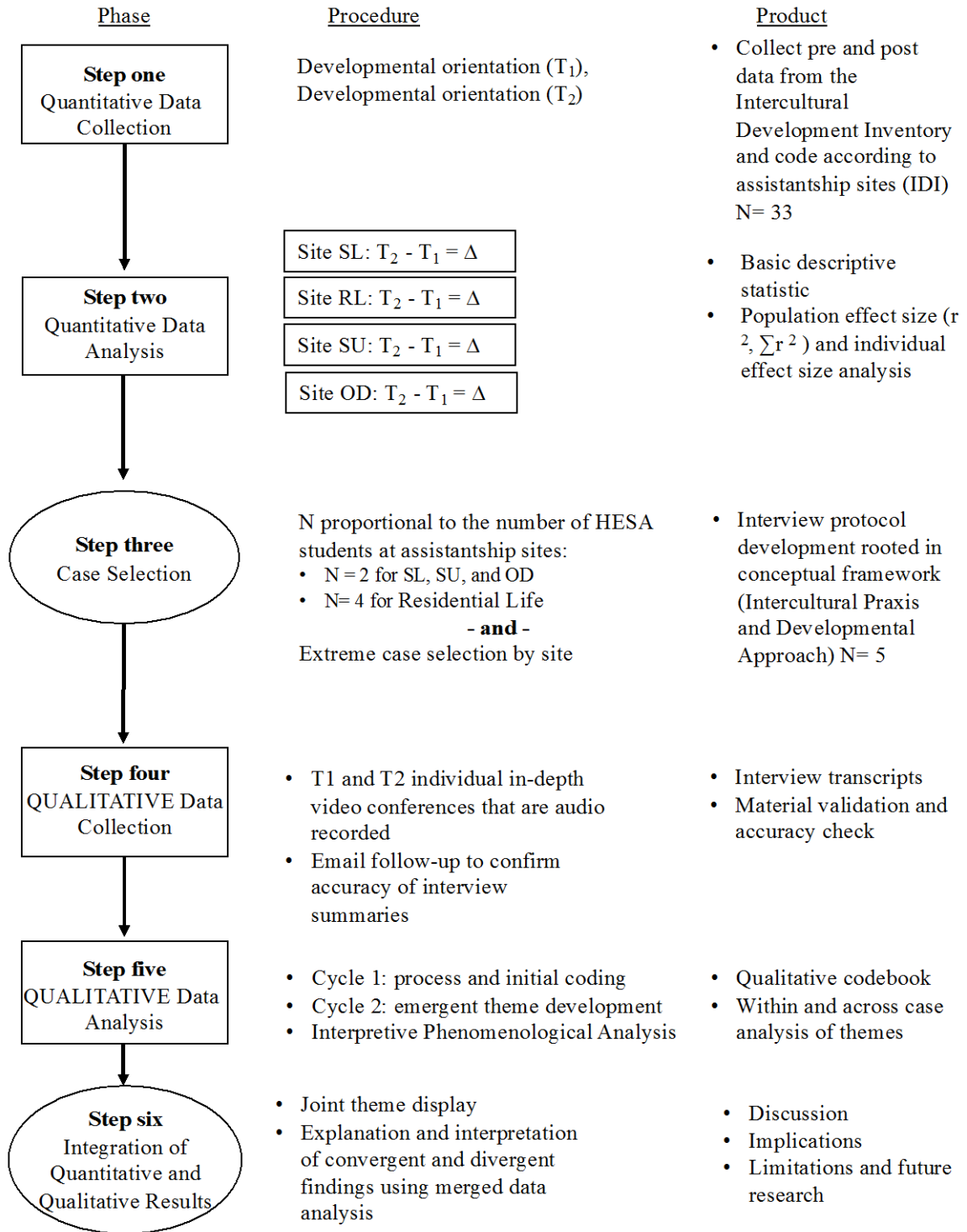- Implications
- Limitations and future research

Figure 2. Graphic Diagram of the Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design

Step one quantitative data collection and instrumentation. The first phase of

this study relied on findings from the Intercultural Development Inventory v3 (IDI v3), a

50-item questionnaire available online and developed following psychometric scale

construction protocols so that the tool cannot be "figured out" or fooled by participants

(Hammer, 2012). The IDI v3 is used widely in the education, government, and business

sectors. While the IDI roots were in large part grounded in assessing the skills and

capacity for mutual learning and exchange of ideas across various cultures throughout the

world, the same skillset and capacity can be effectively used to study cultural differences

domestically. A web-based analytics system gathers the responses from an online

questionnaire and generates a report outlining the findings and overall summary scores

(Hammer, 2012). The results assess an individual's intercultural competence in one of

five orientations: denial, polarization, minimization, acceptance, and adaptation. The

responses are reported as a raw score ranging between 55 to 145. These scores fall within

a categorized scale corresponding to one of the orientations five orientations, denial (55 –

69.99), polarization (70 – 84.88), minimization (85 – 114.99), acceptance (115 – 129.99),

and adaptation (130 – 145). The system can calculate individuals score as well as group

scores. The system also calculates "perceived orientation," as well as an individual's or

group's estimation of their intercultural capacity and developmental orientation, and an

individual's or group's actual intercultural capacity. For the purpose of this study, only

individual scores and those pertaining to developmental orientation will be analyzed. The

IDI tool possesses good internal validity with an achieved reliability of .83 for the

developmental orientation score and .82 for the perceived orientation score (Hammer,

2011). Further, the tool achieved .91 on the goodness of fit index in a study that involved

11 cohort groups representing 8 different countries and 4 different fields that included high schools, colleges, local churches, and non-governmental organizations; these scores suggest strong reliability (Hammer, 2011).

For this study, previously collected IDI data collected for training and development purposes were needed. To use these data, approval from the appropriate divisional leadership of the research site was needed for the use of this data. A proposal was submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) requesting the use of existing data originally collected for non-research purposes. Specifically, the information requested consisted of a randomly generated ID number for each participant, participant demographic collected on the IDI instrument, pre-test developmental orientation results, post-test developmental orientation results, cohort year, and assistantship site.

IDI results utilized in the first phase of the research were stripped of names and contact information. A randomly generated identification number was assigned to each participant, and a representative of the research site who was not involved in the study held the master list with names and email addresses. This representative also solicited participants for the qualitative phase of the study, serving as an intermediary to protect the privacy of participants. The quantitative data would be connected to a participant only after having met the case selection criteria and upon agreeing to participate in the qualitative phase of the study. The developmental orientation scores requested originated from a pre-test (T_1) of HESA students entering in the 2014, 2015, and 2016 cohort and post-test (T_2) conducted 21 months later, shortly before their graduation. Rather than utilizing the overall group result, I relied on individual results for cohort members. Out of a population of 42 participants that received an assistantship, a total of 33 HESA students

completed both the pre- and post-test. The number of students that either did not graduate from the program or did not complete the pre- or post-test totaled nine.

Although the quantitative study used secondary data, threats of internal validity, such as compensatory/resentful demoralization, still existed during the data collection phase (Creswell, 2009). As per standard training practice for the Division of Student Affairs, individuals were not given their personal IDI results, but rather a group report speaking to the result of the entire cohort. This had the potential of impacting the willingness or motivation of participants to take the post-test. In response, all participants were extended the opportunity to review their post-test results with an IDI Qualified Administrator. The two-year degree completion timeframe restricted the generalizability of the results, presenting a threat to the external validity. This threat has been addressed by utilizing data for three cohorts.

Step two quantitative data analysis. The quantitative phase of the study as assessed by the IDI outcomes addresses the change in intercultural competence of HESA students between entry and graduation. Specifically, this research determines (1) what, if any, change is observed in the development orientation of participants broadly, (2) the magnitude of observed developmental orientation change, and (3) the observed changes by assistantship site.

Descriptive statistics summarize observed changes between pre- and post-IDI results and provide overall change data and insight regarding the spread of the results. Moreover, the focus of this study was not to determine whether differences in the means of the pre- and post-tests were statistically significant. Rather, this study sought to understand the individual and collective progress of intercultural development relative to

the participant population. Therefore, to best answer the stated research questions, statistical analysis focused on the magnitude of the developmental orientation change by calculating group and individual effect sizes for each participant. Because the sample size is larger than 30, effect size is a suitable method of analysis for this study (McMaster LaPointe, 2014).

To determine what, if any, developmental orientation change occurred for the sample population, an overall effect size was calculated by subtracting the average pre-test score from the average post-test score, giving the difference in mean scores. This score is then divided by the mean standard deviation which is calculated by averaging out the standard deviations for the pre-test and post-test scores. The formula for calculating the overall effect size is Δ mean scores/mean SD. The magnitude of developmental orientation change for each participant was determined by subtracting the individual participant's pre-test score from their post-test score, (mean post-test – mean pre-test). This score is then divided by the mean SD described in the first formula. These scores come together in the following formula as a means of determining the magnitude of individual developmental orientation progress, participant n Δ score/ mean SD.

Individual effect sizes for each participant, along with those for the assistantship sites, informed the case selection and the attending qualitative data analysis sought to understand (1) possible reasons for the observed individual effect size, and (2) potential interventions for those who regress in intercultural growth (McMaster LaPointe, 2014). The five effect size categories used during case selection include negative effect, no effect, small effect, medium effect, and large effect. The effect size values range from 0<

for negative effect, $0 \geq .19$ for no effect, $.2 \geq .49$ for small effect, $.5 \geq .79$ for medium effect, and $.8 \geq$ for large effects.

      Step three case selection for qualitative phase. The Department of Student Life hosts various assistantship opportunities for HESA students. Given the size of the department, existing culture and rituals of the team such as staff meeting, professional development, and shared office spaces, as well as the number of positions, all assistantships hosted by the department of Student Life are coded as Student Life (SL). The same is true for Residential Life (RL), which disproportionally hosts the largest number of assistantship opportunities totaling about half of all assistantships offered. Both Student Life and Residential Life are departments within the Division of Student Affairs, and collectively host roughly 70 percent of HESA assistantships. Smaller offices within the division also host HESA assistantships; however, the number of these assistantships can vary due to limited resources. Because of the size of these departments and their shared characteristics, the assistantships hosted by these smaller offices were clustered and titled Smaller Units (SU). Finally, a set of assistantships hosted in areas outside of the Division of Student Affairs were also included although their culture and the experiences are distinct from the assistantships offered within the Division of Students Affairs. They were clustered and labeled Outside of the Division (OD). The four sets of assistantships are shown with their codes in Table 1.

Table 1

Assistantship Site Classifications and Codes

Assistantship Site	Assistantship Code
Outside of the Division	OD
Smaller Units	SU
Residential Life	RL
Student Life	SL

Case selection is the first instance in which quantitative and qualitative data strands come together during this explanatory research study. Results of the quantitative data analysis informed the case selection for the qualitative phases of the study. Two pieces of data were utilized during the case selection phase—individual effect sizes and assistantship site. Stratified purposeful and extreme case sampling schemes were employed to develop a solicitation list inviting participants to contribute to the qualitative study. A stratified purposeful sampling schema placed the population into various subgroups or stratum, each subgroup representing a similar characteristic, with purposeful representation from each subgroup (Collins, 2017). The population was grouped according to assistantship sites and the numbers of participants selected were proportional to the number of participants at each assistantship site as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Case Selection by Assistantship Site and Effect Size

Assistantship Site	Phase 1 Participants[a]	Phase 2 Solicitations[b]	Phase 2 Participants[c]
Outside the Division	4	2	1
Residential Life	18	4	2
Smaller Units	4	2	1
Student Life	7	2	1
Total	33	10	5

[a] participants whose IDI data were included in the quantitative phase of this study
[b] participants from phase one invited to participate in the qualitative phase of the study
[c] individuals who agreed to participate in the qualitative phase

Assistantship site was an intentional stratum or sub-group to use given the nature of the study. If the qualitative study seeks to explore possible reasons for effect size differences, identifying contradictory experiences and/or confirming similar experiences convergent across various assistantship locations can provide internal validity. In addition to the stratified purposeful schema, cases at each assistantship site were further refined based on individual effect sizes. Specifically, participants were selected if individual effect sizes within their assistantship site positioned them among the highest or lowest effect size of that subgroup as shown on Table 2 above. This sampling schema is consistent with the case-selection variant of an explanatory design where qualitative exploration of a phenomenon requires "quantitative results to identify and purposefully select the best participants" (Creswell & Clark, 2018, p. 82). Moreover, the schema also aligns with an interpretative phenomenological analysis methodology, framing the

qualitative phase of the study, which also calls for purposeful sampling (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).

Based on the distribution of effect sizes within each assistantship site, not all categories of the effect size scale were represented in the case selection. An extreme case sampling schema was used with the aim of fully exploring how experiences at these sites were similar to or different from observed effect size trends at each assistantship site. Ten cases, representing all assistantship sites and proportional representation of effect size distribution, were ultimately identified and asked to participate in the qualitative phase of the study. Expecting that all 10 participants would not agree to take part in the study, this was a sufficient basis for a manageable number of participants while still meeting recommended qualitative data collection practices. The results of this procedure are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Case Selection by Effect Size

Effect Size	Phase 1 Participants	Phase 2 Solicitation	Phase 2 Participants
Negative effect[a]	12	5	1
No effect[b]	3	1	1
Small effect[c]	3	0	0
Medium effect[d]	2	0	0
Large effect[e]	13	4	3
Total	33	10	5

[a] effect sizes 0<
[b] effect sizes ranging between $0 \geq .19$
[c] effect sizes ranging between $.2 \geq .49$
[d] effect sizes ranging between $.5 \geq .79$
[e] effect sizes $.8 \geq$

The randomly generated identification number for the 10 cases was shared with the representative of the research site who sent out the solicitation email inviting these individuals to take part in two semi-structured interviews. A possible incentive for participants was the opportunity to review their pre- and post-IDI report during the second interview. If former HESA students agreed to participate, they were instructed to contact the principal investigator directly, who followed up with an information sheet. Upon receiving consent to participate via email, the correspondence was sent to the research site representative, who securely transferred the participants' randomly generated identification number to be used at the second phase of the study where quantitative and qualitative strands interplay—the integration of the results phase.

Step four qualitative data collection. Given the in-depth data collection and analysis necessary for an interpretive phenomenological analysis methodology, such studies usually have a small number of participants. In this phase of the study, five participants, representative of all assistantship sites and three of the five effective size scale ranges, took part in two semi-structured interviews. This falls within Creswell's (2013) recommended size of three to four participants experiencing the same phenomenon.

The five participants took part in two semi-structured interviews, no more than a week apart, lasting 60 to 90 minutes combined. The first interview was conducted using a semi--structured protocol that included "open and expansive" questions that solicited detailed and lengthy responses (Smith et al., 2009, p. 59). The protocol included questions that explored intercultural learning opportunities and developmental approaches outlined in the conceptual framework (figure 1). The protocol also including

probing questions that invited a "level of depth" called for in this research approach (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 148). Questions for the first interview solicited descriptive, narrative, and evaluative insight into the participants' experience. The second interview was structured slightly differently than the first. A possible incentive for participants, the second semi-structured interview began with a review of their pre- and post-IDI report. While participants took the IDI at two different times during their program, the group IDI result was the only information shared by administrators. This was the first time participants had access to their individual results. After reviewing pre- and post-IDI results, participants again were asked questions in a semi-structured fashion that resembled the first interview. Reviewing the IDI results was not only an incentive for participants to complete both interviews, it mitigated the potential of biasing stories based on the participants' understanding of their pre- and post-results. Participants were given the opportunity to reflect on the stories they shared after receiving their IDI results during their second interview.

Creswell (2009) "recommends the use of multiple strategies" to enhance the validity of research findings (p. 191). I ensured accuracy of the findings by applying three validation strategies—member-checking, the use of thick rich descriptions that provided detailed accounts that illustrate patterns in the data, and presenting discrepant information (Creswell, 2009). Validity in qualitative research refers to the trustworthiness, accuracy, and credibility of the findings (Creswell & Miller, 2000). The first strategy for validity, member-checking, occurred through the use of member check memos that summarized and outlined preliminary themes to be shared with participants for accuracy. Member check memos were shared with participants along with an invitation to weigh in and offer

changes regarding the accuracy of the memo. Rich thick descriptions gathered from interviews provided substantive details and multiple perspectives regarding the identified themes. Subsequently, any discrepant findings identified during data analysis were highlighted in the findings section of this study. The multiple strategies used--member checking--solicitation of rich descriptions, and identification of divergent findings contribute to the validity of the results (Creswell, 2009).

Step six qualitative data analysis. As stated previously, an interpretative phenomenological analysis methodology, typically employed with smaller sample sizes of relatively homogenous groups, is used to examine deeply discrepant and convergent findings (Smith et al., 2009). In this case, the homogeneity of the group is their HESA cohort membership and the phenomenon explored is the presence of intercultural learning at their assistantship site. Using data collected from each participant spanning two interviews, the goal of the analysis was to examine each individual case in order to establish patterns and themes across data sets relying on observed convergence or divergence in intercultural learning experiences within and across assistantship sites. Analysis of experiences at assistantship sites provides insights into the range of intercultural learning experiences that existed. Each participant's transcript was read, reviewed, and coded consecutively despite interviews occurring at two different times.

Smith et al. (2009) states that a critical aspect of the analysis is dynamic process of "moving between the part and the whole" (p.81). While initial themes are bound to group in the study, "The researcher can assess the evidence in relation to their existing professional" expertise to engage in theoretical generalizability (Smith et al., 2009, p. 4). In short, established intercultural development theory and the subject matter expertise of

the researcher informed the interpretation of the findings gathered from participant's stories.

Before coding the data, the analysis process involved multiple readings of the transcript for the purposes of "slowing down the habitual propensity for a 'quick and dirty' reduction and synopsis, interpretative phenomenological analysis refers to this as 'reading and re-reading'" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 82). After having read the transcripts multiple time, I began to jot notes outlining patterns I began to see within the participants' experiences. These patterns were quite preliminary and appeared to focus on engagement and ongoing activity or nuanced and deep experiences that required unpacking. These patterns informed the next phase of analysis which Smith et al. (2009) refers to as "initial noting," also referred to as "coding".

Data coding occurred in two cycles, with the first cycle employing two coding methods. Given the observed patterns during the reading and-rereading phase, the two coding methods used were process coding and initial coding. Process coding centers around "simple observable activities…and more general conceptual action" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 96). Initial coding focuses on the nuances by breaking "data down into discrete parts, [where they are] closely examined and compared for similarities" (Corbin, Strauss, & Strauss, 2008, p. 102). Data coding was done utilizing Dedoose, a web-based application for qualitative and mixed methods analysis. During the first cycle coding, roughly 44 codes were identified, including duplicate codes.

After completing first cycle coding, a second coding referred to by Saldaña (2013) as the "second cycle coding" or what Smith et al. (2009) calls "developing emergent themes." Saldaña (2013) refers to this phase as the development of the meta-

code and offers six different coding methods (p. 209). Given its natural alignment with interpretative phenomenological analysis, a pattern coding method was used for the second phase, where inferential codes helped identify an inferential theme by bracketing large amounts of descriptive codes into meaningful units of analysis (Saldaña, 2013). Three emergent themes were identified--influential relationships, impactful factors, and depth of engagement--with related codes and sub-codes that further frame the findings.

Step six integration of quantitative and qualitative results. Mixed methods analysis "involves looking across quantitative results and the qualitative findings and making an assessment" of the information to best answer the research questions (Creswell & Clark, 2018, p. 212). Understanding the intercultural learning experiences of HESA students according to magnitude of developmental orientation progress outcomes required merging both quantitative and qualitative findings "to create a new or consolidated …data sets used for further analysis" (Creswell & Clark, 2018, p. 213). A joint display was developed to visually represent the analysis of themes, codes, and sub-codes across effect size categories. Initial qualitative analysis focused on experiences at assistantship sites providing insights into the range of intercultural learning experiences that existed for participants. The mixed methods analysis, which incorporated effect size findings, provided the opportunity to compare and contrast the nuances, quality, and effectiveness of said experiences in supporting intercultural learning progression among participants.

Two potential threats to validity existed in this study making it possible that illogical comparisons between quantitative and qualitative analysis might exist and the likelihood of discounting divergent findings. Threats to validity were addressed by

conducting a mixed methods analysis separately and after the qualitative analysis was completed. Furthermore, findings were substantiated by stories and data points that added further credence to the results. Finally, divergent findings were explicitly addressed in multiple sections of the study including the mixed methods findings, limitations of the research, and recommendations for future research sections.

Summary. The research questions for this study grew out of my years of work in student affairs and drove my choice for the design of the study. As noted above, I worked closely with many of the participants in this study. I managed the administration of the IDI and the analysis of the resulting data; this work has since been handed over to my predecessor. The IDI data collected during the study period with its focus on group rather than individual results has undoubtedly added value to the field of student affairs.

The research design I employed turned out to be complex and time consuming to implement, but also extremely effective as a means of unpacking new knowledge concerning the intercultural competence development process as discussed in the next chapter. The student participants of the study deserve my gratitude and thanks for the time and effort they contributed to this effort.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

This study was conducted using a mixed methodological design for the

purposes of understanding what, if any, changes occurred in the intercultural

competence of HESA students between the time of entry and graduation. Based on

the observed differences in the quantitative analysis in the first phase of the study,

participants were purposefully selected and invited to participate in the qualitative,

second phase of the study. The second phase of the study explored how HESA

students experienced intercultural praxis at their respective assistantship sites.

Phase One: Quantitative Findings

Phase one of this study relied on results from the Intercultural Development

Inventory v3 (IDI v3), a 50-item questionnaire available online administered to three

consecutive cohorts of HESA students. The instrument was administered a few weeks

prior to the start of the master's program and administered again shortly before

graduation. Out of a population of 42 participants that received an assistantship, a total of

33 HESA students completed both the pre- and post-test. A total of nine students did not

complete both the inventory either because they did not complete the program or did not

take the post-inventory IDI.

As previously mentioned, a web-based analytics system gathered the responses to

the online questionnaire and generated a report outlining the findings and overall

summary scores (Hammer, 2012, p. 201). Results from IDI position an individuals'

intercultural competence in one of five orientations: denial, polarization, minimization,

acceptance, and adaptation. The responses were calculated into a raw score that fell

within a variable scale of between 55 and 145 and the cut points delineated the five

orientations. All of the analysis was conducted using participants' raw scores obtained

during the developmental orientation. See Table 4 for the IDI's categories and resulting

raw scores.

Table 4

Intercultural Development Continuum Scale

Orientation	Raw Score
Denial	55 - 70
Polarization	70-84.99
Minimization	85-114.99
Acceptance	115-129.99
Adaptation	130-145

A summary of the data in Table 5 shows the basic descriptive analysis regarding

the pre-test, post-test, and the overall change between both iterations of the IDI.

Table 5

Pre- and Post-Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive Statistics N= 33	Pre-IDI Results		Post-IDI Results		Δ
	Raw Score	**Orientation**	**Raw Score**	**Orientation**	
min	67.19	Denial	83.14	Minimization	-40.49
max	138.67	Adaptation	140.41	Adaptation	56.85
M	108.9	Minimization	115	Acceptance	6.83
SD	16.95		16.7		20.22

As participants entered the program, Table 5 shows that the IDI raw scores

ranged from 67.19 to 138.67, with a mean score of 108.99 and a 16.96 standard

deviation. The range of developmental orientations suggests that participants

entered the HESA program engaging and viewing cultural differences in numerous

ways from, at one end of the continuum, a lens of "us versus them" (a succinct

summary of polarization) to engaging cultural differences deeply and adapting

frames of references when appropriate (known as "adaptation") (Hammer, 2012).

Table 6 gives the pre- post-IDI raw count of participants. As shown, the majority

of participants entered the program in the polarization orientation.

Table 6

Pre-and Post-Developmental Orientation Count

Developmental Orientation	Pre-IDI Count	Post-IDI Count
Denial	0	0
Polarization	11	1
Minimization	10	14
Acceptance	9	9
Adaptation	3	9
Total (N=)	33	33

The average score for the entering group of participants was 108.9, placing this

population within Minimization orientation. Post-IDI raw scores ranged from 83.14 to

140.41, with a mean score of 115.82 and a nearly identical standard deviation of 16.71.

With only one participant in the post-test zone, the post-IDI result ranged from

Minimization through Adaptation.

The Intercultural Development Continuum placed the five orientations within two

distinct mindsets – the monocultural mindset, which includes denial and polarization, and

intercultural mindset, which includes acceptance and adaptation (Hammer, 2012).

Minimization is conceptualized as the bridge between both mindsets. The pre- and post-

comparison suggests that this group of participants experienced a collective shift with no individuals operating from a monocultural mindset which "reflects a view that one's own culture is central to reality" (Hammer, 2012, p. 120). The standard deviation for pre- and post-IDI scores remained relatively constant, 16.96 and 16.71 respectively. Given that the point spread between orientations is typically 15 points (Table 4), with the exception of Minimization which is 30 points, these numbers indicate that the spread among scores are at least half to one full orientation from the average. Such a range in values supports additional inquiry including the qualitative exploration conducted in this study.

When examining the overall change in developmental orientation, descriptive analysis provides clear as well as conflicting information requiring further analysis. The average score change minimum was -40.49 indicating one of the participants regressed two to three orientations. At the same time, the data indicates that an individual participant progressed 58.85 three to four orientations. The average change (Δ) in pre- and post-mean was 6.83 with a standard deviation of 20.22. These numbers indicate a large variance, meaning there is a wide range of pre-and-post Δ scores.

It is important to note that each assistantship site had representation spanning across the three cohorts included in phase one of the study (Table 8). When examining the average change in developmental orientation by assistantship sites (Figure 3) and comparing these figures to the average change (Δ) of 6.83, two assistantship site groupings fall below the average while the other two were higher than the average. Specifically, the average change in developmental orientation for the seven participants in Student Life (SL) was 2.06, while the average change for the four participants in Smaller Units (SU) was -14.77. On average the HESA group with an assistantship in SL

increased their IDI scores by a marginal amount, while the group in SU regressed nearly

a half to full orientation, depending on the groups incoming IDI. The four participants

with assistantship assignments Outside of the Division (OD) saw an average group

developmental orientation change of 8.54, while the Residential Life (RL) group of 14

experienced a 13.11 average increase in their developmental orientation. Both OD and

RL sites reported changes above the mean; however, it is notable that the largest change
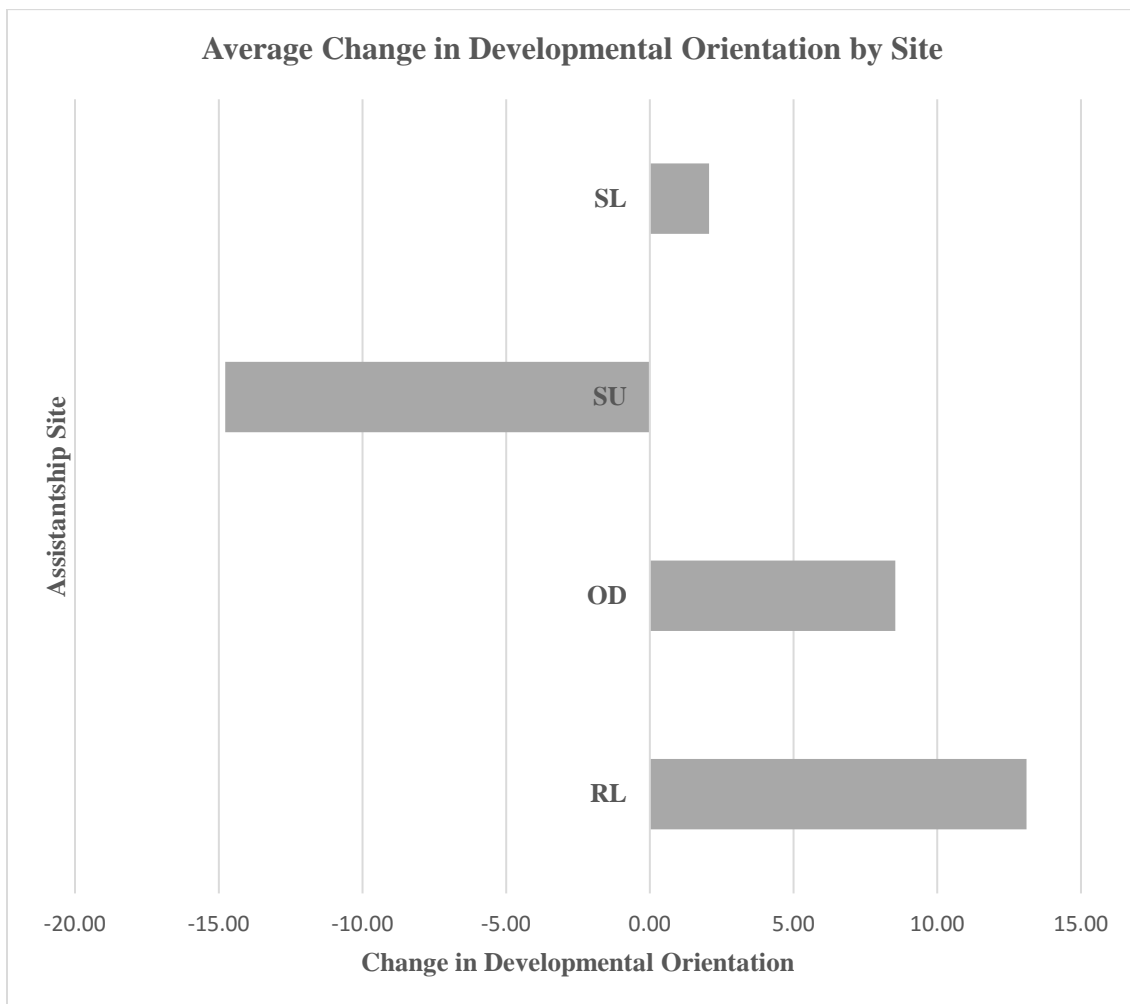
by site was the observed regression.

Figure 3. Average Change in Developmental Orientation by Assistantship Site

The average change in developmental orientation by site groupings provides some information regarding the location of the phenomenon being studied. However, contextualizing the meaning of observed changes in comparison to the group is also important. Quantitative analysis is critical for the purposes of our qualitative case selection. For this reason, I also conducted effect size analysis to measure the relative improvement of participants' IDI; in other words, individuals' growth compared to other participants, rather than individual achievement in reaching a specific developmental orientation stage (McMaster LaPointe, 2014). Effect size calculations determined the magnitude of individual developmental orientation change in comparison to the group and provided insights into the progress made by individual participants allowing for the exploration of intercultural learning opportunities (Balow, 2017).

This study focused on a small, relatively homogenous, population of students. Measuring achievement by focusing on how many participants moved from a monocultural mindset orientation to an intercultural mindset orientation not only dismisses the progress made by participants who had significant room for growth, it is also contrary to the fundamental idea of intercultural competence and development being a lifelong learning process. Measurement of individual achievement was not the intent of this study. Instead, the quantitative phase of the study was informed by the desire to understand the progress made by individuals in comparison to other participants for the sake of exploring convergence and divergence experiences qualitatively. The effect size analysis conducted in this study provides the best measure of progress in comparison to the group "revealing the size of the effect therefore providing substantive significance not just statistical significance" (Sullivan & Feinn, 2012. pg. 279).

Cohen's d was used as a basic method for interpreting effect sizes. As outlined in Table 7, standard interpretations include effect sizes of .20 as small, .50 as medium, and .80 as large. Table 7 also outlines values lower than .20 as no effect, in addition to negative values interpreted as negative effects. Individual effect size was calculated for the 33 participants. As illustrated in Table 7, 12 participants had a negative effect size. Moreover, there was an equal number of participants, namely three, reporting no effect or a small effect. The smallest number of participants were in the medium effect size category with only two participants (6%). The largest number of participants, a total of 13 (39%), fell within the large effect size.

These findings indicate that 36 percent of participants experienced shift in the pre- and post-score which went in the opposite direction of the average participants' negative shift. The magnitude of the change for 9 percent of the participants was negligible, while for another 9 percent the magnitude of the pre- and post-change was small falling within a range of .2 to .49 standard deviations higher than the average difference of pre- and post-IDI scores. The magnitude of pre- and post-score change was calculated as a medium effect for 6 percent of the population falling within a range of .5 to .79 standard deviations higher than the average pre- and post-score difference. The largest number of participants, exactly 39 percent, reported a large effect size with a pre- and post-change scores ranging .8 + standard deviations above the average. In this study, the range of calculated negative effect sizes were -.04 to -2.41, while the range for positive effect sizes were .82 to 3.38.

Individual effect sizes were also examined by assistantship sites and Cohens method of interpretation. Table 7 outlines a total number of participants by assistantship

site with a corresponding breakdown outlining where participants landed according to effect size categories. Participants with assistantships Outside the Division (OD) totaled 4 with 1 individual experiencing a negative effect size, 1 individual with no effect, and 2 individuals experiencing a large effect size. No participants with assistantships OD had either a small or medium effect size. Residential Life (RL) hosted the largest number of participants with 5 participants experiencing a negative effect, 3 participants experiencing a small effect size, 1 participant experiencing a medium effect size, and 9 participants experiencing large effect size. There were no participants in RL that experienced no effect. SU had a total of 4 participants, three of which experienced a negative effect and 1 experiencing no effect, and no representation in any of the other effect size interpretation categories. Participants with assistantships in SL totaled 7, with 3 participants experiencing a negative effect, 1 participant experiencing no effect, 1 participant experiencing a medium effect, and 2 participants experiencing large effect size. There were no participants from SL with a small effect size.

Table 7

Effect Size Counts and Percentages by Population and Assistantship Site

Effect Size		Outside the Division	Residential Life	Smaller Units	Student Life	Count by Effect Size #[d]	%[e]
Negative effect (> 0)							
	#[a]	1	5	3	3	12	36%
	%[b]	25%	28%	75%	43%		
No effect ($0 \geq .19$)							
	#	1	0	1	1	3	9%
	%	25%	0%	25%	14%		

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		OD	RL	SU	SL	Total[d]	%[e]
Small effect (.2 ≥ .49)							
	#[a]	0	3	0	0	3	9%
	%[b]	0%	17%	0%	0%		
Medium effect (.5 ≥ .79)							
	#[a]	0	1	0	1	2	6%
	%[b]	0%	6%	0%	14%		
Large effect (.8 ≥)							
	#[a]	2	9	0	2	13	39%
	%[b]	50%	50%	0%	29%		
Count by assistantship site	#[c]	4	18	4	7	33	

[a] number of participants with stated effect size at each assistantship site
[b] percent of participants within the assistantship site with stated effect size
[c] total number of participants within the assistantship site
[d] total number of participants within each effect size grouping
[e] total percent of participants within each effect size grouping

Figure 4 depicts the percent of participants by assistantship site across effect size categories. Participants with an assistantship outside of the division (OD) fell within the extremes of the effect size groupings with the magnitude of the change score for 50 percent of participants being either negative or no effect, while the magnitude of change for the remaining 50 percent of participants outside of the division (OD) being large. The majority of participants in RL had change scores with an effect size that was either large or medium, with half of the group (50%) falling within the large effect size category and 6 percent within medium effect. The magnitude of change for all participants within smaller units (SU) was either a negative effect or no effect. The majority of participants in SL (57%) had change scores that were either negative or no effect.

The variance in effect sizes across assistantships aligned with the premise and purpose of this study. Not only did these findings suggest varied levels of progress, it provided a basis for exploration that aligned with our qualitative question: How did HESA students experience intercultural praxis at their assistantship site? The effective size analysis conducted also informed the case selection process.
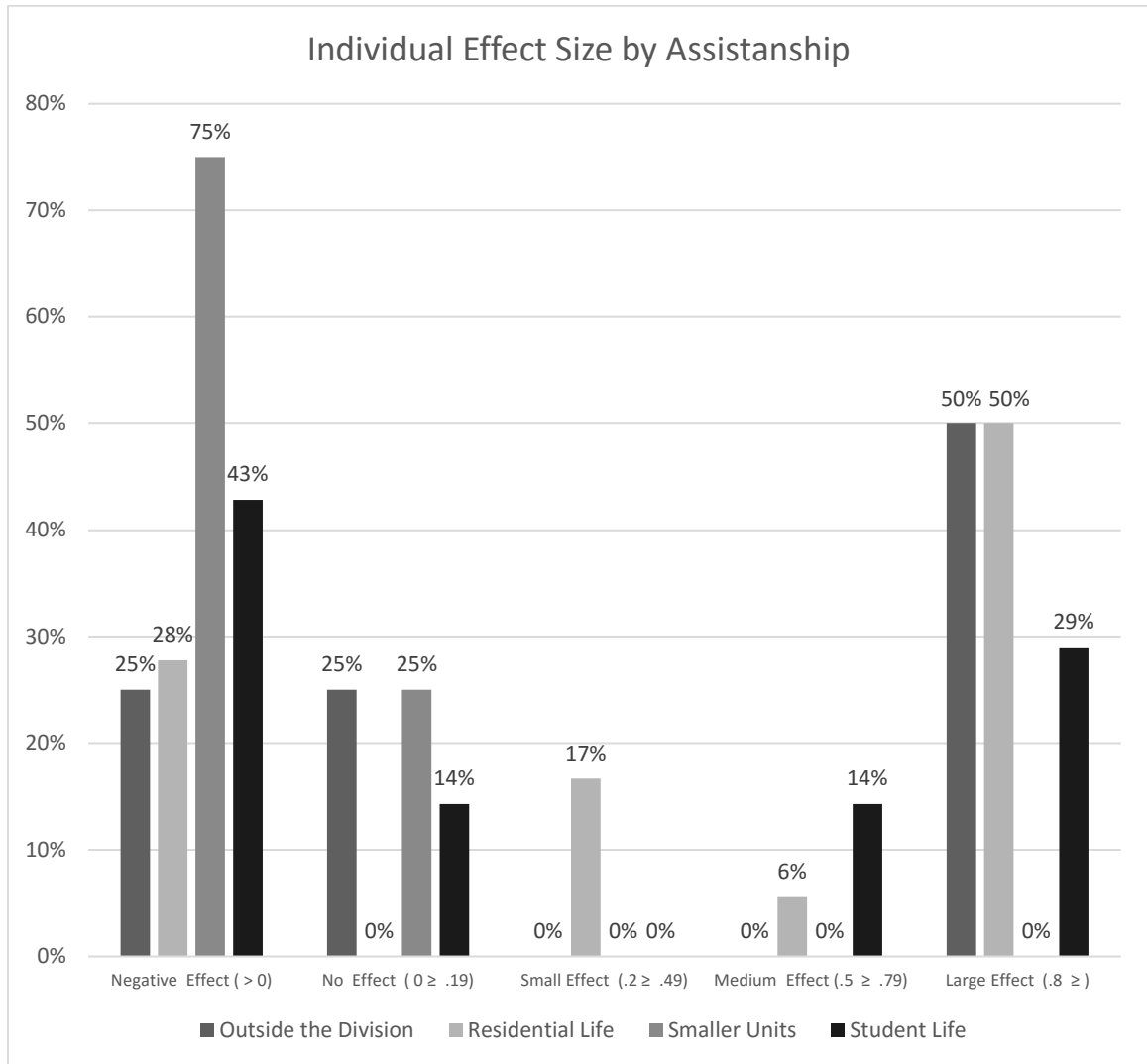

Figure 4. Individual Effect Size Population Percentage by Assistantship Site

Assistantship site and individual effect sizes were used as part of the case selection strategy. The discrepancy in intercultural developmental progress, determined by effect sizes, across assistantship sites, provided a basis for exploration of the phenomenon. I employed stratified purposeful and extreme case sampling schemes to develop a sampling frame inviting participants to the qualitative study. A stratified purposeful sampling schema places the population into various subgroups or stratum, each subgroup representing a similar characteristic, with purposeful representation from each subgroup (Collins, 2017, p. 358). The characteristics used to develop subgroups were assistantship sites. In addition to the stratified sampling schema, extreme case sampling schema was also employed to further explore the similarities and differences in experiences across assistantship sites also observed during the effect size analysis. The box plot in Figure 4 depicts the sampling schemas employed with effect sizes grouped together by assistantship sites and corresponding upper and lower whiskers serving as potential participants for solicitation.
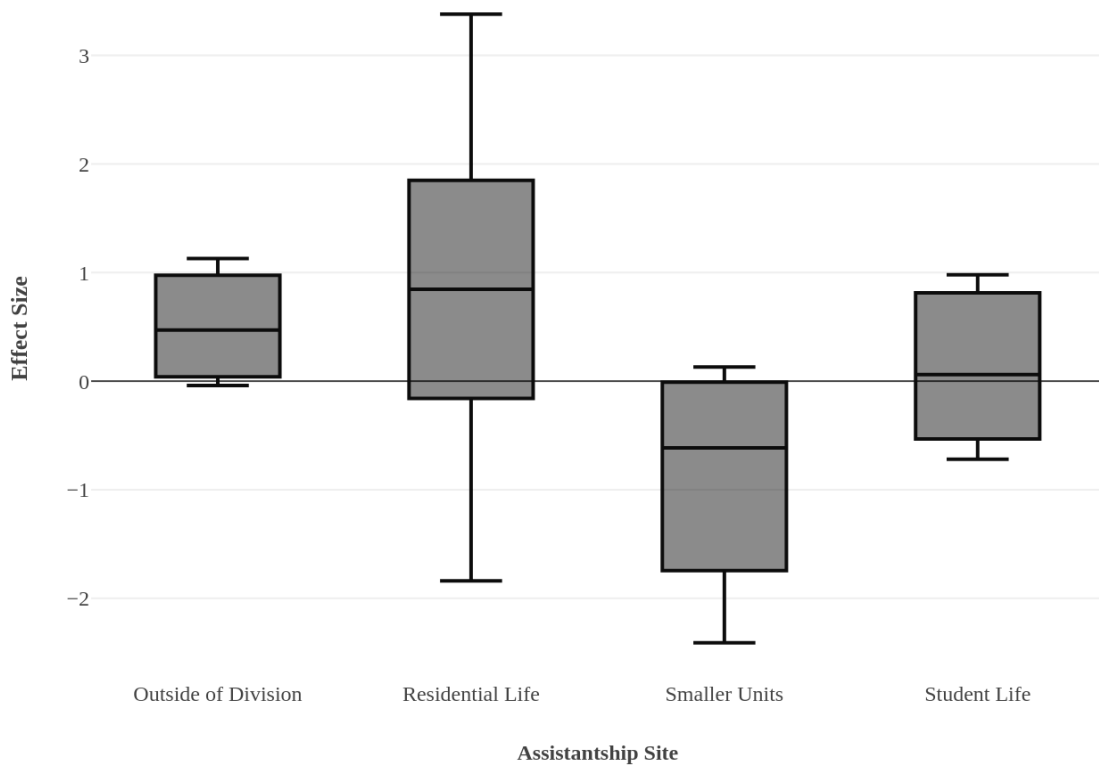
Figure 5. Individual Effect Size by Assistantship Site

Given the qualitative question grounded phase two of this study, I placed priority

on representation of assistantship sites. The goal was to identify 10 participants for

solicitation and yield no more than 5 participants for phase two of the study. In order to

ensure representation of intercultural learning experiences across assistantship site, the

number of individuals solicited by site was proportional to the number of participants by

site as shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Qualitative Study Participant Solicitation by Assistantship Site

Assistantship Site	Phase 1 Participants[a]	Phase 2 Solicitation[b]	Phase 2 Participants[c]
Outside the Division	4	2	1
Residential Life	18	4	2
Smaller Units	4	2	1
Student Life	7	2	1
Total	33	10	5

[a] number of participants represented in the quantitative portion of the research (phase 1) using the IDI
[b] participants invited to participate in the qualitative portion of the research (phase 2) from each assistantship site according to the sampling schema
[c] number of invited participants that agreed to take part in the qualitative portion of the research (phase 2)

Given this approach, extreme case sampling was restricted and therefore not representative of all the categories within the effect size scale (Table 9). The yield from phase one through phase two participation based on assistantship site and effect size is outlined in tables 8 and 9 respectively.

Table 9

Qualitative Study Participant Solicitation by Effect Size

Effect Size	Phase 1 Participants[a]	Phase 2 Solicitation[b]	Phase 2 Participants[c]
Negative Effect	12	5	1
No Effect	3	1	1
Small Effect	3	0	0
Medium Effect	2	0	0
Large Effect	13	4	3
Total	33	10	5

[a] number of participants represented in the quantitative portion of the research (phase 1) using the IDI
[b] participants invited to participate in the qualitative portion of the research (phase 2) from each assistantship site according to the sampling schema
[c] number of invited participants that agreed to take part in the qualitative portion of the research (phase 2)

A total of five participants agreed to cooperate and completed phase two of this study. They are listed in Table 10. They spanned all three cohort groups included in phase one of the study and were reflective of the racial demographics of the cohorts sampled. Marisabel worked in RL and identifies as a woman of color. The magnitude of her change score between pre- and post- was negative. Austin, a man of color, whose assistantship site was outside of the division, had an effect size that was large in

magnitude. Henry, who worked in RL, and Jack, who worked in SL, identified as a white man and had effect sizes similar to Austin. John worked in a smaller unit. He identified as multi/biracial and the magnitude of his change score was negligible.

Table 10

Qualitative Study Participants

	Marisabel	Austin	Henry	John	Jack
Assistantship Site	Residential Life	Outside the Division	Residential Life	Smaller Unit	Student Life
Race	POC	POC	White	Multi/Biracial	White
Gender	Woman	Man	Man	Man	Man
Effect size	Negative	Large	Large	No	Large

Phase Two: Qualitative Findings

The five participants described in Table 10 took part in two semi-structured interviews, lasting 60 to 90 minutes combined, about a week apart. The first interview was conducted using a semi-structured protocol that included questions that solicited detailed and lengthy responses. The second semi-structured interview began with the first time review of their pre- and post-IDI report, followed by questions in a semi-structured format that resembled the first interview. After two cycles of coding three themes emerged. Each theme encompassed codes, some of which were connected through related sub-codes that provided additional perspectives to the findings as shown in Table 11. In exploring HESA students' experience of intercultural learning at their assistantship site, participants reflected back on past complex, multi-faceted, and varied recollections. These findings reflect the core aspects from the point of view of the participants as it relates to experiencing intercultural learning at their assistantship sites.

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Table 11

Emergent Themes and Corresponding Codes

Themes	Corresponding Codes	Sub Codes
Influential Relationships	1. Supervisor 2. Cohort 3. Classroom	
Impactful Factors	1. Expectations and group norms	(a) Openness and willingness to engage (b) building relationship (c) expectations and commitment to learning
	2. Working on diverse teams	(a) socio-demographic make-up work place (b) work place engagement of cultural differences (c) individual's engagement of cultural differences
	3. Formal opportunities to engage	
Depth of engagement	1. Awareness of complex social positioning	(a) awareness of the social identities held (b) understanding and exploration of dominant and marginalized identities (c) awareness of the implications of dominant identities

	(d)	understanding the limitations of one's frame of reference
2. Taking risks	(a)	risk taking role modeled
		participants willingness to take risks
3. Engaging different world views	(a)	wrestling with different perspectives
	(b)	shifting or taking on a new perspective

Influential relationships theme. The relationships participants developed played a key role in their intercultural development experience. Despite the focus on assistantship sites, relationships in and out of work continuously emerged as central and important. Above all else, relationships influenced whether a participant would, at the most basic level, engage in intercultural learning and also informed their sense of interpersonal trust. The relationships most discussed were supervisory relationships, cohort relationships, and the classroom relationship.

Supervisory relationships framed and contextualize learning and engagement for participants, primarily through role modeling. Jack, in discussing the role his supervisor played in role modeling, said, "My supervisor was very good about kind of putting the brakes on things sometimes when I'm going a mile a minute or I'm really hot and heavy on something to be like, 'Let's stop and just talk about this for a second and process and think about it'…I think I had always been the kind of person I just wanted to get things done that I wasn't really understanding or taking the time to respect the process or what

was going on in my head in the moment, why was I reacting the way I was, or why was I making the decisions." Whether supervisors were aware, intentional, and developmental in their supervisory approach or not, all participants lauded their supervisory relationships. In discussing his experiences with two distinct supervisors, Henry shared, "With my first supervisor…[I] knew that I was going through so much of my own shit… and was willing to engage and keep trying with the fact that I was fucking up. I'm sure I am left in impacting people. But she was able to hold that at the time for me…My second supervisor came in and really, too interested in engaging across difference but was more interested in shutting shit down so to speak. And we had conversations about gender and they were willing to be somewhat vulnerable with me, but they didn't really ever want to engage to the level that my former supervisor had." At assistantship sites, the setting at the focus of this study, supervisors directly influenced both impactful factors and depth of engagement around intercultural learning. In other words, supervisors played a role in all three themes that emerged in the study. Jack, talking about his supervisor who was a woman of color, shared "having a supervisor …who was also incredibly open and was willing to be vulnerable in spaces and share her narrative, I think for me had a huge impact because I never had a supervisor someone like that before."

If supervisory relationships framed what intercultural learning and engagement should look like, cohort relationships were influential in supporting intercultural learning among a peer group by establishing a sense of interpersonal trust. Interpersonal trust refers to the underlying belief that members of a group do not seek to intentionally harm you and therefore there is a willingness to be vulnerable (Borum, 2010). Trusting is vital in everyday human reaction and in any classroom and work environment it has the ability

to affect daily interactions. Participants' sense of interpersonal trust informed, in every

scenario, whether and how they engaged in intercultural learning. Speaking about his

cohort experience and their level of trust, Henry shared, "A lot of folks came in wanting

to engage, I mean, in my HESA cohort. They did, and sometimes they were pissed off

that day, or hurt that day, or annoyed that day, but for the most part, they wanted to be in

the work with each other as opposed to just in the work to shut shit down or not really

communicate. I felt lucky for that." Given the size of some units and the number of

HESA students employed in said unit, some overlap existed between assistantship sites

and cohort relationships. This provided opportunities to reinforce the level of

interpersonal trust that did or did not exist between cohort members who also worked in

the same assistantship site. Reflecting on a trusting relationship with a cohort member,

Henry shared, "The best of conversations that we had would be the ones where I actually

had a relationship with her more than just in the classroom because I worked with her,

and we got to know each other over time…and we would just start talking about our

experiences. And how we're perceiving things in the classroom or how." The

participants' identity as a member of a cohort was elevated as a significant group

membership. This group membership was mentioned as frequently as was the unit in

which participants work in, which was the focus of the study. The cohort relationship,

rooted in interpersonal trust, influenced if participants engaged in intercultural learning at

assistantship sites and in the classroom. Reflecting on the shifts within her cohort

between her first and second year, Marisabel said, "I think that there was a lot of

optimism to begin with, when it came to our assistantship and having conversations

across difference. But then going into our second year, people are just kind of tired of it

all, and just want to disengage." Speaking to a similar shift between his first and second

year, Jack shared, "I think my second year, once I felt like I had that level of comfort and

trust with some of my peers, I think I definitely formed some relationships with a couple

people in my cohort, particularly that I became and I'm still very close with who I feel

like I can confide in and I can just go. And despite the fact that our identities are very

different, I feel like we can go at each other and talk pretty openly about anything, and I

feel like I'm not going to be judged."

The classroom emerged as a theme describing not as a space, but rather a complex

relationship where all aspects of the HESA experience intersected. The influence of

supervisors and dynamics of the cohort merged with assigned scholarly readings and

lived experiences of students. Henry remembers, "There were some people that would

just [be] very vulnerably…like linking the content of the literature or whatever to their

experience and I, by nature of being a student, was there in the room. There was nothing

particularly curious about me in that moment. It's just that person was willing to go there.

And so I got to stay in it and listen." If all things aligned well, the classroom was

experienced as a space of personal challenge, generosity, inequitable struggle, fear, and

frustration that folks cautiously entered, given their personal capacity, with a mutual goal

and commitment towards learning. Jack reflected on how challenging this was, sharing,

"A couple times, I was really challenged particularly in [a specific professor's] classes. I

remember once or twice, [they were] not afraid to go down to some of the deep dark

conversations." The classroom was discussed as a formal practice ground for intercultural

learning. The classroom saw the manifestation of the effect of supervisory influences,

cohort relationships, impactful factors, and a student's depth of engagement on a cohort

group level, rather than individual or small group level. Discussing how all these variables came to play in the classroom, John, who identifies as bi-racial, shared, "I learned a lot of self confidence in my identities due to the fact that they were very much negated in the classroom space and outside of my assistantship." Marisabel discussed the interconnectedness of her experience and how it played out in the classroom by sharing, "I learned through the class that being in higher education and being in a graduate program really wasn't built for me, as a woman of color. And I think that was something that sometimes made me really angry. And also made me question things almost like made me question a lot of the decisions that were made…just being really, really, really, critical about them. And that's just me being honest, is that I was critical because I felt like I had to try harder to learn what I had to learn…well, I guess, to graduate."

   Impactful factors theme. The first emergent theme focused on relationships that influenced the intercultural learning of participants. If influential relationships identified "who" influences intercultural learning, impactful factors identify "how" engaging in intercultural learning was framed and understood by participants. Factors impacting intercultural learning include expectations and group norms, diverse and representative teams, and formal opportunities to engage. These impactful factors do not function in isolation but rather are interconnected to the relationships discussed earlier that can influence if participants engaged in intercultural learning.

   Expectations and group norms were a common theme across experiences. Specifically, group norms and expectations regarding being open and willing to engage in difficult conversations, relationship and trust building, and an explicit commitment to learning across differences. Participants emulated the sense of openness and the

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willingness to learn and engage role modeled in the classroom and at their assistantship. In some cases, the desire or willingness to learn and engage in difficult conversation was not merely an approach that was role modeled, but rather an expectation set by peers or the assistantship site, eventually becoming a part of the culture for the cohort. Jack discussed the concept of being open and willing to engage through his relationship with his supervisor and his cohort. Reflecting on his supervisory experience, Jack shared, "I think having a supervisor that was very honest and very transparent with me helped me learn…push[ed] my perceptions." His experience with his supervisor related to a sense of openness and willingness to engage complimented his experience with his cohort sharing, "My cohort as a whole…we didn't all get along perfectly, but I think we got along well…we all brought something different to the table. And I think we all were incredibly respectful of each other in terms of when we had those conversations. And I feel like that's where I did a lot of my learning was through my cohort, and I think being in a space where seeing my peers comfortable sharing something about themselves made me more curious." Relationship and trust building played an integral role in establishing a group culture where individuals were willing to engage in difficult conversation. These relationships of trust allowed groups to establish boundaries and stretch themselves in their intercultural learning process, allowing members to disengage when an individual's capacity was maxed while still bound by strong establish relationships and a commitment to learning. Henry captured this balance when he shared his experience with a member of his cohort who held multiple marginalized identities. Henry said, "I probably asked some questions of her…when I was having very little understanding of what would be included in microaggressions…not really being a thoughtful person, when I, just sort of being

curious as opposed to thoughtful. And she was willing to, once again, just sort of, maybe, put up with my shit…but the relationship formed and we laughed together a lot, we would hang out together." He captured his cohorts' understanding that a willingness to engage in difficult conversation and a commitment to learning were not noble concepts but rather a messy, uncomfortable, and collective pledge sharing, "Sometimes they were pissed off that day, or hurt that day, or annoyed that day, but for the most part, they wanted to be in the work with each other as opposed to just in the work to shut shit down or not really communicate."

Working on diverse teams in conjunction with formal opportunities to engage cultural differences were identified as factors impacting intercultural learning at assistantship sites. Participants who worked in culturally diverse teams reported engaging in conversations around differences, whereas homogenous teams rarely broached the subject in a proactive manner. Austin, reflecting on his assistantship experience shared, "Most of them were white…and my supervisor was queer. I don't think there was any formal setting that we talked about identities, or our differences. I think that's sort of already in the assistantship work, so as I'm talking about working with…students." To be clear, the presence of difference in and of itself did not encourage intercultural learning. Marisabel, who identifies as a woman of color, discussed at length her appreciation for being a part of a diverse team and the impact this had on her as someone who held multiple marginalized identity. She shared, "Having a supervisor that understood me at that level was pretty wonderful… being a part of a community [that was] for the most part folks of color who are experiencing Green Mountain State University together." When reflecting on her experiences engaging individuals who were culturally different,

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Marisabel shared, "For those that I had similar identities, it was more so, 'let's build a relationship that's authentic and we can build some sort of solidarity, given that our experiences are outliers in this context of being in a PWI'. So I think that those were relationships that I treasured." Formal opportunities aimed at exploring difference created the opportunity for participants to depart from instinctual human characteristics of surrounding oneself with those who are similar for safety and comfort, a reality which is necessary at times but negatively impacts intercultural learning. In discussing formal opportunities to engage across differences, Henry mentioned "diversity trainings which were very expansive, so like three or four days just professional staff…scholarships…[and] affinity spaces." In reflecting on these opportunities Henry said, "I would be in the room thinking about a shared identity, but also forced me to think about identities that I didn't identity share [with others]."

Depth of engagement theme. This theme refers to nuanced content that supported intercultural learning. If influential relationships identified "who" impacted intercultural learning for participants and impactful factors identified "how" intercultural learning was framed and understood by HESA students, depth of engagement identified "what" concepts and topics best supported intercultural learning. Participants named awareness of complex social positioning, taking risks and engaging different world views as concepts that supported intercultural learning. A result of intercultural learning was the ability to put new knowledge and insight into practice.

Awareness of complex social positioning was a fundamental concept for intercultural learning highlighted by participants. Understanding that socially constructed identities exist and more importantly, naming the identities held was foundational for

participants to engage in intercultural learning, capturing the idea that intercultural

learning was dependent on a sense of self-awareness and self-learning. Henry captured

his self-learning while reflecting and sharing, "Identities were intrinsic in the way that I

was operating in the world, and the way that I was seeing the world, but not necessarily

visible to me unless I came in contact with…different identities." The concept of

complex social positioning referred participants' ability to name both marginalized and

dominant identities. In other words, the capacity to identify where one is positioned to

social power across a broad spectrum of social identities. Jack shared the development of

his awareness during a moment where he realized, "Okay. I need to start thinking more

about how I spend so much time carrying this queer identity narrative in my head

and…now all of a sudden I need to think about how [my race] shows up in spaces and

how that impacts other people." Often focusing on his marginalized queer identity, Jack

began to learn that focusing on his whiteness was equally as important for intercultural

learning. An awareness of complex social positioning made it more likely for participants

to also understand the limitations of their worldview. Henry discussed what it meant to

engage while knowing that his worldview was limited by his experiences and identities

sharing, "I recognize that I held that group membership. I didn't have that language at the

time, but I recognize that there was a lot to that. That if someone was going to engage

with me, that there was something different about that."

While an awareness of complex social positioning is foundational in intercultural

learning, taking risks promoted deep knowledge and meaning making with respect to

individual identities held, cultural differences, and openness to differing perspectives.

Participants reported that risk taking was often role modeled across influential

relationships, and also related to an extent to a group's norms and expectations, specifically around openness and willingness to engage in difficult conversations, relationship and trust building, and an explicit commitment to learning across differences. Henry reflected on the ways risk-taking was role modeled sharing, "I saw examples in my supervisors of who came to GMSU with the interest of talking about social justice and learning about identities so that majority of the time they didn't feel like they had arrived, they were learning from each other." Role modeling and clear expectations and group norms relating to risk taking were important in encouraging risk taking, but not enough. Intercultural learning was influenced when opportunities to take risks were intentionally and explicitly afforded to participants. Reflecting on the multiple opportunities to engage social identities in class, Jack shared how, over time, he became more comfortable discussing queerness in class. Jack shared, "I still had a little bit of a guard up with that, and I was comfortable enough to address it in the classroom. But I feel like as I went on…I was much more comfortable talking about it."

Participants discussed deep listening and learning, wrestling with new information, and perspective taking and shifting as core aspects of engaging different world views. Austin, speaking about the opportunities he had to engage different world views shared, "I made a consistent effort to learn from different people and hear other people's stories." The idea of wrestling with new information was referred to the cognitive and emotional dissonance that occurred when confronted with cultural perspectives that challenged and did not align with previously acquired knowledge. As participants wrestling with new information, perspective taking and shifting was often a part of the process. Participants discussed how challenging it was to engage different

worldview, in discussing the process the image of a necessary, yet difficult tussle. Henry described the process of wrestling with new ideas as "absolutely beautiful and amazing, but that didn't necessarily feel good the whole time. But I was in the midst of like the times where I was feeling, what I would call now, as like some fragility. Not unforeseen and cognitive dissonance I couldn't put together. I still would just keep trying. And so I just stayed in it. So the two things are like, there's constantly difference around me that I was engaging with and different levels. And I wanted it and I stayed in it." Marisabel's experience reinforced the connection between engaging different worldviews and an established expectation and group norms around commitment towards learning. Reflecting on an opportunity to engage different world views, Marisabel shared, "I remember other grad students…who had a different way of communicating, different way of engaging, or even understanding a lot of the stuff that was happening in the classroom [differently]. But I think that when it came to engaging through that difference, there were a lot of other dynamics that were at play that kind of – I don't know, shut me down to having those conversations…and it just didn't seem like the right place." When participants learned as a result of engaging different worldviews, they reported incorporating skills and disposition into practice. Austin, who identified as an international student, reflected on his learning and openness to the different perspective, an important aspect given the student population he worked with. For Austin believed "it's really learning how to deal with [my] reaction."

Mixed Methods Findings

The mixed methods explanatory sequential design of this study, specifically the case-selection variant, brought together both quantitative and qualitative data stands at

two distinct junctions. The first mixing of qualitative and quantitative data occurred during case selection. The second instance of quantitative and qualitative data strand mixing occurs when reporting findings. In this section, three tables, one for each of the emerging theme, outlines corresponding codes that emerged during qualitative analysis, and examining findings across quantitative effect size groups. This mixed methods approach provides breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration of intercultural learning experiences across effect size groupings (Creswell & Clark, 2018). Quantitative and qualitative findings were used to deeply examine each individual case in order to establish patterns and themes across data sets via a joint display table (Tables 12-14).

The three emergent themes: influential relationships (Table 12), impactful factors (Table 13) and depth of engagement (Table 14) highlight participant experiences related to corresponding codes and areas of divergence and convergence that I identified during the analysis. These experiences are organized, compared, and contrasted according to effect sizes of participants. I combine participants' stories and experiences with the experiences and expertise of the principle investigator to broad theoretical analysis. While the three initial themes are specific and connected specifically to the experiences of the five participants, "The researcher can assess the evidence in relation to their existing professional" expertise to provide theoretical generalizability (Smith et al., 2009, p. 4).

Supervisors. The relationship between HESA students and supervisors were characterized as comprehensive as well as often including affirmation, professional guidance, perspective, and challenge. Across effect size groups, participants discussed the influence supervisors had on their overall learning experience (Table 12, 1). Although an

important component of supervision, supporting intercultural learning was not the sole purpose of these relationships. This was evident in how participants discussed their relationships with supervisors. While participants were able to clearly identify impactful factors and concepts that supported deep intercultural learning, they did not assess their relationships with supervisors according to their supervisor's ability to provide such learning opportunities. Participants across all effect size groups represented in the study reported a positive and good working relationship with supervisors.

Cohort. The development and existence of interpersonal trust within cohorts, intentionally recruited and selected to enhance the learning of the group, varied across effect size clusters (table 12, 2). All clusters discussed the role of the cohort in establish group culture and norms, one of the elements under the impactful factors. Individuals within the large effect size group discussed the cohort community as vulnerable and willing to share, core elements of developing interpersonal trust, while acknowledging the inherent difficulties involved. Participants within the negative effect size and no effect size groups discussed a culture that was primarily critical and closed off, approaches that negatively impacted the ability to develop interpersonal trust.

Classroom. Participants discussed the classroom as the complex manifestation of dynamics, history, and learning, and a relationship in and of itself. The classroom was discussed not as a space, but a set of pre-negotiated relationships and responses coming into contact with other students, with the cohort, or with faculty. For Jackie, the same sense of questioning and cynicism carried out throughout the classes she took (Table 12, 3). Outside of mentioning not having his identities affirmed by his cohort or in the classroom, John made no mention of the classroom. Henry reported the sense of openness

and vulnerability that existed in the classroom of which he took advantage. The exception was Austin, who spoke little of his cohort experience and the classroom. Whether the participants demonstrated a negative effect, no effect, or large effect size in intercultural learning progress, it was clear that classroom relationships did not exist in a vacuum but were inextricably connected to the influential relationships discussed earlier as well as other impactful factors.

Table 12

Emergent Theme: Influential Relationships

	Negative Effect	No Effect	Large Effect
1. Supervisor			
	I think being supervised by [my supervisor] was one of, really, the most transformative experiences for me…be able to identify the things that have been really impactful for me throughout the program, whether that's the academic side or the assistantship side. And through their probing and their questions and ethic of care, I was able to kind of grow and be comfortable.	Honestly, I think the most meaningful relationship I built throughout my two years in my assistantship was with my supervisor. And there were some real conversations about "if you [John] bring things up to me [the supervisor] in a way that you're not trying to be rude or mean but you actually are genuinely trying to care about me, I'm willing to engage with you".	Having a supervisor that had very, very different identities from me and someone who was also incredibly open and was willing to be vulnerable in spaces and share her narrative, I think for me had a huge impact because I never had a supervisor someone like that before. - Jack [She] was able to both hold the fact that I was in it, and was willing to engage and keep trying with the fact that I was fucking up – Henry
2. Cohort			
	I think that just being in community with people who were real…were critical, and questioned everything, kind of adapted some of those coping mechanisms within myself to feel like I could thrive there.	I learned a lot about having self-confidence personally in my identities because, being a biracial individual, I wasn't accepted in the white group in our classroom or the students of color group in our classroom, so	So the community of HESA grads was actually pretty vulnerable with one another and willing to share from their shared experiences…a lot of folks came in wanting to engage, I mean, in my HESA cohort. They did, and

			I very much was in this space where I wasn't accepted	sometimes they were pissed off that day, or hurt that day, or annoyed that day, but for the most part, they wanted to be in the work with each other as opposed to just in the work to shut shit down or not really communicate. – Henry
3. Classroom	I learned through the class that being in higher education and being in a graduate program really wasn't built for me, as a woman of color. And I think that was something that sometimes made me really angry. And also made me question things almost like-- made me question a lot of the decisions that were made, a lot of the-- I don't know, classes that we were in, and just being really, really, really, critical about them. I think that kind of morphed into cynicism a little bit.	I learned a lot of self confidence in my identities due to the fact that they were very much negated in the classroom space and outside of my assistantship.	I remember in class, there were some people that would just very vulnerably share from, like linking the content of the literature or whatever to their experience and I, by nature of being a student, was there in the room. There was nothing particularly curious about me [laughter] in that moment. It's just that person was willing to go there. And so I got to stay in it and listen. - Henry

Expectations and group norms. A willingness and openness to engage, build relationships, and commitment to learning encompassed a sense of expectations and group norms which participants believed to impact intercultural learning. Participants who were within the negative and large effect size groups both reported a sense of being open to every extent possible. For Marisabel, that openness and willingness was primarily present for individuals who shared similar subordinated identities as she did, while for Henry and Jack, it was a sense of openness and willingness to share in spite of the identity differences that existed (Table 13, 1a). Similar patterns emerged with respect to relationship building for participants. Marisabel discussed building relationships with cohort members as a process of choosing the right side so as to not lose whatever relationship existed while Jack and Henry discussed it as a process of building trust through sharing, which has sustained relationships long term (Table 13, 1b). A shared commitment and expectation regarding intercultural learning had the potential to ground the group and establish group norms. Both Austin and Henry, participants within the large effect size group, discussed their commitment and desire to learn across difference (Table 13, 1c). On the other hand, Marisabel conceptualized learning as a process of becoming comfortable with herself and exploring the ways she was impacted (Table 13, 1c). John, who was within the no effect size group, did not discuss expectations and group norms as an impactful factor, which aligns with his expressed level of disconnection he experienced with his cohort related to his identity. While no formal process was named for communicating and establishing expectations and group norms, participants within the large effect size group provided positive and successful examples for this.

Working in diverse and representative teams. Participants identified the social identity make-up of staff at assistantship sites as an impactful factor. Henry and Marisable, both of whom worked for the same unit, reported working on very diverse teams (Table 13, 2a). This is a notable fact, given that Henry and Marisabel were a part of the large effect and negative effect size group respectively. Moreover, Austin and Jack, both within the large effect group, reported working in units that were somewhat representative and had significant interaction with diverse students as a part of their work (Table 13, 2a). John reported working with a predominantly racially homogenous staff and student body (Table 13, 2a). Having diverse teams increased the likelihood that participants would openly discuss and engage in intercultural learning. Marisabel reported engaging in conversations around difference (Table 13, 2b) similar to Henry and Jack's conversations, again representing similar experiences despite their different effect size group. Working in a diverse team was not the same as engaging across difference, which was critical for intercultural learning. Engaging in conversations around differences was role modeled, practiced, and reinforced by the assistantship site. The extent and approach of the individual participant was highly influenced by their experience. Marisabel shared on a number of occasions that she took part in many opportunities and discussing exploring difference. A nuanced analysis of her experiences further explored later, demonstrates that much of her engagement of difference revolved around experiences with folks who shared marginalized identities; for examples her referencing affinity groups which functions differently based on dominant or subordinate identities (Table 13, 2b). For John, engaging across difference at his predominantly white assistantship site was a self-directed effort that positioned him as the individual

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responsible for introducing the issue, assuring him that the topic would be approached in a manner that made the unit leader by code switching, and placing the responsibility on him to facilitate the conversation with his colleagues (Table 13, 2b). Austin, Henry and Jack belonged to teams that openly engaged difference openly, similarly to Marisabel (Table 13, 2b). Working in diverse and representative teams that did or did not engaged in conversations about difference, impacted how participants themselves navigated such conversations, which in turn, informed the depth of engagement that occurred.

Formal opportunities to engage. Providing opportunities to engage in conversations regarding difference formally supported intercultural learning for participants. John discussed the lack of formal opportunities provided during his experience (Table 13, 3). Again, Henry and Marisabel both had access to formal opportunities to engage, albeit different outcomes. The data suggests that the depth of engagement and topics discussed during formal opportunities are important variables as well.

Table 13

Emergent Theme: Impactful Factors

		Negative Effect	No Effect	Large Effect
1.	Expectations and group norms			
	a. openness and willingness to engage	I think that through operating through my identities, I was trying to understand as much as I can. And for those that I had similar identities, it was more so, "Let's build a relationship that's authentic and we can build some sort of solidarity, given that our experiences are outliers in this context of being in a PWI. So I think that those were relationships that I treasured a lot.		And despite the fact that our identities are very different, I feel like we can go at each other and talk pretty openly about anything, and I feel like I'm not going to be judged. - Jack I remember in class, there were some people that would just very vulnerably share from, like linking the content of the literature or whatever to their experience. - Henry
	b. building relationship	If there was someone that I truly cared about, and cared about their well-being and what they going through, if I didn't choose their side, I was against them and who they were as a person. And I think that that dynamic created almost like an internal-- like I		folks, carried all very different identities and different cultural backgrounds…talking about a lot and sharing stories and the ability to building relationships with them was critical– Henry

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had to choose - even though that was the last thing that I wanted to do

c. expectations and commitment to learning

Being supervised by [this person] was one of, really, the most transformative experiences for me…[to] be able to identify the things that have been really impactful for me throughout the program, whether that's the academic side or the assistantship side. And through their probing and their questions and ethic of care, I was able to kind of grow and be comfortable

There was a lot of optimism to begin with, when it came to our assistantship and having conversations across difference. But then going into our second year, people are just kind of tired of it all

I felt like I had that level of comfort and trust with some of my peers, that I became and I'm still very close with – Jack

I made a consistent effort to learn, and learn from different people, and hearing other people's stories, and learning that way. – Austin

But then the other thing is like I wanted it. I knew that I didn't know much. I wanted to figure somethings out. - Henry

2. Working on diverse teams				
a. Socio-demograp hic make-up of work place	We are, for the most part, folks of color who are experiencing Green Mountain State University, being in a predominantly white institution, together	I was surrounded by a predominantly white staff, predominantly white students…I had one other person of color on our staff [who] chose to pursue other opportunities.	I think one thing I really loved about my assistantship was that we were so intentional in terms of staffing like trying to get a really diverse mix of students and not just talking about race or sexual orientation and abilities, socioeconomic status, religion. – Jack	
			At my assistantship site, most of them were white. We're talking about a racial identity. And my supervisor was queer, so that's also something I didn't know until I got there. half [of] my assistantship was focusing on working with students [that had an] identity that I shared and [the other half] most of the students were white. I think there were twelve of us, and probably three POCs. – Austin	
b. work place engagem	I remember when we would have affinity spaces, and the sort of conversations that came from	I engaged with a lot of intellectual difference…my [unit leader] at the time didn't have	I would say especially if we're bringing up sort of current event, people will have different	

ent of cultural differences	that whether it's supervising students of color that are kind of struggling being themselves in a PWI or supervising white students who kind of have a sense of entitlement	any of that engagement or that understanding, so there was a lot of clashing of ideas and trying to understand how to engage with that difference and almost coalition build at that point.	opinions about it. We talked about it during staff meetings, so it was in a structured time, but there were also informal times where we talked about current events, but like I said before, there weren't that many differing opinions…I would say most of it came informally, just by talking with my coworkers. I don't think there was any formal setting that we talked about identities, or our differences, or yeah. – Austin
	Having a supervisor that understood me at that level was pretty wonderful.	There were some real conversations about, "If you bring things up to me in a way that you're not trying to be rude or mean but you actually are genuinely are trying to care about me, I'm willing to engage with you in that conversation."	
		And once we had that conversations we really were able to talk about some different things and talk about how my world-- like sharing my worldview with that individual	Created space for me to talk a little bit more about myself and understanding who I am and how I interact and work with other people. In terms of learning about other individuals and beyond my supervisor, I think that when we were doing trainings, we spent a lot of time trying to figure out particularly from a diversity and a social justice standpoint – Jack

			The team that I was a part of, they espoused a framework for communicating and just building relationships that, I think laid some groundwork - Henry
c. individuals engagement of cultural differences	I think that mostly marginalized identities, and they happened with graduate students, with professionals within the assistantship… a lot of the books that I did the most learning from were teaching with a more marginalized worldview…I don't think our identities operate in silos but I don't know. I think there was a lot more validity overall in these experiences coming from marginalization and a place of impact	I think one-on-one conversations, walking to places, things along those lines, allowed us to engage in some conversation and talk about differing worldviews.

I code switch a lot, so I was surrounded by a predominantly white staff, predominantly white students, so I code switched a lot to that identity, and it didn't feel

like I was engaging with difference a lot because I shared to say like half an identity with them, and it made it a lot less abrasive and a little bit more of a fluid of a transition. | But I think it came definitely in the informal setting while we just talked during lunch or just stopped by the office to talk. - Austin

[I] started to interrogate that the way that I was actually showing up for me when I came into contact with folks … coming up to GMSU and actually

communicating with folks that did things differently - Henry |

3. Formal opportunities to engage	That came up through the professional development that we had…definitely professional development opportunities that were offered during staff meetings. I mean, we had affinity spaces.	Other than our staff meetings I don't think they did exist. We didn't do any sort of [inaudible] practice type activities within our small staff, so I think unless it was a staff meeting where someone brought something up and we had conversations about it, those spaces didn't really exist. reflection was all individually driven. I didn't have any evaluations. I didn't have any reflective activities, things along those lines. A lot of my reflection came from the classroom when it was like, "Reflect on your experience in your assistantship," for a paper or for this different thing.	I think in those two years we had several maybe closer to five or six racial affinity spaces…there was scholarships that I was able to tap into. I was able to apply for a diversity scholarship where actually, I was exploring some spirituality questions in regards to faith on what feels like a secular campus. Diversity trainings that were very expansive" - Henry

Awareness of complex social positioning. Participants shared the thought that intercultural learning was enhanced when opportunities to engage incorporated specific concepts or topics. Among them, an awareness of complex social positioning referring to the ability to name the social identities held by the individual as a means for self-awareness and self-learning. Understanding how social power is constructed, which groups or identities are afforded said power, referred to as the dominant identities, and which are excluded, or marginalized identities, was discussed as a foundational and critical concept supporting intercultural learning. All participants were able to identify social identities (Table 14, 1a). Complexity in social positioning refers to one's ability to acknowledge and name both dominant and subordinate identities that most people hold. Across effect size groups, it was clear that participants within the large effect size group all named both dominant and subordinated group, with the exception of Henry who carried predominantly dominant identities (Table 14, 1a). John named both social identities and personal affiliations, such as belonging to a fraternity (Table 14, 1a). Marisabel exclusively named subordinated identities (Table 14, 1a). Participants' awareness of their own complex social positioning directly connected to the amount of self-work and learning that occurred, including a level of awareness about the identities held. Self-work and learning around marginalized identities included opportunities, not readily available, to honor, celebrate, learn, explore, and share aspect of one's identities not always valued within a given social construct for the purposes of intercultural learning. Self-work and learning with respect to dominant identities carried the responsibility to fully understand, explore, name, and unpack the implications of holding the specific identity, in addition to establishing patterns of engagement and self-

identification that are more inclusive. Participants with the awareness of their complex

social positioning who engaged in self-awareness and learning around both marginalized

and dominant identities happened to fall within the large effect size group. All three

groups engage their identities differently. Marisabel discussed not having many

opportunities to explore the dominant identities she held, while John discussed code-

switching as a biracial person and minimized his subordinate identities to ease any

challenges his identities might create between him and his colleagues (Table 14, 1b).

Henry discussed the differences in engaging both dominant and subordinate identities

while Austin discussed learning from international students and domestic students, as

someone who is international but reports being acculturated to the United States (Table

14, 1b). Participants' understanding of their complex social identity enabled them to

understand how their dominant identities impacted their experiences and those around

them, providing the opportunity to develop new skills and approaches as a part of their

intercultural learning. Henry, fully cognizant of his dominant identities, discussed his

responsibility to understand and interpret when cultural differences were at play, rather

than placing the responsibility on others (Table 14, 1c). John was aware of his dominant

identities and the privileges it afforded him, but did not discuss skills or adaptive

strategies that were inclusive (Table 14, 1c). Marisabel resorted to minimizing her

dominant identities and finding commonalities that allowed her to connect (Table 14, 1c).

Intersectionality, the concept of multiple social identities being ever present in our life

experiences was discussed by both Marisabel and Jack (Table 14, 1d). Both participants

discussed the role of intersectionality with respect to their complex social awareness as a

method of minimizing or not focusing on the dominant identities held, indicating some value in first exploring identities singularly.

Taking risks. Risk taking, highly dependent on established positive group norms and expectations and role modeled within influential relationships, provided participants to engage their intercultural learning at a deeper lever. Henry, Jack, and Marisabel discussed the humility and vulnerability witnessed as supervisors and members of their team openly navigated work place challenges and dynamics (Table 14, 2a). John referenced the conditions and rules of engagement for discussing uncomfortable and new topics at his assistantship site (Table 14, 2a). With respect to risk taking, participants did not always emulate what was role modeled at their assistantship site. For the most part, participants were willing to take risks, albeit by degrees. Marisabel shares her attempt to address an ongoing issue among her cohort, clearly understanding cultural differences around conflict were at play (Table 14, 2b). Despite the attempt, her risk taking was not reciprocated. John, given his positionality as a student within the organization, was willing to take risks within his assistantship (Table 14, 2b). He often took responsibility for initiating conversations around difference in support of students and himself, despite the existing dynamics within his unit. Henry discussed his willingness to not simply listen but also engage and seek to understand and learn through follow up conversations with people who held different identities (Table 14, 2b).

Engaging different world views. Providing opportunities for participants to wrestle with new information through engaging different worldviews is an approach that encourages risk taking. Participants shared how they engage new information or perspectives and the outcomes. Marisabel was willing and open to hearing different

world views, but had little interest in shifting her approach or perspective (Table 14, 3a). For John, engaging different worldviews was not rooted in any intentional practice or opportunity and discussed with a sense of missing out on this during his experience (Table 14, 3a). Henry discussed engaging with a topic and hearing a completely different perspective than he was accustomed to and building a relationship with that individual (Table 14, 3a). Austin, Henry, and Jack, all of whom fell within the large effect size group, shared experiences of shifting their frame of reference and perspective as a result of engaging different world views (Table 14, 3a).

Summary. A mixed methods analysis identified a number of convergent and divergent findings. Most notable was the similarities in Henry and Marisabel experiences. Both participants took part in similar experiences that resulted in different intercultural learning outcomes. Their experiences differed drastically primarily around expectations, group norms and awareness of complex social positioning. Henry benefited from a set of group norms and expectation having to do with openness, willingness to engage, and commitment to learning despite the challenges. Relationship building was a shared value across the various facets of his HESA experience, the classroom, assistantship and the cohort. The group norms and expectations for Marisabel revolved around cynicism and questioning, with selective relationship building which negatively impacted in the interpersonal trust of the group. Moreover, formal intercultural learning opportunities that focused on exploring marginalized identities exclusively impacted Marisabel's awareness of her complex social identities and, in turn, her self-awareness and learning. On the other hand, the two participants identifying as racially white, received balanced opportunities to explore both dominant and subordinate identities if they possessed any.

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John, whose intercultural learning progress was within the no effect size group,

experienced similar dynamics as Marisabel with respect to expectation and group norms.

Additional influential relationships, formal opportunities to engage, and identity make-up

of his team significantly impacted John's depth of engagement. Among the five

participants, Austin's experiences, whose intercultural learning progress was within the

large effect size group, frequently did not align with the experiences and emergent

themes identified by other participants. The nature of Austin's assistantship vis-a-vis the

student populations he worked with, in conjunction with his identity as an international

student, meant that he was constantly engaging difference on multiple levels in all aspects

of his life. Pulling apart distinct aspects of his experiences proved difficult.

Table 14

Emergent Theme: Depth of Engagement

	Negative Effect	No Effect	Large Effect
1. Awareness of complex social positioning			
a. Awareness of the social identities held	Being a woman of color	A fraternity man A man A man of color	A white, cis, heterosexual man, able of body – Henry My whiteness, my queerness -Jack Being international, my queer identity, being a man of color -Austin
b. Understanding and exploration of dominant and marginalized identities	I think that definitely professional Development opportunities that were offered during staff meetings-- I mean, we had affinity spaces. Those were pretty amazing spaces for me to mostly talk about my subordinate ones. When it comes to dominant identities, I think that because of my, because most	I code switch a lot, so I was surrounded by a predominantly white staff, predominantly white students, so I code switched a lot to that identity, and it didn't feel like I was engaging with difference a lot because I shared to say like half an identity with them, and it made it a lot less	So for a lot of folks, the idea of an affinity space is one of healing, and it's one of being around folks that have a shared identity as you, and when you look around or when you ask around, you don't see many folks with shared identities. But this affinity space for someone with a dominant identity, that's the

of my marginalized identities are talked about, there wasn't really that many opportunities for me to talk about my dominant ones.

abrasive and a little bit more of a fluid of a transition.

beginning of some self-work and learning that is so important and necessary - Henry

Learning about different cultures as well because we did a lot of students that were
not just from China, not from the culture that I know. And being able to talk with them and learn about their culture, that was sort of part of the assistantship – Austin

c. Awareness of the implications of dominant identities	When it comes to the positionality piece of the supervision relationship, the way I kind of rationalized them were that, "Hey, I'm a student too, and I'm just navigating this just as much as you are." And I think that that kind of helped them feel a little bit more comfortable.	My identity as a man gave me a large amount of privilege compared to her identity as a woman. And within that we were both people of color, and it was really interesting to see that different dynamic where my identity as a cisgendered man matched my supervisor's and my program director's identity. So I was given a lot more freedom and access to succeed, to create, to think outside the box, while	Knowing that as a white, cis, heterosexual man, able of body, that I represented…at times, a lot of potential harm, and pain …I'd note those things. I'd pick up on them of that's different from my experience, but maybe what a sign, a meaning to it, maybe I would think maybe this has to do with our sexuality difference, maybe this has to do with our race difference. – Henry

		my counterpart wasn't necessarily given that same opportunity,	I think I spent a lot of time particularly in the earlier part of my HESA experience kind of focused on my queer identity and that aspect of me, and I think anytime there was
			a chance in the classroom to discuss or address identities with intersectionality, I think that was my most common go-to, my most commonly-used discussion piece, I guess. But I think as my HESA experience went on, I started to notice and experience how the intersection of my queerness with my whiteness and other aspects of my identities were what really kind of impacted my worldview…but now all of a sudden I need to think about how that shows up in spaces and how that impacts other people – Jack
d.	Understanding the limitations of	I think that because a lot of them [dominant identities] are invisible…I don't really-- I would have to think a little bit	I know that I have the dominant identities, but maybe I haven't done as much thinking about them, and I had all sorts of initial

one's frame of reference

more because I want to say that I don't remember really talking about them. I think that they came up intersectionality, when I did talk about my marginalized identities.

feelings and concerns about when do I say things, when do I not say things, but with all that initial stuff of not really understanding how to work with my own identities. - Henry

"Well, we're spending a lot of time talking about the individual identities but not talking about the intersection." And this individual and I really kind of went at it in conversation about, "Well, that's just your privilege, and you don't understand the power of the intersection because you've been so focused on" at that point my queerness and that being a really-- I was just using that as a form of victimization at times. I was like, "I'm queer. Everyone should feel bad for me," where I wasn't really identifying the fact that, "Wow. I'm a white male, and I'm able-bodied." – Jack

2. Taking risks

a. Risk taking and role modeling	I think that I realized really quickly that we were in a [work] community of people that were all trying to get their shit together, and we're all in the process of trying to do it as graciously as possible. And so I think there was a lot of realism that happened my first year, in just-- I think being more humble towards a field and giving the field more grace.	If you bring things up to me in a way that you're not trying to be rude or mean but you actually are genuinely are trying to care about me, I'm willing to engage with you in that conversation." And once we had that conversation we really were able to talk about some different things and talk about how my world-- like sharing my worldview	I think it was very entrusting to have a supervisor who had more marginalized identities than I did. And I noticed that a lot when we were in campus-wide meetings or things like that, and then we would be debriefing afterwards…how people would perceive her as a being a woman of color. – Jack
		Within the assistantship in itself there was only one student affairs professional advocating for that, so it was a voice that wasn't heard all the time.	Sometimes folks who just sort of said, "I'm done with you. I don't want to be around you." And I understood why they would do that. I understood to the best I could. I was like, Okay. I wouldn't want to be around someone who just keeps negatively impacting me and microagressing me or whatever… but the majority of the time, I saw examples in my supervisors of who came to GMSU with the interest of talking about social justice and learning about identities so that

				majority of the time they didn't feel like they had arrived, they were learning from each other, and they had their own meetings where they would talk about things – Henry
b.	Participants willingness to take risks	"What is going on between-- what is going on between you and the rest of the graduate students? Because there's obviously something that's going on." And I think that through those conversations, he talked about a lot of trauma and oppression that's	It was really interesting to engage with him [unit leader] from such a privileged perspective and where his current identities lie without any understanding of social justice or inclusion...him and I were, after I think the first year in my assistantship,	Through the assistantship, I was constantly, constantly, every day engaging across racial difference that little things that would help to learn about… and so I don't tend to leave just like a, "Oh, okay."
		going on. And I think that although we had different ways of going about conflict and explaining why we go about-- why we go about different…he kind of just, oh, what's that word, he kind of just withdraws and doesn't like to talk about it, and just wants to keep moving forward and graduate and that's it… And so people would just	we were able to really build a strong connection and challenge each other and push each other to be better professionals, better people, and better scholars…our staff meetings and individual conversations, there was that space that was created to say, "I'm going to put this out there and it might be wrong and it	And not ask a follow up or what I think to be maybe a thoughtful follow up question, just to have the conversation. I was willing to be super, super honest with me to go there, and I was trying to learn, and I fucked it up, I'm sure. – Henry

		rather not engage than work toward something.	might fail, but I'm here to learn, and that's okay."	
3. Engaging different world views				
	a. Wrestling with different perspectives	Operating through my identities, I was trying to understand as much as I can. And for those that I had similar identities. Well, let's just agree to disagree, and everything's going to be okay. We can go about things differently and we'll both be successful." And so, yeah, they got that sense even in class where it's just kind of like, "Yeah, we're just different. And I'm not going to mess with you, and you're not going to mess with me." So yeah.	I think a lot of what the difference that I engaged with was happenstance and a lot of it wasn't meaningful. I think the people who are really leaning into the conversation and having intentional conversations about engaging with cultural difference weren't a part of my experience.	I'm from a town where one black man was killed by a police officer… and I remember sitting across from someone that I was becoming close with…and the two of us talking about that in the middle of RA training, and never had I ever had a conversation to that gravity, to share affinity with …another black man in regards to this.
	b. Shifting or taking on a new perspective	I remember other grad students in RET who had a different way of communicating, different way of engaging, or even understanding a lot of the stuff that was happening in the classroom. But I think that when		Learning about different cultures as well because we did a lot of students that were not just…from the culture that I know. And being able to talk with them and learn about their culture, that was sort of part of the assistantship –

it came to engaging through that difference, there were a lot of other dynamics that were at play that kind of-- I don't know, shut me down to having those conversations.

Austin And I think there's this perception from my opinion that a lot of international students have money and don't need financial aid or support or are struggling. And I think that narrative was really turned upside down for me or that perception when we had a couple students who were…international amongst our team. – Jack

Her willingness to share honestly, me, willingness to share honestly and also think about I wonder why that difference occurs and why it's like that and then ultimately connecting those dots for myself of, "Seems like there's something going on here in regards to our identities…" - Henry

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Summary of Findings

This study sought to understand the intercultural learning experiences of HESA students at assistantship site according to magnitude of developmental orientation. The case-selection variant explanatory sequential design highlighted critical connections among both quantitative and qualitative findings. Specifically, the study found that, across assistantship sites, intercultural learning was dictated by the three themes: influential relationships, impactful factors, and depth of engagement. All participants, despite where they fell along the magnitude of developmental change grouping, explicitly or implicitly confirmed what supported or detracted from their intercultural learning. The individuals and relationships that most influenced intercultural learning were supervisors, the cohort, and the classroom space. The settings and grounding factors that impacted intercultural learning included working on a diverse team, having established group norms and expectations and having the opportunity to formally engage in conversations about difference and social justice. Participants also discussed the depth of engagement as a firm awareness of their complex social positioning, a willingness to take risks, and an openness to explore different world views. It is important to note that all three themes function as interconnected variables supporting intercultural learning.

Conceptual Framework Revisited

The conceptual framework for this study outlined the interconnected process of intercultural learning and development. Explored throughout the study, the conceptual framework begins by assuming that all carry an existing set of intercultural disposition

and skills. The framework, rooted in the literature review, conceptualized the HESA experience as consisting, or not, of intercultural learning opportunities that introduced any level of challenge and support for a learner. Intercultural learning opportunities were rooted in Sorrels' (1993) Intercultural Praxis model and challenge and support was rooted in Bennett's (2009) Challenge and Support grid. At the conclusion of the study, the findings both outline additional areas requiring explicit attention and support components of the theoretical underpinnings of the study.

At best, there is an implied assertion that engaging in intercultural learning requires a level of connection and commitment. What this study outlined was the importance for a clear and explicit commitment and expectation to learning. Moreover, it was critical to incorporate relationship and community prior to engaging content. This body of work was identified as integral foundational components necessary to support intercultural learning. Incorporating these elements sets up expectations and culture of inquiry, one of the entry points outlined in Sorrells' (1993) Intercultural Praxis Model. It also solidifies that intercultural learning is an ongoing and interconnected process requiring synergy and dynamic collaboration amongst facilitators. Specific to this study, synergy was required among site supervisors, faculty, and program administrators. The study reaffirmed the interconnectedness among the entry points outlined in Sorrell's (1993) Intercultural Praxis model. Participants of the study consistently identified the importance of framing and positioning as critical for deeper levels of awareness, understanding, and necessary for intercultural growth. Framing, referring to one's capacity to shift perspectives globally and locally, and positioning, referring to the examination of social constructs of inclusion and exclusion, were not only critical for

deeper levels of awareness, they also served as a pathway for more meaningful dialogue, yet another entry point in Sorrells' (1993) model. Participants who progressed in their intercultural competence discussed a genuine desire to learn and engage those who were different than themselves and a willingness to have their worldview changed and challenged, all of which are the principles that define inquiry. Understanding that learning is intrapersonal as much as it is interpersonal, those who engage in reflection, for the purposes of shifting their perspective and approach, also experience a large effect size in their intercultural competence progression. One of the entry points not explicitly discussed was action. In fairness, the interview protocol focused on action the least and it is possible this was missed in the analysis.

Bennett's (2009) Challenge and Support grid outlines a balance between process and content challenge intended to mitigate risk so as to encourage an appropriate level of risk taking and exposure that promotes learning and stretching preconceived notions but does not cause the individual to retreat out of fear or defensiveness. As stated earlier, incorporating relationship and community building prior to engaging content minimized defensiveness and fear. In fact, it encouraged levels of risk taking, and it should be noted that risk taking was identified as a code under the depth of engagement theme. The level of intentional relationship building was a factor in addition to the balance between process and content challenge, where learners either develop skills, develop knowledge, rests, or disengage. In the study, those with little opportunities to engage in high content or process challenge remained within the resting stage outlined in the model and this was reflected in their intercultural growth.

For Marisabel, the consistent focus on the topic of race and gender introduced high content challenge. However, the process challenge, depending on the setting, involved facilitation strategies that resulted in knowledge acquisition or withdrawing from the learning process. For example, in the classroom, the learning strategies employed often resulted in high levels of frustration and disappointment, whereas in her assistantship, her participation in activities like affinity group often provided her opportunities to learn more about herself and about race and racism. What was not present in her experiences were opportunities to discuss topics that contextually were less challenging, but never the less support her intercultural learning. Engaging topics that positioned her within the dominant group was not an opportunity afforded to her. As a result, the capacity to develop key intercultural skills were impacted.

For Henry, holding predominantly dominant identities, the content and process challenges were often high, yet as a learner they did not withdraw despite his intercultural capacity entering the HESA program, according to the IDI. Curiosity and risk taking were abundantly present in their experiences. This begs the question: what was different in his experience? Did the influential relationships identified in this study encourage curiosity and risk taking or was it the overwhelmingly dominant identities held which carries the privilege of encouraging risk taking with little or minimal consequences. Might it have been a combination of these factors that supported such risk taking and curiosity which yielded such significant intercultural development?

Jack, who was encouraged and at times pushed to explore both dominant and subordinate identities, openly discussed the difficulty in not focusing on their primary subordinated identity. This introduced content challenge and meant that he fluctuated

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between acquiring knowledge and developing skills. This was reflected in the intercultural growth observed by these participants. Based on Austin's background and the nature of his work there was a constant shift between the levels of process and content challenge. As someone who identified as international, Austin spent half of his time working with a student who shared similar identities as he did, and the other half working with students who were completely different. Bennett's (2009) Challenge and Support Grid outlining a developmental approach for supporting learning was reaffirmed by triangulating participants' narrative and effect size grouping.

Connection Among Themes

The three emergent themes identified (a) influential relationships, (b) impactful factors, and (c) depth of engagement were not stand-alone findings but rather interconnected variables with the possibility to positively support intercultural learning (Figure 6). Influential relationships were foundational to intercultural learning as it provided opportunities for supervisors to role model engagement and learning and allowed participants to develop a sense interpersonal trust among the cohort. Group norms and expectations, working in diverse teams and formal opportunities to engage constitute impactful factors for intercultural learning. The foundation laid by influential relationships increased the likelihood of participants to establish group norms and expectations for intercultural learning, which could be tested at their assistantship sites through working within diverse teams and engaging in formal intercultural learning opportunities. Effective role modeling, interpersonal trust, and established expectations around learning tested at the assistantship site then encouraged deeper levels of engagement. Depth of engagement as a theme embodied the entry points outlined on

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Sorrells' (2013) Intercultural Praxis Model. The research suggests the importance and intentional focus needed on influential relationships and impactful factors, before and as a means to engage in intercultural praxis. Above all else, the first two themes influenced depth of engagement. Foundational work around influential relationships and impactful factors can provide participants the appropriate level of support, expectations, and trust needed to engage deeply. The importance of this relationship held true across assistantship and effect size groupings outlined in this mixed methods study.
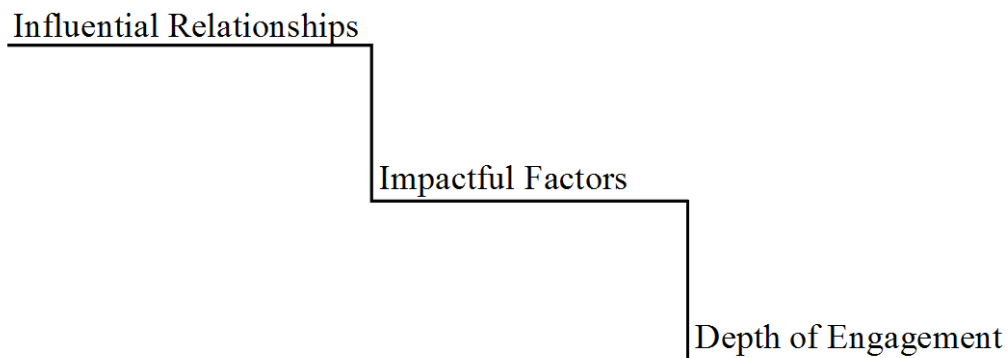
Influential Relationships

Impactful Factors

Depth of Engagement

Figure 6. Connections Among Themes

Divergent Findings

When grouped by effect sizes, many of the assistantship experiences followed patterns that logically supported the magnitude of change experienced by the participant. For example, participants who had formal opportunities to explore and unpack both dominant identities fell within the large effect size group, while those that did not reported either negative or no effect size. However, Austin's experience did not align so neatly into the emergent themes. Austin reported no formal opportunities to engage and also rarely mentioned his relationship with his cohort as an influencing relationship that

supported his intercultural learning, a drastic difference from his counterparts who fell within the large effect size group. What Austin did reference consistently was his experience as an international student. His identity as an international student and his unique assistantship experience meant that Austin was constantly engaging in intercultural learning. An area for further study would be to explore intercultural learning of international HESA students and exploring the juxtaposition against U.S. domestic students.

Sub-theme Findings

Supervisory relationships were lauded despite providing what they needed or did not. In the process of unpacking the impactful factors and depth of engagement, participants shared experiences that positively or negatively influenced their intercultural learning. While these influences were quite clear, supervisory relationships were labeled as positively transformative whether or not they provided the intercultural learning opportunities that positively impacted progress. This is understandable due to the multifaceted nature of supervisory relationships, which are not singularly focused on intercultural learning. In fact, supervisory relationships can support growth in development in many ways, learning the profession, finding one's voice, etc. What was clear in discussions with participants is the level of deference and trust that exists within supervisory relationships. What was also clear is the level on influence supervisors had on both impactful factors and depth of engagement around intercultural learning. Given the preparatory nature of HESA programs and influence of these relationships, supervisors have a responsibility to intentionally address factors that impact HESA

student engagement and provide meaningful opportunities that pushes students to engage at a deeper level.

Despite the importance placed in interpersonal trust and its far-reaching impact into the work place and classroom, participants did not discuss any intentional efforts or experiences set in place to establish and support the development of trust. The development of interpersonal trust for participants relied on the disposition, attitudes, and abilities of cohort members, which varied year by year. Given the importance and influence of interpersonal trust in establishing cooperation in the learning process, creating opportunities and reinforcing this concept with consistency in all aspects of a student's experience was deemed foundational. Deardorff's (2006) work also highlighted notions of cooperation among the various markers of intercultural competence. Given the importance placed on trust and cooperation, the definition of transformative intercultural development and learning provided earlier now includes: (a) trust and cooperation; (b) patience; (c) deep self-awareness; (d) active listening; (e) openness; (f) curiosity; (g) tolerance for ambiguity; (h) empathy; and (i) flexibility. Establishing trust and cooperation among the cohort would require collaboration and clarity across the major parts of the HESA experience to include the classroom, the cohort, and assistantship sites.

For participants, the classroom was more than a space, but an extension of a complex relationship that bound within a broader HESA experience. This presents a challenge and a transformative opportunity. The challenge is the interconnected impact, for example, of a supervisory that frames and contextualizes learning across difference in a manner that is safe and does not involve taking risks. Or conversely, a classroom space where trust is not built or nurtured and risk taking does not stretch the learning

relationship of cohort members, but rather breaks the learning relationship. In the first scenario, you could fathom a classroom dynamic where risk taking does not occur, therefore impacting the learning happening in the classroom, while in the latter example, you would experience an assistantship dynamic where students are participating in professional development diversity session where members of the unit are engaging in deep and vulnerable sharing but students are more reserved based on an underlined fear and lack of trust for one another. The opportunity exists for working relationships, educational intervention, and group development opportunities that are integrated, collaborative, flexible, and responsive.

Expectations and group norms related to learning varied greatly across cohort groups, assistantship site, and supervisors. Absent a clearly articulated expectations and group norms around being open and willing to engage in difficult conversations, relationship and trust building, and an explicit commitment to learning across differences, participants replicated approaches role modeled for them to the best of their capacity or relied on what was familiar or comfortable with little guidance or direction. In essence, it was not clear how to engage in intercultural learning. Once again, the capacities and disposition of individual cohort members resulted in establishing expectations and group norms that encouraged intercultural learning. Clear expectations and established group norms provide a framework for how to engage and if reinforced consistently, allows members to engage in the acknowledged and explicitly stated messiness and complexity that is intercultural learning with enough flexibility to pull back when necessary, rather than pulling away completely. At its best, participants flourished when a clear expectation for engaging across cultural differences existed in conjunction with an

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articulated commitment to collective learning within the cohort that is reinforced across all aspects the students experienced.

Being a part of diverse and representative teams and participating in formal opportunities to engage cultural differences impacted intercultural learning. Participants working at assistantship sites that were homogenous with respect to social identity perpetuated a dynamic where individuals holding marginalized identities absorbed the responsibility of addressing and representing the perspectives and needs of non-dominant communities or employed assimilation strategies as a survival mechanism. Moreover, students working at such assistantship sites sought out informal opportunities to engage in intercultural learning. Additionally, assistantship sites consisting of diverse team members did not guarantee the opportunity for intercultural learning. The impact on intercultural learning was rather nuanced. While a diverse team increased opportunity for intercultural learning, formal opportunities that encouraged and explored cultural differences was a critical part of equation. A diverse team increased the likelihood of mutual learning across difference and multiple perspectives rather than delegating expertise to one or a few individuals holding marginalized identities. Formal opportunities encouraged intercultural learning when clear expectations and opportunities existed for navigating both dominant and non-dominant identities at separate times. For members holding multiple marginalized identities, intercultural learning required the right balance existed between affirmation and affinity of marginalized identity, and critical exploration of dominant identities. Conversely, intercultural learning for individuals with multiple dominant identities was impacted by the opportunity to critically explore their dominance.

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A foundational concept supporting intercultural learning was the balance between exploring and naming parts of one's social identities often marginalized and identifying social identities held which are often not thought of or critically examined given the assumption of superiority. The capacity to name both dominant and subordinate identities was fundamental as this level of awareness carried a sense of opportunity, not always available, to honor, celebrate, and explore marginalized identities and the responsibility to fully understand, explore, and unpack dominant identities. Awareness of complex social positioning as a concept inherently introduced challenges and support requiring a level of risk taking that allowed participants to engage in intercultural learning.

While awareness involved a level of self-knowledge, risk taking was necessary in order to engage in deep self-exploration, learning, and growing about yourself and others after acquiring such knowledge. Taking risks was a conscious decision to lean on and bend the sense of interpersonal trust among the cohort and willingly place yourself in a position to learn about aspects of self not previously discovered. Similar to the concept of awareness of complex social positioning, taking risks was as much about self-learning as it was about learning or teaching others. Participants benefited from seeing vulnerability and risk-taking role modeled by peers and supervisors. It was clear that intercultural learning was influenced when opportunities to take risks were intentionally and explicitly afforded to participants.

A way to encourage and provide opportunities for risk taking was through explicitly engaging different worldviews. Given our human instinct to seek safety and comfort, more often than not, participants did not seek out these opportunities. Engaging different worldviews is the collective responsibility of assistantship sites, supervisors, the

cohort group, and the classroom space and requires prior attention be given to impactful factors which can inadvertently result intercultural breakdowns rather than learning. Engaging different worldviews most often referred to demographic and social identities rooted in U.S. culture. Missing was the ability to shift perspectives and engage across global or international differences.

Recommendations

The mixed methods design of this study yielded quantitative and qualitative findings which lend themselves to numerous recommendations. However, the most substantive recommendations were derived from the mixed methods findings that considered all collected and analyzed data strands. The primary recommendations include (a) intentional cohort development, (b) assistantship guides that outline standards and best practices, and (c) clearly articulate learning goals, expectations, definitions, and approaches towards intercultural learning

Intentional cohort development facilitated by individuals with the skills and capacity to support in substantive relationship building would remove the variability that existed among cohorts. Cohorts reported that oversight for relationship building, expectation setting, and learning was identified in large part as a process overseen by students, with little intentionality, inconsistent support and guidance, and often limited skills to do so. Creating opportunities to develop and reinforce interpersonal trust is foundational to building cooperation in the learning process, and requires consistent reinforcement in all aspects of a student's HESA experience.

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Closely connected to international cohort development, clearly articulated learning goals, expectations, definitions, and approaches towards intercultural learning delivered in a coordinated manner solidified cultural underpinnings of the program and provides a metaphoric north start that supports navigating the learning experience. This requires intentional coordination between faculty, program coordinators, assistantship site providers, and supervisors to support the intercultural growth of students. Part of the coordination includes understanding the work, training, lessons, class assignments, dynamics of the cohort, and workplace dynamics students encounter. This promoted synergy across the experience and allows for cognitive dissonance, conflicting approaches, and disagreements to be engaged in a many that supports the student's development. Intercultural learning was best experienced when the coordination mentioned above was present.

The assistantship experience was at the heart of this study, and as such the findings led to substantive recommendations. Broadly, establishing assistantship guides outlining standards and best practices for supporting and developing students, specifically around intercultural competence development, would align what seems to be ill defined, unarticulated, conflicting, and sometimes absent understanding of intercultural development. Specifically, assistantship guides should (a) outline the impact and importance of diverse teams on, among other things, the intercultural development individuals within the unit, (b) discuss the role of self-awareness and development of unit leaders' or supervisors' own intercultural competence, and (c) expect that unit and sites develop explicit and formal opportunities to engaging in intercultural learning across difference.

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Given the preparatory nature of HESA programs and influence of the relationships at assistantship site, most notably the supervisory relation, supervisors play a critical role in support intercultural learning of aspiring professionals. The supervisor or unit leader capacity or willingness, or lack thereof, to work across difference due to either not understanding the value of doing so, lacking the capacity to support engaging across difference, or outright hostility towards engaging across difference impacts the intercultural development of others. Supervisors and sites best support HESA students' intercultural development when the capacity exists to understand the appropriate balance between challenge and support that is developmentally focused rather than on perceived need.

Finally, the research recommends developing intercultural learning opportunities that are developmentally appropriate and account for the nuance of complex social positioning. To summarize, Complexity in social positioning refers to one's ability to acknowledge and name both dominant and subordinate identities that most people hold. Self-work and learning look different between dominant and marginalized identities. Self-work and learning around marginalized identities included opportunity to learn, explore, honor, and celebrate, and share aspect one's identities not always valued within a given social construct for the purposes of intercultural learning. Self-work and learning with respect to dominant identities carried the responsibility to fully understand, explore, name, and unpack the implications of holding such identity and understanding and how dominant identities impact their experiences and those around you.

For members holding multiple marginalized identities, intercultural learning required a balance exists between affirmation and affinity of marginalized identity, and

critical exploration of dominant identities. Conversely, intercultural learning for individuals with overwhelmingly dominant identities was required the opportunity to critically and substantively explore their dominance.

Future Research

The explicit focus of this study was to examine changes in the intercultural competence development of HESA students, as assessed by the Intercultural Development Inventory, in order to purposefully explore how intercultural learning was experienced across assistantship sites, using a mixed methods approach. Future research can focus on predictive analysis using pre- and post-IDI data of HESA students, but would require large enough sample sizes. Additionally, the three emergent themes, codes, and sub codes, which reflect many of the theoretical underpinnings of this study, should be tested, refined, and retested in different research sites.

Limitations of this Study

This study focused on the intercultural competence development and intercultural learning experiences of HESA students within a single institution. The case-selection variant of the explanatory sequential mixed methods design relied on the quantitative data strand to inform qualitative exploration. In this study quantitative data for 78 percent of the three cohorts studied was used in the quantitative data, offering a strong representative sample of HESA graduate between 2014 through 2018. Results from the quantitative analysis positioned participants within one of five effect size categories: (a) negative effect; (b) no effect; (c) small effect; (d) medium effect; and (e) large effect. Three of the five effect size categories were represented. The experiences and voices of

individuals within the small and medium effect sizes were not represented in the qualitative phase of the study, presenting an opportunity for further research.

The research focused on the recollection and experiences of participants that spanned across various spheres and spaces including the classroom and work sites. The analysis conducted and findings offered in this study can be misinterpreted as a program evaluation which may be perceived as a limitation by some. Given the variability uncounted for in all phases of this study, it is important for readers to center the stories shared by participants as the key unit of analysis providing insight into experiences that support intercultural learning.

Additional limitations to the study include the small sample size (N=33) of this study and its impact on quantitative analysis. The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) while reporting strong validity and reliability, can admittedly display inconsistent findings as a result of a recent life-altering cultural experience. Furthermore, there are many variables that influence intercultural learning and development not explored in this study. Specifically, the classroom curriculum, instructors, institutional factors, and U.S. socio-political climate were among the many variables not explicitly explored.

Despite stated limitations, the insights provided from this study could have only been possible using mixed methodological. A quantitative study would have identified a magnitude of progress but given the small n sample size, few additional analyses would be conducted. While the magnitude of change would be identified, the stories and meaning behind these changes would be missing if this study was situated only within the quantitative research tradition. Conversely, had this study taken place as purely qualitative, we would have gathered rich stories and experiences, but missed the

opportunity to contextualize and refine the meaning and experiences shared. In other words, we would not have understood and connected the gradations of the identified themes in relationship to effect size groups. The nuanced findings of this study supported best practices rooted in theoretical concepts and also provided subtle shifts and enhancements to these practices.

Conclusion

As mentioned at the outset, today's college campus reflects the expansive societal and political ideology, tone, and sentiments of the times we live in. College campuses are complicated microcosms that aim to be the birthplace of learning, problem solving, and creativity. With such conflicting ideologies, varying values, and diversity or perspective and people, student affairs practitioners can best be of service if they acquire the attitudes and capacity to work across difference. Preparatory programs such as HESA play a critical role in equipping aspiring professionals with the tools needed to support today's students and universities. The HESA program at the Green Mountain State University with its explicit commitment towards social justice serves as an exemplary site to explore how intercultural learning occurs. The study revealed that students participating in this cohort model program experienced varying degree of progress in their intercultural learning. The complimentary and varied experiences of participants highlighted practices and variables that supported or inhibited progression of intercultural learning. It is my hope that this study, which enhanced and aligned with the theoretical underpinnings of this research, provides substantive and useful insights to aspiring student affairs practitioners, higher education faculty and program administrators, and current student affairs staff alike. It is my deepest desire that the lived experiences and narratives of

student affairs practitioners presented through a multitude of mediums, including formal

research like this one, enhances the commitment to access and justice and dedication to

student learning that grounds the profession.

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Appendix A: Invitation to Interview

Dear UVM HESA Alum:

I hope this email finds you in good spirits and energy. My name is Haley Clayton and I have served as the Associate Director for Assessment and Strategic Initiatives in the Department of Residential Life. Among my responsibilities, I manage multiple assessment projects and oversee data gathered by the department and division of student affairs. One the projects I manage is the Intercultural Development Inventory solicitation.

I am reaching out to share with you an impending dissertation study and to inquire about your interest in participating in the study. Rafael Rodriguez, a doctoral candidate for Educational Leadership and Policy, will be conducting interviews as part of a research project aimed at understanding the aspects of a HESA assistantship experience that support an individual's capacity to engage across cultural differences and similarities.

Should you choose to participate, you will be expected to participate in two (2) semi-structured interviews lasting around 60 minutes each. The first interview would include prepared questions Mr. Rodriguez will draw from, as well as follow-up questions related to what you share. The second interview will consist of reviewing your individualized pre and post IDI report with an opportunity to reflect on the information shared. The goal of the study is to understand what opportunities, activities, or events existed that helped develop your ability to engage across cultural. Interviews will occur via video conferencing, and audio will be recorded. The information will be kept confidential and pseudonyms will be used to protect the confidentiality of participants. All audio recordings of the interviews will be deleted after transcription. Likewise, any files linking your IDI results to you, including your IDI reports, will also be deleted after the analysis is conducted.

There is no compensation for participation, however, your insights could be a valuable addition to this research and the findings may help inform assistantship providers of helpful practices and experiences that can support intercultural skill and capacity development. Individuals participating in this study will be given a report of their IDI pre and post results.

The IDI data used in the first part of Mr. Rodriguez's study were de-identified and he does not have access to a master list that connects the data back to any participant. The researcher is interested in your participation in this study based on your assistantship site and IDI pre and post results. In an effort to protect the confidentiality of your information, I have been asked to reach out and present this opportunity. If you agree to participate, please reach out directly to Rafael Rodriguez via email at rrodrig1@uvm.edu. If you agree to participate, Mr. Rodriguez will forward me your email to confirm and

only then, will I share with him your name and the random identification number assigned to you in his data file. At this point, the researcher will be able to link IDI data he possesses to you as a participant.

Thank you for considering the opportunity to participate in this study.

Appendix B: Information Sheet

Title of Research Project: Transformative Preparation: Measuring the

Intercultural Competence Development of Higher

Education and Student Affairs (HESA) Students

and Exploring the Impact of Intercultural Praxis

Across Assistantship Sites

Principal Investigator: Rafael Rodriguez *M.Ed.*

Faculty Sponsor: Bernice Garnett, Sc.D.

Sponsor: College of Education and Social Services
University of Vermont

As you may recall, during your time in the Higher Education and Student Affairs (HESA) program you completed the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) twice; once upon entering the program, then again right before your graduation. As one of the Qualified Administers (QA) of the IDI, I either solicited or helped developed the IDI report for your cohort. You are being invited to take part in this research study because you are a graduate of the (HESA) program at the University of Vermont, Specifically, you are being invited to participate given your assistantship site and your individual pre and post IDI results.

Why is This Research Study Being Conducted?
This research is being conducted to explore components and experiences within your assistantship that influenced your capacity to engage across cultural differences and similarities, also known as intercultural competence.

How Many People Will Take Part In The Study?
Approximately 10 HESA alumni/ae/x spanning multiple years, cohorts, and assistantship sites will participate in interviews in this study.

What Is Involved In The Study?
If you agree to participate in the study, you will participate in two (2) 60-minute interviews. Information from your interview as well as from your ID results will be used in the analysis. During the first interview I will ask you questions pertaining to your assistantship experience and opportunities to engage in intercultural developmental

opportunities. You will be asked a variety of topics including your assistantship site, your world view, interactions with individuals who are different than you, and learning from cultural differences, to name a few. In the second interview, we will review your entering and exit Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) profiles and reflect on this information. The interviews will occur via video conferencing but will be audio-recorded for transcribing purposes. Following transcription, the audio recording will be destroyed

What Are The Benefits of Participating In The Study?
There may be no direct benefit to you for your participation; with the exception of reviewing and receiving a copy of your IDI report containing the results of the assessment. Additionally, participants may gain some insight about your learning and growth during your time in the HESA program. The information gained from this study may help inform assistantship providers of helpful practices and experiences that can support intercultural skill and capacity development.

What Are The Risks and Discomforts Of The Study?
In all research that involves identifiable private information, there is a risk of a breach of confidentiality. In this study, results from the IDI and/or responses provided during your interviews could be a risk to professional reputation, particularly for individuals still employed at the University of Vermont. The following steps will be taken to minimize the risk of a breach of confidentiality. IDI results utilized for the first phase of this research project has been stripped of your name and contact information and can only be connected to an individual participant if they agree to participate in the interview. I did not have access to a master list with your names or contact information prior to you receiving the solicitation email. Upon your agreeing to participate, I will email Haley Clayton, and share our email exchange email as proof of your willingness to participate. Ms. Clayton who holds the master list and stores it securely, will send me, via file transfer, your name and the random identification number assigned to you. With these two pieces of information, I am allowed to connect your IDI pre and post results to you for the purposes of the interviews. This information is kept on a local drive in an encrypted file. Despite our encryption and security efforts, the possibility exists for a breach of Ms. Clayton's master list or the file I possess containing your random identification number and name. During the interviews, you will be asked to provide a pseudonym for yourself, to be used in reporting findings. It is possible that some of the examples used or information reported could be recognized by individual familiar with you or your experiences.

Are There Any Costs?
There are no costs associated with this study other than your time.

What Is the Compensation?
There is no monetary compensation for participation in this study.

Can You Withdraw From This Study?

You may discontinue your participation in this study any time before the study is published. There are no consequences for discontinuing this study and will in no way impact your relationship with anyone at UVM. If you choose to discontinue your participation in this study, please send an email asking that you be removed from the study. All collected information including audio digital files will be deleted.

What About Confidentiality?

During the interviews, we will use a pseudonym of your choice to talk about you and your assistantship experience. When I transcribe the interviews, I will use the pseudonyms in the written record of the interview. After interviews are transcribed audio recordings will be deleted. Additionally, after all analysis is completed the master list held by Ms. Clayton, the document I possess containing your random identification number and name, and your IDI pre and post reports containing your results will also be deleted. Your name and cohort year will not be used in this study. The pseudonym you select will be used in any reports associated with this study.

Contact Information

You may contact Rafael Rodriguez, the investigator in charge of this study, at (646) 620-7502, for more information about this study. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in a research project or for more information on how to proceed should you believe that you have been harmed as a result of your participation in this study you should contact the Director of the Research Protections Office at the University of Vermont at 802-656-5040.

Statement of Verbal Consent

You have been given and have read a summary of this research study. Should you have any further questions about the research, you may contact the person conducting the study at the e-mail address and telephone number given below. Your participation is voluntary, and you may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty or prejudice.

If you agree to participate in this study, then please state "Yes, I agree to participate." This will be considered your verbal consent to take part of this research study.

Principal Investigator: Rafael Rodriguez
Physical Address: 406 South Prospect Street
                                Burlington VT, 05405
Email Address: Rafael.Rodriguez@uvm.edu
Telephone Number: (646) 620-7502

Faculty Supervisor: Bernice Garnett

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Physical Address: 539A Waterman
                          Burlington VT,05405
Email Address: Bernice.Garnett@uvm.edu
Telephone Number: (802) 656-3424

Appendix C: Pre-Interview Email

In a few days you will be participating in the first of two interviews measuring and exploring the intercultural development of HESA students across assistantship sites. Since the interviews will look back at your experiences several years ago, here are some questions to help provide context and focus our time together. In the section below, the term world view refers to the how you see, understand, engage, and navigate the world shaped by your life experience and the identities you hold.

Assistantship site information
1. Think social identities of the students you worked with at your assistantship
2. What were the social identities of your colleagues and peers at your HESA assistantships
3. How did their social identities differ from yours?
4. How did your identities shape your world view?
5. How did your world view differ from the world view of your students?
6. How did your world differ from the world view of your colleagues and peers?

Appendix D: Interview Protocol

Interview I

Introduction
- During your time in HESA, share some of your salient identities
  - *Probe:* How did they inform your world view?
- Describe the social identities of the students you worked with at your assistantship?
  - *Probe*: Describe the social identities of your staff and peers?

Inquiry *(desire and willingness to know, to ask, and to learn – curiosity)*
- Describe your interactions at your assistantship with those who held different world views?
  - *Probe*: What did you learn or begin to understand about these different world views?
  - *Probe*: When working with students and staff with different world views, what were you able to learn about them? About yourself
- In your assistantship, what informal opportunities existed or did you create to engage or learn from individuals who are culturally different and/or held different identities than you?
  - *Probe*: what impacted your willingness to engage others that held different identities than yours?
  - What made influenced/impacted your curiosity to learn more from those whom were different?

Framing (perspective taking to broaden the constraints of the frames we hold)
- Talk about moments during your assistantship, where you realized that your world view may have been incomplete/limited?
  - *Probe*: What impact did this have on you?
  - *Probe*: Interaction with others?
  - *Possible probe*: Did your response to recognizing your own limited or incomplete worldview change over the course of your assistantship?

- What did you learn, about yourself, from your relationships with others who held differing world views?
  - *Probe*: From students?
  - *Probe*: From staff?
  - *Probe*: How did your work push you to examine your world perspective?

- Talk about the presence of global or international perspectives in conversations of difference, social justice, diversity?

Positioning (*consideration of how one is geographically positioned related to social and political positions*)

- How did you see your dominant identities show up in your assistantship role?

  - *Probe*: How did you reconcile the power you did or did not hold with respect to your social identities with your positional title/role?
- How did you understand how the power/privilege you held shape how you engaged with others?
  - *Probe*: How did your social identities impact the way you engaged students? Staff? Peers?

Dialogue
- What was the role of dialogue in the work you did?
- In your assistantship, what opportunities did you have to engage in dialogue with people who held very different worldviews than yours?
  - *Probe*: Were these opportunities formal or informal?
  - *Probe*: What did you take away from these interactions?
  - *Probe*: To what extent were you able to stretch your point of view or develop empathy for someone completely different than you? Better understand (not agree) with differing perspectives?
- Can you share any experiences where you built meaningfully connections with individuals who held different worldviews as a result of your assistantship?
  - *Probe*: Were these opportunities formal or informal?
  - *Probe*: What did you take away from these relationships?
  - *Probe*: How was dialogue or building relationships with people different than you role modeled?

Reflection
- In what ways was reflection incorporated into your assistantship experience?
- How did you understand the influence/impact of your world views on how you engaged your work?
- What impact did this reflection have on you?

Action
- Can you describe how your actions in relation to students and staff may have changed as you grew and developed in your role?
- Can you describe how your actions in relation to social issues may have changed?

  - Possible probe: Do you act or respond differently now to stereotypes, prejudice, and systemic inequities

Interview II

1. What are you thinking and feeling after reviewing the results
2. How does this line up with your expectations?

3. Reflecting on your responses to the earlier questions, how do you believe your assistantship experience shaped or impacted your intercultural development?
4. Share what you believe to be the biggest contributing factors in your intercultural development outcome?