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## Better Together: Fostering Student-Level Intercultural Competence Through Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) and a Collaboratively Created Assessment Tool

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## Abstract

Many Japanese universities have been undergoing processes of internationalization to mitigate demographic realities that conspire against robust student enrolments. These internationalization initiatives often attract students from other Confucian-based contexts who are expected to move away from their homeland and fully integrate into an unfamiliar, Japanese environment.

Resultantly, international student needs are often camouflaged by cultural similarities that favour group harmony and collectivism over more equitable approaches to learning. Therefore, this Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) aims to serve student needs by fostering the development of intercultural competencies through a pilot collaborative online international learning (COIL) project open to all students, and the creation and adoption of a context-specific rubric for intercultural competence assessment at a small, private, Japanese university to make the on-campus environment more inclusive for all students. A combined servant leadership and creative leadership approach is a foundational complement to traditional Japanese organizational practices for leading the change effort. Moreover, a context-specific adaptation of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is supported by the Change Leader's Roadmap (CLR) in the implementation process. A context-specific, critical-theory-supported approach to AI is also fundamental to the monitoring and evaluation process. The resulting project is focused on increasing student-level intercultural interactions to better align the university's public-facing policy documents with on-campus practices to make the learning environment more inclusive.

*Key words:* Internationalization, COIL, Intercultural Competence, Servant Leadership, Creative Leadership, Appreciative Inquiry

## Executive Summary

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) focuses on a small, private, arts-based university in Japan that is undergoing a process of internationalization. The Problem of Practice (POP) involves exploring how Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) and an increased departmental focus on fostering student-level intercultural competence development could address a misalignment between the on-campus practices and the tenets stated in the school's public-facing policies to make the Foreign Communications department, and the rest of the campus more inclusive. Noticeable improvements, like the creation of an on-campus Centre for Diversity and Inclusion that holds events such as lectures, participative workshops, and celebrations for domestic and international students are noteworthy. However, more work needs to be done in the Foreign Communications department, and across the campus to ensure that the school is achieving its stated goals in a meaningful manner.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the organizational context. Nihon Geijitsu University (NGU— a pseudonym) has been undergoing a process of internationalization that has seen its international student population grow dramatically since the initiative began in 2016. Prior to the internationalization initiative, the on-campus student population was nearly 100% Japanese. By 2022, NGU expects to reach an international student population that is comprised of 40% of its total enrolment (NGU, n.d.). Japanese organizational practices including the *ringi system* (Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014) and *nemawashi* (Breaden, 2013; Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014) are explained and their relevance to the process is outlined. A leadership position and lens statement centred on servant and creative leadership, and elements of critical theory is provided, and the PoP is detailed and framed by a STEEPLED (Buller, 2015) analysis. Positively worded guiding questions (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2008) to support the PoP

are offered for considerations concerning how to address the problem in the subsequent chapters. To continue, the misalignment between the desired state and current practices, organizational role models, and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic complemented by a Habermasian justification for online learning were identified as important change drivers to be leveraged to improve practices. Finally, Cawsey et al.'s (2016) change readiness questionnaire combined with Bolman & Deal's (2017) four frames were applied as lenses to examine the organization's readiness for change.

Chapter 2 discusses the importance of servant leadership (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2016; Coetzer, 2018; Eva et al., 2018; Searle & Barbuto, 2010; Sendjaya, 2015; Zhu & Zhang, 2020) and creative leadership (Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2018) as a combined framework to foster departmental improvements. Appreciative inquiry (AI) has been chosen to lead the change process given its compatibility with Japanese approaches to change, and the focus on collaboratively developing solutions. The Change Leader's Roadmap (CLR) will complement AI because it works as a guiding philosophy divided into a series of steps and processes that could bolster each stage of AI's 4-D process (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Buller, 2015). Furthermore, the CLR will be utilized to mitigate potential change-related issues. A critical organizational analysis that utilizes Buller's (2015) ten analytical lenses provides useful insights into the benefits and challenges that could be experienced throughout the change process. Buller's (2015) lenses also provide important information about the feasibility of the project. Five potential solutions are proposed to address the PoP. A combined approach of collaboratively creating a departmental intercultural competencies rubric based on relevant readings (see Deardorff, 2006, 2017; Gray et al., 2019) is complemented by developing a pilot COIL (Appiah-Kubi & Annan, 2020; Duffy et al., 2020; King de Ramirez, 2019; Marcillo-

Gomez & Desilus, 2016; Swartz et al., 2020) project open to NGU's student body, and housed in the on-campus Centre for Diversity and Inclusion to address the problem. Finally, the ethical implications of the project are explored and detailed through the lens of Hostede's (1980) and Hofstede et al.'s (2010) cultural dimensions theory, Meyer's (2014) culture map, and Japanese research on ethical leadership (Kimura & Nishikawa, 2018).

Chapter 3 outlines the implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and communication plans that are central to ensure that the PoP is addressed. Local organizational practices and critical approaches to AI (Dunlap, 2008; Grant & Humphries, 2006; Ridley-Duff & Duncan, 2015) are explored and detailed throughout the implementation and monitoring and evaluation plans to ensure a conscientious application of the process that is inclusive of all voices, and considerate of potential implementation issues. Multiple, context-specific cycles of AI's 4-D process are required to collaboratively create the intercultural competencies rubric and the COIL project. A modified 4-D cycle (Steyn, 2010, 2012) will be utilized to create the intercultural competencies rubric in the spring semester of 2022. Further, a second AI cycle will lead to the creation of the four-to-six-week pilot COIL project with an international counterpart. The rubric will be translated into Japanese and shared with the administrative staff (*shokuin*) and other departments to promote a more concerted focus on fostering the development of intercultural competence in other departments. In addition, a subsequent AI 4-D cycle involves collecting relevant mixed-methods data to monitor and evaluate the project. Reflective practices are crucial for intercultural competence development, and strategies for collecting and analyzing relevant materials related to determining growth are outlined. Finally, a communication plan utilizing Rucchin's (2021) framework complemented by research-backed practices (Armenakis et al., 2002, 2009; Klein, 1996) details how information throughout the project will be disseminated.

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## Acronyms

AI (Appreciative Inquiry)

CLR (Change Leader's Roadmap)

COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning)

CPS (Creative Problem-Solving)

DL (Diversity Lead)

ICT (Internet Communication Technologies)

LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Queer)

LMS (Learning Management System)

MEXT (The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology)

MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses)

NGU (Nihon Geijitsu University)

OIP (Organizational Improvement Plan)

PoP (Problem of Practice)

STEEPLED (Social, technological, economic, ecological, political, legislative, ethical, and demographic)

## Glossary of Terms

**Appreciative Inquiry (AI):** Refers to a strengths-based, asset-focused approach to organizational change (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010) that involves multiple stakeholders and begins with a robust inquiry into the positive core of the organization (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). Once a positive core has been collectively shared and analyzed, this knowledge is connected to a strategic change agenda (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005).

**Collective Teacher Efficacy:** The collective self-perception that educators in a school can make a significant difference in their students' lives (Donohoo, 2017).

**Confucian-based contexts:** Confucian-based contexts in the context of this manuscript refers to Asian cultures influenced by Confucius. According to cultural dimensions theory (Hofstede, 1980), these cultures are more collectivist and hierarchical than Western societies. Furthermore, people and organizations in these cultures value iterative and long-term change initiatives and prefer to avoid uncertainty (Hofstede, 1980; Meyer, 2014).

**Cultural synthesis:** The ability to treat, understand, and respect cultures equally (Freire, 2018). Educators and students must engage in frequent dialogue, critical reflection, and metacognitive processes in multicultural classrooms for cultural synthesis to occur (Freire, 2018).

**Ethnographic stance:** The process of observing, recording, and interpreting interactions and behaviours like an ethnographic researcher (Puccio et al., 2013).

**First-order changes:** These are changes that involve working within the existing structure to improve the organization through incremental, iterative initiatives.

**Hidden curriculum:** This term refers to the unwritten or unintended concepts and values that students learn in school.

**Intercultural competence:** Refers to an individual's ability to develop knowledge, attitudes, and skills, that contribute to behaviours and communications that are both appropriate and effective in intercultural interactions (Deardorff, 2006). Developing one's intercultural competence is a lifelong process that involves developing both internal and external outcomes (Deardorff, 2006). Intercultural knowledge refers to cultural self-awareness; culturally specific knowledge; sociolinguistic awareness, and an understanding of global issues and trends (Deardorff, 2006). Intercultural skills refer to one's ability to listen, observe, and evaluate in a way that minimizes ethnocentrism; discovering linkages, causality, and relationships using techniques comparative techniques, and critical thinking inclusive of understanding the world from a culturally different point of view, and being able to identify one's own (Deardorff, 2006). Respect refers to valuing cultural diversity, being intellectually curious by viewing interactions as a learning opportunity and being aware of one's own ignorance, and displaying openness and vulnerability (Deardorff, 2006). Demonstrating flexibility, adaptability, and an ability to tolerate ambiguity are key in developing intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006).

**Intercultural competencies:** Refer to the knowledge, skills, and attitudes one needs to develop to become interculturally competent.

**Internationalization:** Refers to including international, intercultural, and global dimensions into curricula, teaching, and learning (Knight, 2004).

**Jimu soshiki:** This term translates to office organization. In practice, jimmu soshiki refers to an administrative organization operating in support of the executive and divisions within the university (Breaden, 2013). This organization is responsible for instituting logistical operations such as jinji idou.



**Jinji idou:** This term means job rotation. Japanese shokuin are generalists who are expected to dedicate themselves to their organization. Part of that process involves learning about different aspects of the organization throughout their career (Seebruck, 2019). Therefore, shokuin are transferred to various offices throughout the organization with little notice several times throughout their career (Seebruck, 2019).

**Kokusaika:** The Japanese word for internationalization.

**Kyojukai:** Faculty councils

**Multivocal term:** A term that has more than one equal meaning, interpretation.

**Nemawashi:** The process of gaining informal approval prior to a formal meeting about a proposed change or initiative (Breaden, 2013).

**Non-research university:** Most Japanese universities are characterized as non-research universities according to MEXT (Huang, 2015). Research universities largely refer to Japan's most prestigious, former imperial institutions that were established in the Meiji era. MEXT provides research universities with more funding than those classified as non-research universities.

**Outsider Status:** Foreign faculty members who have an understanding of Japanese organizations and are considered international by virtue of their birthplace (Breaden, 2013).

**Peripatetic:** Travelling from place to place for work. Place in this paper refers to foreign countries.

**Presentism:** An uncritical adherence to present-day attitudes, beliefs, and practices.

**Ringi System:** Refers to a Japanese decision-making process that is hierarchical, bottom-up, and consensual at the same time (Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014). The system often involves employees discussing ideas and coming to a consensus before presenting their plans to their

immediate superiors. If the immediate superiors are impressed with the idea, they ask their subordinates to prepare a formal document that they can present to higher levels of the organization.

**Ringi-sho:** The ringi-sho is the formal document used to promote a change initiative in the ringi system.

**Shokuin:** Administrative staff

**Soto:** “Them” in an “us vs. them” dichotomy.

**Tatewari:** organizational siloes; sectionalism

**Uchi:** “Us” in an “us vs. them” dichotomy.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction and Problem**

Universities around the world have been undergoing a process of internationalization largely in response to increased globalization, market-based concerns, and neoliberal preoccupations with improving the institution or nation's status on university-ranking tables (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Knight, 1999, 2004, 2012, 2015; Marginson, 2014; Mok, 2007). Unfortunately, what often gets lost in the fixation on statistics and international-student tuition gains is a conscientious, critical examination of how on-campus student experiences are benefiting host-country and international students (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Knight, 1999, 2004, 2012, 2015; Marginson, 2014; Mok, 2007; Ninomiya et al., 2009; Ota, 2014).

Leading internationalization experts contend that intercultural competence development must be integrated into curricula and on-campus experiences so that host-country, and international students learn with and from each other (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Knight, 1999, 2004, 2012, 2015; Mok, 2007; Ota, 2014). However, internationalization experts focused on Japan argue that this is not the case at many institutions (Breaden, 2013; Goodman, 2007; Mok, 2007; Ninomiya et al., 2009; Ota, 2014). Instead, on-campus and internet-based efforts focused on enhancing intercultural competence development and promoting diversity and inclusion are short-term events rather than robust learning opportunities (Breaden, 2013; Mok, 2007).

This opening chapter provides an overview of a Japanese higher-education context, shares a leadership position and lens statement, defines, and frames a leadership problem of practice, offers a vision for change, and assesses the organization's readiness for change.

### **Organizational Context**

Nihon Geijitsu University (NGU), anonymized for the purposes of this OIP, is a private, non-research (Huang, 2015), arts-based university in a mid-sized Japanese city. The school was

founded as a junior college in the late 1960s with two faculties: art and English. The organization gained university status in the late 1970s and has expanded its art and media faculties and departments since then. At present, the school is comprised of five faculties and twelve departments with approximately 3300 students and 150 faculty members.

The organization is currently undergoing a series of internationalization initiatives like many other Japanese universities. One of these internationalization initiatives is a push to boost international student enrolment. Resultantly, from 2016 to 2020, the school has seen a dramatic increase in international student enrolment. Most of these international students come from China and South Korea (see Appendix A), which is demographically in-line with other Japanese universities' internationalization efforts (Byun, 2014; Goodman, 2007; Inaba, 2020; Inuzuka, 2017; Liu-Farrer, 2014; Tamaoka et al., 2003). Students from these Confucian nations share a similar cultural and educational heritage (Byun, 2014; Hofstede, 1980; Meyer, 2014), but need to adapt to Japan's cultural and linguistic differences.

### **Vision, Mission, Values, Purpose and Goals**

NGU strives to respect the autonomy of individuals (NGU, n.d.). The school seeks to promote individual freedom and independence so that students can contribute to society via intellectual and artistic learning (NGU, n.d.). The university also aims to actively contribute to the betterment of society by promoting a sense of social responsibility in its students (NGU, n.d.). Further, the university is focused on creating a strong sense of community that incorporates students, faculty members, and the administration, and leveraging meaningful connections within those relationships to foster educational development (NGU, n.d.). To achieve these goals, community members' values need to be equally respected (NGU, n.d.). Therefore, constituents are encouraged to contribute to the betterment of the institution (NGU, n.d.). Thus, the current

president, Dr. U., has demonstrated a willingness and openness to meet with any member of NGU that wants to share ideas focused on improving the school.

To continue, NGU endeavours to create educational opportunities within Japan and abroad because an ideal society should transcend jurisdictional, ethnic, and religious differences (NGU, n. d.). Therefore, it is essential that NGU students develop relationships that respect differences in values and not favour some cultural or religious viewpoints over others. Further, NGU strives to promote real-world learning opportunities that foster independence and meaningful co-existence with others (NGU, n.d.). Thus, the school strives to make a positive contribution both nationally and internationally (NGU, n.d.).

Sections of NGU's mission statement are pertinent to this OIP. In particular, the tenets focused on social responsibility, international learning, inclusion, and governance are centrally important (NGU, n.d.).

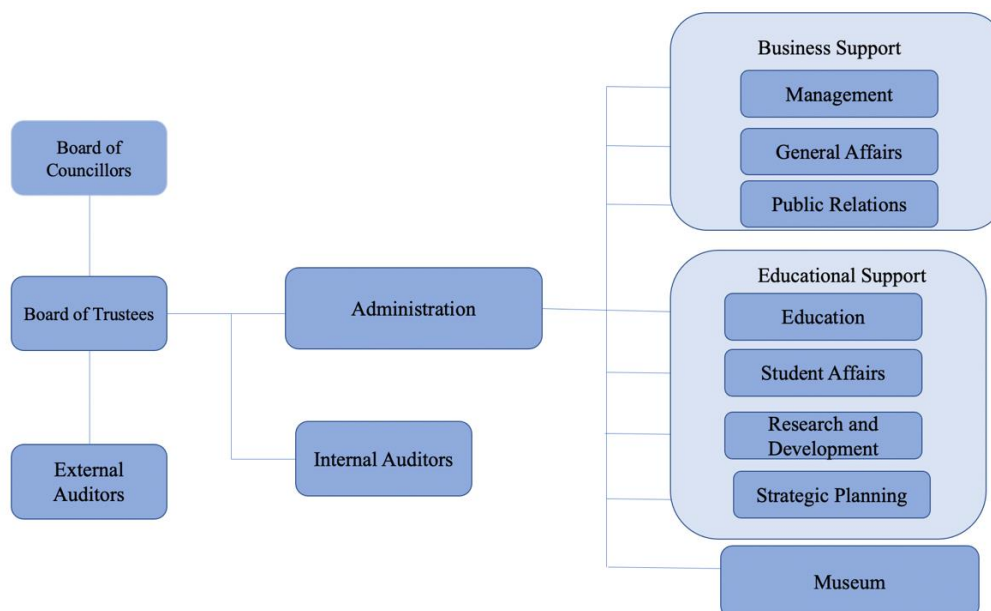
### **Organizational Structure**

NGU's organizational structure resembles many private Japanese universities (Breaden, 2013). The educational support group is responsible for day-to-day teaching-related issues, student affairs, education-based research and development, and strategic planning. The business support group is responsible for budgetary issues, general affairs, and public relations. Executive administration is responsible for, and oversees, both the education support and business support's operations and the operation of NGU's Museum in a large, off-campus, urban location. Internal auditors monitor the executive branch's operations, as do the Board of Trustees and Board of Councillors, and external auditors. Operating in parallel to these structures is an administrative organization, *jimu soshiki* (Breaden, 2013), which consists mainly of offices nearby academic

divisions as well as finance and public relations. Figure 1 provides an overview of the major structures within the organization. It is important to note that academic faculties and departments are contained in the “education” bubble in the “educational support” box.

**Figure 1**

*NGU's Organizational Structure*



**NGU and Internationalization**

NGU, and Japanese universities more generally, have long been encouraged to internationalize to mitigate the deleterious impact of a depleting traditional university-aged population (Breaden, 2013; Breaden & Goodman, 2020; Goodman, 2007; Inaba, 2020; Mok, 2007; Ninomiya et al., 2009; Ota, 2014; Tamaoka et al., 2003). The push to internationalize has grown even more intense in recent years as the traditional-aged university population has decreased to nearly half of what it was in the 1990s (Breaden & Goodman, 2020; Inaba, 2020). Furthermore, the impact of the changing demographic makeup of Japan is particularly damaging to private universities (Inaba, 2020). Private universities represent more than 70% of Japan’s 782 universities, and small private universities (fewer than 4000 students) (Yonezawa, 2017), like

NGU, have difficulty filling their student enrolment quotas owing to the changing demographic conditions (Inaba, 2020). Private universities ignore demographic realities at their peril as evidenced by the 11 permanent university closures that Japan has witnessed since the year 2000 (Inaba, 2020).

To continue, Japan is a collectivist country with a high-power distance organizational culture (Buller, 2015; Haghirian, 2010; Hofstede, 1980; Janssen, 2019; Meyer, 2014; Schein, 2010), and NGU has historically been representative of this characterization. Furthermore, like most university contexts, individual faculties and departments have the power and autonomy to make decisions around curricula and pedagogy (Yonezawa, 2017). Moreover, each faculty council (*kyojukai*), has the power to interpret organizational decisions in a faculty-specific manner and determine how to implement prescribed changes in their own unique ways (Yonezawa, 2017). Thus, like many higher-education contexts, it is difficult to prescribe wholesale changes at NGU due to organizational silos (*tatewari*) (Buller, 2015; Yonezawa, 2017). Therefore, changing the organization's practices is incredibly difficult, regardless of the change messenger or initiative.

Further conspiring against wholesale changes are common Japanese organizational/corporate practices, such as *jinji idou* (job rotation), which task senior leaders in the General Affairs department to reorganize Japanese staff members to different departments after prescribed periods of time to expand their knowledge of the organization (Breaden, 2013; Seebruck, 2019). Unlike universities in many countries, Japanese higher-education institutions are staffed by generalists who are expected to learn on the job (Breaden, 2013; Ota, 2020; Yonezawa, 2017). Thus, when staff members are re-assigned to unfamiliar positions, they are expected to put in long hours to learn the demands of new tasks and responsibilities. Therefore, a

Japanese staff member may be assigned to lead student services without an adequate understanding of student-level issues (mental health, etc.).

These practices suit the demands of a monocultural, non-litigious environment like Japan, but are likely inadequate to meet the diverse needs of an internationalizing campus (Breaden, 2013; Yonezawa, 2017). Unfortunately, practices like these make internationalization efforts more difficult because they do not organize the staff in an optimal manner (Breaden, 2013; Ota, 2020; Seebruck, 2019; Yonezawa, 2020). For example, the author has witnessed instances where administrative staff who were formerly in charge of student services that could assist pupils in their native languages, were reassigned to departments where they were not required to converse with students at all and replaced by unilingual staff members. Thus, the double- and triple-loop learning (Aas, 2017; Argyris & Schon, 1976) required to fully internationalize the campus is complicated by such processes.

Although organizational restructuring is certainly outside the purview of the author's agency within NGU, it is important to acknowledge the complexity involved in wholesale organizational change. Moreover, it is important for the author to steadfastly focus on meeting student needs in the face of practices that conspire against them (Freire, 2018).

### **Japanese Leadership Approaches**

Japanese leadership approaches are largely practiced at NGU. Japanese leadership approaches are hierarchical, bottom-up, and consensual all at once (Breaden, 2013; Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014). Organizational change either begins at a lower level in the organizational hierarchy through a proposal that gains momentum as it rises through the ranks or is dictated from above by a senior-level executive, such as the university president. In either case, the implementation process requires strong interpersonal relationships and is highly participative



(Adamson & Brown, 2012; Breaden, 2013; Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014; Yonezawa, 2017).

The following subsections provide an overview of these leadership approaches.

### ***The Ringi System***

The *ringi system* is a hierarchical decision-making process for bottom-up change initiatives (Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014). In this system, lower-ranked organizational members discuss their ideas with their colleagues until the team agrees that a formal document, called a *ringi-sho*, be prepared to share with more senior members of the organization (Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014). The document must detail the changes the organization should pursue, and the logistical realities involved in those pursuits (Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014). The *ringi-sho* is then shared with its author's immediate superiors (Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014). Those superiors make changes as necessary, and if they approve of the proposal in the document, pass it to their superiors, and so on (Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014).

Hierarchical organizational structures and consensus-based decision-making processes are both deeply embedded in Japanese culture (Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014). However, through the *ringi* system, lower-ranking change agents can have a significant impact on their organizations (Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014; Yonezawa, 2017).

### ***Nemawashi***

*Nemawashi* is the practice of informal consensus-building that precedes any change proposal (Breaden, 2013; Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014). Prospective change agents need to gain support from their departmental peers and relevant organizational allies prior to sharing ideas at formal meetings (Breaden, 2013; Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014) which are largely information-sharing, rather than decision-making sessions (Breaden, 2013; Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014). Although the process for gaining informal approval from colleagues is time-

consuming, it is essential for significant change initiatives because it protects Japanese organizational members from the culturally inappropriate practice of openly disagreeing with each other (Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014; Schein, 2010). Moreover, gaining informal consensus prior to formally sharing a proposal exhibits cultural sensitivity as Japan is a high-uncertainty avoidance culture (Haghirian, 2010; Hofstede, 1980; Meyer, 2014).

In summary, NGU is a small, private, arts-based Japanese university that is undergoing a process of internationalization. The school has steadily increased international student enrolment since 2016, especially from Confucian-based contexts, towards its goal of achieving an on-campus population comprised of 40% foreign-born students by 2022 (NGU, n.d.). Finally, Japanese organizational structures and leadership approaches, and NGU's mission, encourage constituents to develop new practices to help the school achieve its ends (NGU, n.d.).

### **Leadership Position and Lens Statement**

The author has the agency in his current capacity as a lecturer in the Foreign Communications department to lead first-order changes (Waks, 2007). The author has been designing courses at the university since 2012 and has been given full autonomy to utilize teaching methodologies, collaborative practices, and technologies to serve student needs. In addition, the author has had the experience of working within his agency to influence his Japanese colleagues to adopt a rubric-based assessment system and has collaboratively created criteria with them to support their adoption of the practice. Through building collegial relationships and coaching his departmental colleagues, these practices persist. Moreover, the author has exhibited his leadership by designing an international business course at NGU in 2017 based on feedback from students concerned about their abilities to work with foreign counterparts in their future careers. The author demonstrated his leadership by coaching his

departmental colleagues who were tasked to teach the course. This course continues to be taught in the Foreign Communications department. In brief, the author's main goal is to serve the needs of his students, colleagues (Davis, 2017; Dittmar, 2006; Greenleaf, 2011; Hays, 2008; Northouse, 2019), and the organization.

The author also has a history of fostering classroom environments where students feel empowered to design initiatives to address issues they are concerned about in their communities. For example, as an elementary school teacher in British Columbia, the author worked with a paraprofessional and his fifth- and sixth-grade students to weave scarves that were donated to community members experiencing homelessness in Vancouver based on the students' expressed interest. Facilitating this process involved: creating an inclusive learning community where students could share their ideas; developing partnerships with a paraprofessional (who could help students learn to weave scarves) and the Head of School and creating a partnership in the local community to ensure that scarves could reach those in need. This project inspired similar teacher-led community-based initiatives that the author organized with his colleagues. Thus, honouring student wishes, collaborating with key organizational members, and forging partnerships with community organizations helped to foster a greater sense within the class that they could organize to positively impact upon an important social justice issue. To put it simply, working with students and colleagues to improve constituent lives is central to the author's leadership approach. Moreover, encouraging students to work collaboratively to improve their communities is key to enhancing their individual and collective sense of social responsibility.

### **Supporting Internationalization at NGU**

NGU's president, Dr. U., has been leading the university's internationalization change efforts since 2016. Dr. U. has been openly critical of the marketization of education in Japan and

would like students at NGU to better understand their place in the world rather than focus solely on earning a degree to get a career (NGU, n.d.). Dr. U. would like students to work on meaningful projects with people from diverse backgrounds towards achieving these ends (NGU, n.d.). Thus, Dr. U. has invited faculty from all departments to propose and lead initiatives to enhance the on-campus experiences of all students to bolster the internationalization efforts (NGU, n.d.). Resultantly, Dr. U. has had several correspondences with the author about this OIP and has demonstrated his support. Buller (2015) contends that supporting current initiatives is a cogent method for achieving substantive change, and in this spirit, the author has been working within his agency to support Dr. U. in achieving his mission.

### **Critical Theory and Cultural Dimensions Theory**

Freire's (2018) critical pedagogy and liberal education that focuses on the humanistic aspects of learning (Maboloc, 2021) are a major theoretical foundation of this OIP. Maboloc (2021) argues that there are no necessary tensions between Freire's (2018) critical pedagogy and liberal education if students explore how to overcome institutional oppression and dominant educational paradigms that promote an instrumentalist education. Thus, providing students with opportunities to question dominant discourse like the banking concept of education (Freire, 2018) is congruent with a critical theory approach and well suited for this OIP.

To continue, critical theory is important for this project because it focuses on eliminating educational inequities; being attuned with student differences; collaboratively taking responsibility to create socially just learning environments, and increasing student learning (Capper, 2019). Furthermore, critical pedagogy involves working with students on education projects to ameliorate unfairness and redress injustices through regular dialogue (Freire, 2018; Maboloc, 2021); meaningful reflection that investigates thinking (Freire, 2018; Maboloc, 2021);

reciprocal learning and development between teachers and students (Freire, 2018; Maboloc, 2021); relationships of profound trust that promote creativity (Freire, 2018; Maboloc, 2021), and an enhanced sense of autonomy (Freire, 2018), and humility (Freire, 2018). Furthermore, Freirean pedagogy is culturally appropriate given that it has been adopted by some Japanese educators through practices such as reflective autobiographical journaling (Chang et al., 2019).

Organizational issues can be addressed through a pragmatic critical approach that emphasizes cooperation and inquiry towards an enhanced sense of self- and collective-realization and democracy (Maboloc, 2021; Visser, 2019). To achieve this, educational leaders need to interrogate their individual, and their organization's taken-for-granted assumptions and determine the degree to which day-to-day practices foster the conditions for freedom, truth, and justice, in promoting positive change (Capper, 2019; Freire, 2018). Further, critical theory provides educational leaders insights into why some groups are privileged, or advantaged over others (Capper, 2019; Freire, 2018). In short, critical theory aligns well with the author's personal philosophy of education and will serve as an important guide towards creating a more inclusive learning environment at NGU. Resultantly, critical theorists such as Capper (2019); Freire (2018); Fuchs (2016); Habermas (2018); Moscato (2017); O'Mahony (2021); Tilak and Glassman (2020), and Visser (2019) are referenced in this manuscript.

To continue, Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions theory, and Meyer's (2014) culture map, also play a significant role in this OIP. These theoretical underpinnings particularly inform the decisions behind the communication intentions throughout this manuscript. Furthermore, Hofstede (1980) and Meyer (2014) help the author better understand his own positionality within the institution as a cis-gendered, Canadian, white male from a middle-class background to mitigate the potential for cultural invasion (Freire, 2018). Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions

theory classifies national cultures based on power distance; uncertainty avoidance; individualism and collectivism, and masculinity. For example, the author needs to be aware of the stark contrast that exists between his highly individualistic, low power-distance, weak-uncertainty avoidance Canadian cultural background when working in a more collectivist, higher power-distance, strong uncertainty avoidance culture in Japan (Hofstede, 1980; Meyer, 2014) when collaborating with his Japanese counterparts. To continue, Meyer's (2014) work enhances Hofstede's (1980) work by providing leaders with pertinent strategies to navigate these differences. Therefore, Hofstede (1980) and Meyer (2014) are referenced throughout this OIP.

### **Servant Leadership and Creative Leadership**

Buller (2015) contends that leaders in higher-education contexts need to be flexible and adaptable and open to combining leadership approaches to achieve meaningful change. Furthermore, Buller (2015) identifies servant leadership and creative leadership as important approaches in higher education. The following paragraphs outline how servant leadership and creative leadership align with the author's educational philosophies and with NGU's organizational needs.

Servant leadership and creative leadership tenets are largely in line with the author's philosophy of education and leadership and similarly align with the ways he has approached previous change efforts. For instance, servant leadership prioritizes the learners' and organization's needs ahead of the individual (Davis, 2017; Hays, 2008; McCune Stein et al., 2020). Furthermore, it also centres on taking an active interest in the growth and development of others (Coetzer, 2018; Davis, 2017; Dittmar, 2006; Sendjaya, 2015). Through this serving-others-focused lens, and the collaborative approaches that complement this viewpoint, servant leadership can enhance team effectiveness and increase individual and collective levels of

confidence and efficacy (Northouse, 2019). Moreover, servant leadership aligns well with NGU's mission (NGU, n.d.) because it empowers individuals to participate in organizational change (Davis, 2017; Dittmar, 2006; Hays, 2008; Northouse, 2019). Therefore, utilizing the tenets of servant leadership (Sendjaya, 2015) can empower formal and informal leaders to contribute to organizational change (Davis, 2017; Dittmar, 2006; Northouse, 2019).

The author has adopted a servant leadership approach throughout his career by encouraging ethical behaviour, offering help to others, inviting constituents to participate in projects, supporting peers to meet and overcome challenges, and creating value for the community (Greenleaf, 2011; Hays, 2008; Northouse, 2019). Further, sharing insights with colleagues, involving students in designing assignments and criteria (Hays, 2008), and exploring innovative research-based approaches towards helping NGU achieve its goals are also examples of how the author has utilized a servant leadership approach. Thus, servant leadership is an effective, pragmatic approach to support, enhance, and advance internationalization at NGU.

Creative leadership (Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2018) complements servant leadership because it offers a range of strategies and activities that can operationalize servant leadership. Furthermore, creative leadership offers leaders a range of strategies for defining ambiguous problems (Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2018). Activities such as timed writing (Puccio et al., 2018), empathy maps (Puccio et al., 2018), mind mapping (Puccio et al., 2018), and rapid prototyping (Puccio et al., 2018) challenge colleagues to explore novel solutions to organizational problems. Creative leadership encourages leaders to seek novelty, collect as many ideas as possible, and defer judgment (Puccio et al., 2018). Furthermore, creative leadership offers models such as the creative problem-solving process that guide leaders through a three-stage framework towards creating a potential solution (Puccio et al., 2018). Thus, creative

leadership complements servant leadership by providing leaders with activities and frameworks that can empower and inspire others to develop important change initiatives.

### **Servant Leadership and Creative Leadership Experiences at NGU**

When the author started his career at NGU in 2012, he was tasked to design English courses for first- and second-year students. The author was explicitly warned that students were shy and not keen on studying English. Unbeknownst to the author at the time, he used several tenets of servant teaching (Hays, 2008) and creative leadership that proved fruitful in enhancing student-level English-language learning.

To begin, the author worked with students in those classes to co-create their learning program. Resultantly, students produced interesting final products including manga, short videos and animations, and short stories that creatively demonstrated their developing understanding of English. Furthermore, students identified as shy could make presentations about their final products. This was likely because they were more intrinsically motivated to share their creative work than they were overly concerned with their communicative English competencies. This aforementioned experience, and the continued application of these approaches has shown that transforming the direct-teaching strategies that are common in many Japanese university courses to a more collaborative, participative, student-centred approach where students co-construct assignments and criteria has proven important in facilitating student buy-in, increasing accountability, and communicating the specific goals of assignments (Hays, 2008).

The author utilized similar student-centred approaches when tasked to design courses focused on business and academic English. For instance, instead of paper tests, students designed fictional products, television commercials, public service announcements, short videos, and other pieces of art to represent their understanding of economic concepts or social justice issues that



helped them to communicate their learning with their classmates. Thus, focusing on the artistic strengths (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005) and interests of NGU's creative students, and providing them with autonomy in determining how to represent their learning has proven a cogent strategy in fostering their English-language development. The author has used his influence within the Foreign Communications department to encourage his colleagues to adopt similar practices. Thus, despite the author's informal leadership status, he has been able to influence his colleagues' practices through sharing these approaches.

In summary, the author has the capacity in his current position to lead first-order changes (Waks, 2007) to enhance NGU's internationalization efforts. Further, the author has experience working with colleagues to address academic and social-justice-related issues. Moreover, the author has utilized servant leadership and creative leadership approaches to democratically lead important change efforts throughout his career.

### **Leadership Problem of Practice**

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) is focused on investigating how Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) and an increased departmental focus on student-level intercultural competence development could bolster NGU's internationalization efforts by making learning environments more inclusive. To be clear, COIL is a part of the problem of practice because the author has already received departmental approval for a pilot project through *nemawashi*. In addition, a *ringi-sho* has been drafted and submitted to senior departmental leaders in support of the project.

In the present state, Japanese and international students at NGU are not offered enough meaningful interventions focused on enhancing their intercultural competencies due to teaching tendencies that prepare students for exams and careers in accordance with a banking concept of

education (Freire, 2018). Unfortunately, these practices go against the tenets in the school's mission statement that: champion faculty and students making positive international contributions; promote international learning opportunities, and that celebrate diversity (NGU, n.d.). Resultantly, instead of meaningfully incorporating intercultural development into curricula as experts recommend (Knight, 1999, 2004, 2012, 2015; Mok, 2007; Yonezawa, 2017), internationalization is likely conceptualized by NGU constituents as a series of special events that are primarily intended for international students, rather than as a set of robust educational initiatives that could have a profound impact on every student's learning and development. NGU's president, Dr. U., recognizes this issue and has been vocal in encouraging faculty to design, and lead, initiatives towards enhancing intercultural learning.

Not surprisingly, university presidents play an important role in leading Japanese internationalization efforts (Breaden, 2013; Ota, 2020; Yonezawa, 2017; Yonezawa, 2020). However, the role of the university president in Japan is quite different from Western contexts (Breaden, 2013; Ota, 2020). Japanese university presidents are usually faculty members that are appointed to the position rather than externally recruited organizational leadership experts which is typical in Western countries (Ota, 2020). This reality, coupled with Japanese notions of academic freedom and consensus-based organizational practices conspire against wholesale organizational change (Breaden, 2013; Buller, 2015; Ota, 2020; Schein, 2010). Therefore, the author plans to work within his agency to build on-campus relationships and establish partnerships towards serving the organization's needs by leading an initiative to help the president and the school better embody the tenets in the mission statement (NGU, n.d.).

Addressing this problem is important because inclusion is a social justice issue (Chiramba & Maringe, 2020; Malusa, 2020). Inclusion requires going a step beyond merely

integrating culturally different others into the on-campus environment of the dominant culture (Chiramba & Maringe, 2020). Inclusion requires meaningfully learning with and from people (Freire, 2018; Malusa, 2020) in a mutually beneficial manner. Therefore, creating environments where Japanese and international students can learn with, and from each other, would contribute to a more socially just learning environment (Capper, 2019) than the ones created by banking education models (Freire, 2018) that persists in many classes at NGU and throughout Japan.

Creating learning environments that challenge students to use their language learning as a tool to communicate with international peers could lead to advanced intercultural sensitivity (Arasaratnam-Smith, 2017), humility (Murray-Garcia & Tervalon, 2017), empathy (Calloway-Thomas et al., 2017), and a stronger appreciation for how to share ideas across cultures (Appiah-Kubi & Annan, 2020; King de Ramirez, 2019; Marcillo-Gomez & Desilus, 2016; Swartz et al., 2020) towards the Freirean ideal of cultural synthesis (Freire, 2018).

### **Framing the Problem of Practice**

Change agents need to be cognizant of how the national context interacts with the local environment and the resulting impacts on individual and organizational learning before implementing substantive changes (Buller, 2015; Campbell & Armstrong, 2011). Moreover, a sophisticated understanding of the manifold interactions between individuals and external forces can provide working insights into the micro-environment (Buller, 2015; Campbell & Armstrong, 2011). To examine these complex interactions, insights into intercultural competence are provided, followed by a STEEPLED analysis (Buller, 2015) to frame the problem of practice.

### **Intercultural Competence**

Intercultural competence is defined as having the skills and abilities to communicate effectively and behave appropriately in intercultural situations (Blair, 2017; Deardorff, 2006,

2009, 2017; Murray-Garcia & Tervalon, 2017). However, researchers recommend that schools develop context-specific definitions of intercultural competence that reflect their unique environment (Deardorff, 2017; Wang et al., 2017). For example, students at a South African university developed their own context-specific intercultural competence definitions and assessment tools (Deardorff, 2017).

University mission statements should be referenced when determining intercultural competence definitions and interventions (Deardorff, 2017; Hofmeyr, 2020). Based on NGU's mission statement (NGU, n.d.), a context-specific definition of student-level intercultural would require individuals to exhibit a range of traits including empathy (Deardorff, 2017; Blair, 2017; Calloway-Thomas et al., 2017); curiosity (Deardorff, 2017;); active listening (Calloway-Thomas et al., 2017); tolerance for ambiguity (Deardorff, 2017), and humility (Freire, 2018; Murray-Garcia & Tervalon, 2017). Moreover, students need to engage in ongoing cycles of reflection (Freire, 2018; Murray-Garcia & Tervalon, 2017) to break down invisible religious, linguistic, and cultural boundaries (Saurwein et al., 2020) towards cultural synthesis (Freire, 2018). However, it is important to note that the university does not have a recognized definition of, nor assessment tools for, intercultural competence. This lack of conceptual understanding represents a significant obstacle in creating inclusive, intercultural learning environments.

### **A STEEPLD Analysis**

A STEEPLD (Buller, 2015) analysis constitutes exploring the social, technological, economic, ecological, political, legislative, ethical, and demographic factors that impact upon the problem of practice. A STEEPLD (Buller, 2015) analysis provides a coherent examination of the macro-, meso-, and micro-level factors that contribute to current student levels of intercultural competence at NGU.

Beginning with the social analysis, Japan is a nearly homogeneous, collectivist culture at the macro-level (Breaden, 2013; Breaden & Goodman, 2020; Cummings, 2014; Hofstede, 1980; Meyer, 2014; Schein, 2010). Moreover, most international students at the micro-level hail from Confucian-based contexts and have similar cultural views about communication to their Japanese peers (Hofstede, 1980; Meyer, 2014; Schein, 2010). Therefore, it is difficult to argue that students are truly engaged in developing their intercultural competencies if they are almost exclusively exposed to others with similar cultural beliefs without being intentionally prompted to examine their commonalities and differences (Saurwein et al., 2020). Further, research suggests that international students crave meaningful interactions and strong relationships with local people while sustaining their identities (Marginson & Sawir, 2012). Unfortunately, research also suggests that international students on Japanese campuses often experience discrimination in their communities (Breaden, 2013; Goodman, 2007; Mok, 2007; Tamaoka et al., 2003) and have a hard time making friends (Tamaoka et al., 2003). The author's anecdotal observations corroborate these research-backed assertions.

To continue, from the technological level of analysis, internet-based learning is conceptualized in intercultural competence and internationalization literature as an important tool in campus-based interventions (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Knight, 2012, 2015; Mok, 2007; Swartz et al., 2020). Furthermore, the experience of the ongoing novel coronavirus pandemic at the macro-, meso-, and micro-level has highlighted the importance of technology for learning organizations and has demonstrated the ease with which real-time and on-demand courses can be designed and accessed (Ahlburg, 2020). Finding ways to incorporate the important knowledge gained from this unprecedented schooling experience in the long term could be beneficial (Bellini et al., 2021; Minkos & Gelbar, 2021). Unfortunately, there are no current long-term

plans to incorporate internet-based intercultural learning in the Foreign Communications department.

At the economic level, evidence from the private sector indicates that Japanese people are interested in developing their intercultural competencies. The banking concept (Freire, 2018) of education practiced at many high schools and universities throughout Japan is preparing students for tests rather than real-world intercultural interactions (Breaden, 2013). Resultantly, for-profit foreign language and intercultural learning institutions are a more than eight billion-dollar (US) industry (Yano Research Institute, 2019), and have been popular in Japanese cities for decades. Major Japanese companies pay substantial tuitions for courses that train employees how to interact with counterparts from other cultures. This suggests that many Japanese people feel that the education system is not preparing them for intercultural interactions. Further, it also suggests that Japan's education system should make a more concerted effort to explore and honour differences and encourage students to meaningfully interact with culturally different others to make learning environments more inclusive (Breaden, 2013; Mok, 2007; Nakamatsu, 2014; Shiobara, 2020).

To continue, at-home internationalization efforts such as COIL projects are more inclusive because they are less costly than international learning excursions that may be prohibitively expensive for some students (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Therefore, COIL could increase access to important learning opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable to some students (Wilson-Strydom, 2015). Moreover, internet-based intercultural learning is also better for the environment from an ecological standpoint because it does not require international travel.

From the political standpoint, NGU's recent history has demonstrated that there is support for internet-based learning at the site level. For instance, the organization offered a free-of-charge massive open online course (MOOC) from 2013 to 2016. Moreover, arts-based faculties in the institution have been collaborating with partnering universities in Europe, the United States, and Africa since 2018 on one-day "shared campus" events (NGU, n.d.). Further, the school's creation of a dedicated Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, and frequent events focused on celebrating diversity (NGU, n.d.) indicate political support for both internet-based, and on-campus intercultural learning opportunities at the micro-level.

From a legislative standpoint, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) has been encouraging universities to internationalize for a number of years (Breaden, 2013; Goodman, 2007; Inuzuka, 2017; Mok, 2007). Legislation (MEXT, 2017; MEXT, 2018) has strongly advocated for internationalizing campuses largely in attempts to improve Japanese university rankings in international tables (Breaden, 2013; Goodman, 2007; Inuzuka, 2017; Mok, 2007; Ninomiya et al., 2009). Therefore, initiatives designed to increase the frequency with which students and faculty interact with international counterparts would be supported by macro-level legislation. Similarly, at the micro-level, creating opportunities for students and faculty to regularly interact, and work in meaningful collaboration with foreign counterparts is supported by the school's mission (NGU, n.d.), as well as on-campus policies. Unfortunately, specific strategies for enhancing intercultural competence have not been meaningfully integrated into government-level legislation (Breaden, 2013), nor have interventions been explored within the Foreign Communications department to enhance intercultural learning.

Ethical issues must be thoughtfully considered in any intercultural learning effort to ensure that all participants are willing to learn with and from each other (Fang, 2010; Marginson & Sawir, 2012), rather than favour some cultural practices at the expense of others (Gray et al., 2019). Unfortunately, university-level promotions of intercultural exchange at some Japanese universities have been criticized for favouring the dominant culture (Kudo, 2016). Therefore, any intercultural learning interventions need to be designed with care to ensure inclusivity.

Finally, demographics are a major factor. National and prefectural promotions of university internationalization efforts have been framed as attempts to mitigate the impact of Japan's declining traditionally aged university-eligible population (Breaden, 2013; Breaden & Goodman, 2020; Goodman, 2007; MEXT, 2017; MEXT, 2018). Increasing the number of traditionally aged university students to ensure the survival of post-secondary institutions has been championed despite the lack of long-term opportunities for international students to establish lives in Japan (Breaden & Goodman, 2020; Inaba, 2020; Liu-Farrer, 2014; Nakamatsu, 2014; Shiobara, 2020; Tamaoka et al., 2003). Superficial promotion of multiculturalism at the national level (Nakamatsu, 2014; Shiobara, 2020) can be combatted at the campus level by promoting learning and behaviours that lessen the impact of the dominant culture.

In summary, NGU lacks an agreed-upon definition of intercultural competence. Moreover, strengths and non-trivial gaps at the social, technological, economic, ecological, demographic, legislative, ethical, and demographic levels that contribute to the organization's current state have been identified.

### **Guiding Questions Emerging from the Problem of Practice**

The main goal of this OIP is to enhance student-level intercultural competencies to bolster NGU's internationalization process by making the on-campus environment more



inclusive. Key guiding questions explore how to operationalize this OIP to better align learning practices with the school's mission (NGU, n.d.) to foster a more inclusive learning environment.

To begin, how can a COIL project enhance student-level intercultural competencies? What specific activities and assignments should be designed to ensure that students are provided learning opportunities to enhance their intercultural skill development? How can these activities be designed in cooperation with an international counterpart to contribute to a successful project?

Second, how can existing participatory exchanges be enhanced to advance intercultural learning and promote inclusion? NGU has established more than 40 partnerships with higher-education institutions and other organizations both in Japan and around the world (NGU, n.d.). Can these partnerships be expanded to enhance intercultural learning to promote diversity and inclusion? Should a new partnership be established?

Third, Breaden (2013) argues that foreign-born university employees in Japanese contexts can have an outsized influence in promoting organizational change due to their outsider status. To garner support for this change effort, a partnership with the Diversity Lead (DL) has been established. What other partnerships in the institution need to be established to promote change outside of the Foreign Communications department? Further, how often should the author communicate with his team given the importance of sharing successes in Japanese organizations (Kirsch et al., 2011; Yonezawa et al., 2014)?

Fourth, Duffy et al. (2020), King de Ramirez (2019), Marcillo-Gomez and Desilus (2016), and Swartz et al. (2020) only provide short descriptions for how they established COIL partnerships with their respective peer institutions. What process should the author follow to establish a meaningful partnership with an international institution?

To continue, what is an effective way to measure student-level intercultural competence at NGU? Most definitions of intercultural competence are general (Deardorff, 2006). This makes it difficult to design an assessment tool (Deardorff, 2006). Further, definitions and assessment tools for intercultural competencies are context-specific and change over time (Deardorff, 2006). In addition, commonly used assessment tools have largely been designed for Western contexts (Deardorff, 2006). Given that this OIP is focused on enhancing student-level intercultural competencies in a Japanese higher-education context, defining criteria, and designing thoughtful assessment tools is required. Should the author promote an existing intercultural competence rubric to expedite the change process? Or should the Foreign Communications department collaboratively create a context-specific intercultural competence rubric? In either case, all participating parties need to be mindful that developing one's intercultural competencies is a lifelong pursuit (Blair, 2017; Deardorff, 2006; Deardorff, 2017; Gray et al., 2019; Saurwein et al., 2020).

Working with the team to define; prioritize areas for development; align department-specific goals with intercultural learning goals, and to determine evidence of and for learning is crucial when creating intercultural-competence-based assessments (Deardorff, 2017). Superficially measuring and analyzing data could lead to misleading results and trivialize the lifelong pursuit of developing one's intercultural competencies. How much time should be devoted to collaboratively making these assessment decisions?

### **Leadership-Focused Vision for Change**

Change leaders in Japanese organizations need to be clear and prescriptive about what they expect of organizational members for their initiatives to be successful (Andonian et al., 2018; Kirsch et al., 2011). Furthermore, change agents in a high uncertainty avoidance,

consensus-based culture must be amenable to a slower pace of change that is focused on the long term (Andonian et al. 2018; Buller, 2015; Hofstede, 1980; Kirsch et al., 2011; Meyer, 2014; Schein, 2010). Being patient and willing to iteratively redefine the desired future state in collaboration with colleagues is key for success (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2010), as is a tolerance for ambiguity and paradox (Fang, 2010) throughout the process. Moreover, dedicating time and effort to a multiyear change process is important (Andonian et al., 2018; Buller, 2015) as changes need to be gradual, iterative, and incremental, and occur over several years (Andonian et al., 2018; Buller, 2015). These conventional insights into Japanese and collectivist organizational cultures notwithstanding, it is important to be open to a “both-and” dialectic (Fang, 2010) when undergoing change at NGU given the success of its recent change efforts.

NGU has a lot of events, initiatives, and programs that deserve acknowledgement. Student- and instructor-created initiatives that celebrate diversity and promote inclusive learning environments free from discrimination are one such example. These types of events are not common at other Japanese universities. Another important example is the school’s focus on helping students with mental health issues and creating learning environments to better support those students. These progressive changes represent important examples of how the university has been able to adapt to a changing social climate to meet diverse student needs. The Foreign Communications department can focus on these successes when collaboratively working to create a better future (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Cooperrider et al., 2008).

### **The Desired State**

Achieving the desired organizational state requires an increase in international learning opportunities to bolster student-level intercultural competencies (Knight, 1999, 2004). Better aligning in-class practices with the organization’s mission could enhance intercultural learning

(Castro et al., 2020). A more concentrated focus on bolstering student-level intercultural competencies can begin in the Foreign Communications department and inspire changes in other departments.

### ***Improving Alignment***

In the desired state, NGU's on-campus environment would strongly exhibit the tenets outlined in the organization's mission (NGU, n.d.). In NGU's current state, more work needs to be done to ensure that students have opportunities to explore differences in values. It is hard to argue that particular cultural or religious viewpoints are not being promoted when the vast majority of the on-campus population is Japanese. Therefore, in the desired state, students would earnestly learn about a range of religions and ideological viewpoints.

The university should also organize its resources to make positive national and international contributions. NGU has made strides towards achieving this goal by establishing partnerships with more than 40 domestic and international institutions (NGU, n.d.). However, no partnerships to date have been established with the Foreign Communications department. Moreover, some areas of the world, like Central and South America, are not represented by the university's current partnership roster. In the desired state, the Foreign Communications department would have partnering institutions in other countries.

### ***Role Models***

Role models within an organization can inspire important change (Gregersen-Hermans, 2017; Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010). The university's president, Dr. U., is a fine example of an organizational member that departmental colleagues could be inspired to emulate. The president's example could be leveraged as an important driver to advance initiatives. Dr. U. is multilingual, and his active involvement and support for on-campus events that enhance

internationalization represents a good model to inspire change for others in the organization (Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010). In addition to his visibility at on-campus events, he also accompanies students on study-abroad excursions outside of Japan and weaves opportunities for international learning in his courses and lectures. A more explicit focus on enhancing student-level intercultural competencies through promoting increased interactions with students from a wide range of backgrounds would provide options for students to see themselves as agentic and capable outside of Japan as per Dr. U.'s vision.

### *Student Needs*

Student needs must also be a central change driver (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Freire, 2018). As the number of international students is expected to grow year-over-year going forward, it is imperative that students are provided with intercultural training (Hofstede, 1980; Janssen, 2019; Meyer, 2014; Swartz et al., 2020) that could help to create a more inclusive on-campus learning environment (Maboloc, 2021). Honour, respect, and empathy play incredibly important roles in fostering intercultural competence (Calloway-Thomas et al., 2017) and establishing a balance of these traits is key to achieving the desired state.

In addition, to the social justice focus on inclusion (Chiramba & Maringe, 2020; Malusa, 2020), meaningfully working alongside, and learning about, culturally different others would work to satisfy the increased, market-based need for Japanese corporations to employ peripatetic workers who are able to decipher the complex needs of international counterparts (Wang et al., 2017). Even if corporate practices become more sedentary as a long-term ramification of the novel coronavirus pandemic, workers would require a heightened understanding of the cultural realities and diverse needs of culturally different others as they collaborated on projects and

interpreted/negotiated meaning at a distance. Providing students with important international learning opportunities in advance of their careers would certainly be helpful.

### ***COVID-19 and Online Learning***

The abrupt and ongoing shift to online educational methods resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic should be a beacon that signals that internet-based teaching practices need to be continuously improved upon to enhance learning and to provide more equitable access to course offerings (Bellini et al., 2021; Minkos & Gelbar, 2021). The internet provides a range of new possibilities for the Habermasian notion of a public sphere (Glassman, 2020) as well as a forum for discourse ethics (Habermas, 2018) and communicative action that could be leveraged at NGU to make the learning environment more inclusive. Increasing the amount of higher-order reflectivity in internet-based education would create opportunities for ideal speech (Habermas, 2018; Jackson, 2019; Visser, 2019), egalitarian learning (Tilak & Glassman, 2020; Welikala, 2019), and human-driven, humanistic education (Glassman, 2020). To achieve this, discussions need to be inclusive (Moscato, 2017; Welikala, 2019); foster equal participation (Capper, 2019; Habermas, 2018; Moscato, 2017); be based in what each participant believes to be true (Fuchs, 2016; Habermas, 2018; Moscato, 2017; O'Mahony, 2021; Peters, 2006; Phirangee & Malec, 2017); be non-coercive (Capper, 2019; Moscato, 2017), and in accordance with the subjects' interests and values (Habermas, 2018) so that a collaborative community can be developed (Maboloc, 2021; Phirangee & Malec, 2017). Further, participants in inclusive online discourse need to be able to engage in perspective-taking to meaningfully consider the diversity of viewpoints involved (Habermas, 2018; O'Mahony, 2021).

Thus, online learning will be incorporated in this OIP in a manner focused on heightening student agency and learning (Tilak & Glassman, 2020) through inclusive discourse focused on

enhancing intercultural understanding and empathy to ameliorate injustice (Capper, 2019; Freire, 2018; Glassman, 2020; Habermas 2018). Further, specific practices will be adopted to keep learners affectively, cognitively, and behaviourally engaged (Walker & Koralesky, 2021). Internet-based-learning needs to continue developing into a means for students to meaningfully interact with each other to create new knowledge (Bellini et al., 2021; Glassman, 2020; Minkos & Gelbar, 2021; Selwyn, 2007; Tilak & Glassman, 2020).

In summary, the author will adopt a long-term perspective focused on incremental and iterative change towards achieving the desired state. This perspective is in accordance with Japan's high-uncertainty avoidance, long-term-perspective focused organizational culture (Andonian et al., 2018; Breden, 2013; Buller, 2015; Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede et al., 2010; Kirsch et al., 2011; Meyer, 2014; Schein, 2010). Moreover, the author will use stories from the organization's successes in making the school more inclusive; demonstrate the misalignment between current practices and NGU's mission statement; point to important on-campus role models as examples; focus heavily on meeting student needs and use theoretical and evidence-informed learning practices as drivers of change.

### **Organizational Change Readiness**

The author wholeheartedly believes that NGU can become more inclusive by seizing the opportunity presented by the ongoing novel coronavirus pandemic to utilize internet-based tools to enhance student-level intercultural competencies. The following paragraphs outline how the author utilized two tools to gauge the department's readiness for change.

#### **Cawsey et al.'s (2016) Organizational Change Readiness Questionnaire**

Cawsey et al.'s (2016) questionnaire contains 36 items that are categorized into areas that are important for determining change readiness. Points are awarded or deducted based on the

realities of the organization. Scores can range from -10 to +35 using this tool, and organizations that score below 10 are not ready for change (Cawsey et al., 2016). NGU earned a score of 19 on the tool (see Appendix B). NGU has a positive score in five out of the six targeted sections. The paragraphs that follow explain the results in more detail.

NGU received its highest ranking in the questions focused on credible leadership (see Appendix B). The major internationalization initiatives that are currently underway at NGU have demonstrated that senior leadership has been effective at cultivating trust, retaining important organizational stakeholders, and facilitating processes for lower-ranking organizational members to communicate with senior leadership. These practices are all supported by change-readiness research (see Rafferty et al., 2013; Samaranyake & Takemura, 2017; Weiner, 2009; Yonezawa, 2017). In addition, the leadership team has demonstrated its commitment to change by following through on promises; establishing partnerships with more than 40 universities in international settings (NGU, n.d.); increasing the number of international students year over year (see Appendix A) and encouraging NGU faculty to share ideas on how to enhance the internationalization efforts or improve the school in other ways.

NGU also earned a high score in the section concerning accountability. NGU commonly uses survey instruments to collect data and gain insights into the students, academic faculty, and administrative staff. Further, departments administer surveys at the beginning, middle, and end of each semester to assess student learning, study habits, and satisfaction with their courses. Departments share aggregated responses from these survey instruments with faculty and task them to prepare reports that outline their professional goals based on the results. These practices are common at Japanese universities (Breaden, 2013). Thus, leveraging these existing survey-based practices could be an important strategy for collecting and analyzing data in this OIP.



### **Critique of Cawsey et al.'s (2016) Organizational Change Readiness Questionnaire**

The questionnaire is a useful tool in assessing an organization's readiness for change. However, there are cultural biases in the questionnaire that need to be acknowledged. Cawsey et al.'s (2016) contention that change leaders should focus their attention on strengthening the areas of weakness identified by their questionnaire does not necessarily apply in a Japanese university context. Japan is a high uncertainty avoidance (Haghirian, 2010; Hofstede, 1980; Meyer, 2014), collectivist (Meyer, 2014; Schein, 2010) culture, and thus rewards for change efforts are intrinsic and hard to assess. Organizational members view the work, camaraderie, and success as the reward (Breaden, 2013; Meyer, 2014). Further, the third question in Cawsey et al.'s (2016) inventory concerning rewards for change reflects a Western perspective on the cultural value of failure that is incompatible with the Japanese view. This is because individual faculty members, despite their autonomy to design courses and choose teaching methodologies and pedagogies to meet their students' needs are never viewed as outside of their group. Thus, attempting change and failing reflects on the group rather than the individual. However, given Japanese organizational proclivities towards adhering to processes and following conventions (Breaden, 2013; Haghirian, 2010; Hofstede, 1980; Kimura & Nishikawa, 2018; Meyer, 2014), individuals who attempt changes without following the proper procedures would certainly be reprimanded.

Cawsey et al.'s (2016) questions related to executive support also reflect a Western view of organizations that is somewhat incompatible with Japanese university contexts. This is because, unlike Western university contexts, Japanese university presidents and other members of the senior leadership team are overwhelmingly internally appointed, tenured faculty members who continue their teaching duties throughout their presidency (Breaden, 2013; Ota, 2020; Yonezawa, 2020). Japanese university presidents and other senior executive appointees typically

serve a fixed term and then either continue their teaching and research or retire (Breaden, 2013; Ota, 2020; Yonezawa, 2020). This is in stark contrast to Western practices where presidents are largely recruited externally based on their business and leadership acumen (Ota, 2020), and are thus subject to high turnover rates owing to the success or failure of their initiatives. In short, if executive success is defined by a senior-level leader's ability to remain in their position, it is incompatible with the practices at NGU and other Japanese contexts.

### **Bolman and Deal's (2017) Four Frames**

Bolman and Deal's four frames (the structural frame, the human resources frame, the political frame, and the symbolic frame) provide an important complement to Cawsey et al.'s (2016) questionnaire in assessing the Foreign Communications Department and NGU's readiness for organizational change.

The structural frame indicates that NGU has procedures in place to support bottom-up change. Faculty members have used the ringi system to foster changes to promote a more inclusive campus. For example, the Foreign Communications department created a policy in 2017 to support LGBTQ students. This bottom-up change inspired a policy that requires staff to avoid gendered pronouns in their communications with students. This policy success indicates that structures are in place. Furthermore, working collaboratively to collect a broad spectrum of opinions is supported by change readiness research (see Armenakis et al., 1993; Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Holt et al., 2007; Samaranyake & Takemura, 2017; Weiner, 2009).

The human resource frame provides important insights into agendas, individual motivations, and human needs. To begin, NGU's leadership has demonstrated a commitment to promoting diversity as evidenced by the establishment of an on-campus Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, and the creation of the Diversity Lead (DL) position, that is aligned with evidence-

based practices (Knight, 2015; Yonezawa, 2017). In addition, the leadership team has consistently increased the number of on-campus international students (see Appendix A) as promised in their strategic plan. Thus, NGU's leadership team has been executing on its promises. However, the human resource frame indicates that more work could be done to meet student needs. Developing intercultural competence has not been a focus of departmental courses, nor is it reflected in NGU's public-facing policies.

Change leaders utilizing bottom-up approaches need to be particularly adept at forming alliances and anticipating conflicts. This is especially true in Japan's collectivist culture. The political frame provides a means for examining potential issues. Given that faculty members possess outsized autonomy in developing course curricula, conflicts could arise if the author is too forceful in insisting on change (Meyer, 2014). To this point in the process, the author has used an evidence-informed, political approach to change which involves praising influential leaders' successes and sharing insights from research literature with them (Coetzer, 2018).

Buller (2015) argues that the symbolic frame is particularly important when analyzing a university's culture during major change efforts. NGU is a Japanese university that has cultures, traditions, and practices that need to be honoured, respected, and followed. Dr. U. has exemplified the how change leaders should both honour existing practices and celebrate change. Dr. U.'s visibility at on-campus events and in university-related media makes him an important, recognizable figure to gain support for change initiatives.

## **Findings**

In summary, a synthesis of Cawsey et al.'s (2016) organizational change readiness questionnaire and an analysis of NGU through Bolman and Deal's (2017) four frames indicates that the department and organization is ready for change. However, the author needs to be aware

of important caveats that could complicate the change process. First, an awards system may need to be established given the multicultural composition of the department. The author believes, based on past initiatives, that the potential to publish research about the project in academic journals should be enough to maintain support. However, more incentives may need to be offered. Second, the author needs to continue to build support for the project via *nemawashi*. Sharing articles about intercultural competence development and COIL with departmental colleagues, and other important stakeholders, towards fostering a more inclusive on-campus environment is key. Third, the author needs to continue to follow Japanese organizational practices. Although, practices such as *nemawashi* and the *ringi* system are time-consuming, honouring these structures is important for change to occur.

Finally, NGU has demonstrated a commitment to fostering changes that champion inclusivity that are uncommon at other Japanese universities. Maintaining a departmental focus on the important changes NGU has supported to advance LGBTQ rights, establish several genderless washrooms, and acknowledge Black Lives Matter, is crucial to galvanize support.

### **Chapter 1 Conclusion**

This opening chapter described NGU's unique organizational context, including details about its history; current initiatives; traditional change processes; leadership, and the author's professional agency. The author has also outlined how servant leadership and creative leadership could be used to complement the organization's internationalization initiatives to better align on-campus practices with the university's mission statement. Furthermore, the author has provided an evidence-based rationale for why achieving this alignment is vital to foster a more inclusive, and interculturally competent on-campus environment. In addition, the problem of practice was explained and framed by a STEEPLED analysis, and change drivers including the misalignment

between the desired state and current practices, organizational role models, and online learning were outlined. Finally, NGU's change readiness was analyzed using Cawsey et al.'s (2016) organizational readiness questionnaire and Bolman and Deal's (2017) four frames. The findings suggest that the project is feasible.

Chapter 2 outlines how a combined approach of servant and creative leadership will be utilized to lead the change process. The chapter also describes how Appreciative Inquiry (AI) (Cooperrider et al., 2008) will be complemented by the Change Leader's Roadmap (CLR) (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2010) as the framework for leading the change. A critical organizational analysis using Buller's (2015) ten analytical lenses is provided, and five possible solutions are analyzed and evaluated to determine the optimal approach to address the PoP. Finally, culturally specific ethical considerations are outlined and analyzed using Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions theory and Meyer's (2014) culture map.

## **Chapter 2: Planning and Development**

Chapter 1 introduced NGU and provided an overview of its history and the process of internationalization that it is currently undergoing. Further, the first chapter introduced the PoP focused on investigating how COIL and an increased departmental focus on developing student-level intercultural competencies could bolster NGU's internationalization efforts to make the learning environment more inclusive. This second chapter explains the author's approach to change; describes the framework for leading the change process; offers an organizational analysis using Buller's (2015) ten analytical lenses; shares five possible solutions to redress the problem of practice and explores the ethical considerations and implications of this project.

### **Leadership Approaches to Change**

The author will work within his agency throughout this plan to advance the departmental understanding of intercultural competence by leveraging informal relationships, sharing knowledge, and co-creating interventions towards achieving cultural synthesis (Freire, 2018). Working with the DL and senior departmental members in accordance with Japanese organizational practices and cultural dimensions theory, the author will share readings and research to consistently focus attention on the importance of enhancing student-level intercultural competencies. Furthermore, the author will share successful practices from other Japanese universities that could be adopted at NGU to inspire potential changes to increase knowledge in a culturally sensitive leadership manner (Hofstede, 1980; Meyer, 2014). In addition, the author will leverage examples of sound practices from other faculties in the institution that could be adopted by the department. In sum, sharing knowledge and research-backed practices are effective leadership practices because they honour the high-uncertainty avoidance culture (Hofstede, 1980; Meyer, 2014).

## **Servant Leadership**

Servant leadership is a cogent companion to Japanese leadership approaches because it is focused on building relationships, and thus, is compatible with the informal consensus building required in *nemawashi* (Breaden, 2013; Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014). In addition, servant leadership is culturally appropriate because it has been found to be an effective style of leadership in Japanese organizations (Kobayashi et al., 2020). Sharing knowledge with influential colleagues with an authentic focus on improving the student experience has been the most effective way to change practices in the author's experience at NGU, and servant leadership literature corroborates this claim (Coetzer, 2018; Eva et al., 2018; Kobayashi et al., 2020; Zhu & Zhang, 2020). Moreover, unlike transformational leadership, servant leadership is not dependent on the clear vision of the leader, nor does it assume that the team is not performing to the best of their abilities (Northouse, 2019).

Servant leadership is also a cogent approach to foster change given the author's agency because it can begin anywhere in the organization (Dittmar, 2006; Northouse, 2019). The approach is focused heavily on a commitment to personal and communal learning and development (Hays, 2008), to benefit the least privileged in organizations (Searle & Barbuto, 2010; Sendjaya, 2015). Thus, servant leadership can complement critical pedagogy (Freire, 2018) in a culturally relevant manner (Hofstede, 1980; Meyer, 2014), and will serve to help the author promote more inclusive learning environments. Therefore, servant leadership models and operational definitions from Barbuto and Wheeler (2016), Coetzer (2018), Searle and Barbuto (2010), Sendjaya (2015), and Zhu and Zhang (2020) will be utilized to inspire change.

At the outset, considerations from Zhu and Zhang's (2020) model will help to drive the change process because it is pragmatic, emphasizes knowledge sharing to drive innovation, and

is best aligned with the author's agency, the high-uncertainty avoidance cultural context (Hofstede, 1980), the department's history, and organizational practices. Searle and Barbuto's (2010) model complements Zhu and Zhang's (2020) approach through its focus on how the servant leadership dimensions of altruistic calling, emotional healing, persuasive mapping, wisdom, and organizational stewardship can influence micro-positive behaviours that increase performance and inspire improved actions at the macro-level.

To continue, Coetzer's model (2018) provides an operational guideline to navigate a change process from establishing a departmental vision, helping colleagues through sharing and role-modeling, professional development, and monitoring for improvement. In addition, Barbuto and Wheeler (2016) have operationalized definitions of listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, growth, and community building that will assist the author in his leadership approach. Finally, Sendjaya (2015) offers a set of dimensions (voluntary subordination, authentic self, covenantal relationships, responsible morality, transcendental spirituality, and transforming influence), each with a subset of values and commitments that will be a great complement to Coetzer (2018), Searle and Barbuto's (2010) and Zhu and Zhang's (2020) models. A synthesis of these models has been developed for this project (see Appendix C).

### **Creative Leadership**

Creative leadership's operationalized definition of creativity focuses on producing original ideas that add value or solve a problem (Hunter et al., 2013; Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2013). Further, creativity involves novelty, usefulness, and realization (or the ability to implement, or produce) (Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2013). However, creative leadership also acknowledges that getting others to accept a proposed change may require an intense effort



(Puccio et al., 2013). Therefore, involving others; giving and receiving feedback focused on fostering development; encouraging debate, and allowing for experimentation are central to creative leadership (Puccio et al., 2013) and complement a servant leadership approach.

To continue, there is a strong connection between creativity and effective leadership (Greenleaf, 2011; Hays, 2008; Puccio, 2013; Sendjaya, 2015). Creative leadership is focused on harnessing the power of organizational constituents to advance learning and creativity (Buller, 2015). Creative leadership provides the author with a range of strategies that can be utilized in departmental meetings (Puccio, 2013; Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2018) for the team to develop prototypes to improve practices from shared understandings once departmental consensus has been achieved through *nemawashi* and knowledge sharing. Creative leadership emphasizes that effective leaders are flexible and take risks, solicit ideas, anticipate opportunities, change their minds, and consider problems from a range of diverse perspectives (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Puccio, 2013). Therefore, when leading meetings, the author needs to create a positive climate that encourages others to be creative (Puccio, 2013).

Effectively implementing a combined servant leadership and creative leadership approach could build a culture that strives for innovative solutions and frames change as an opportunity rather than a threat (Buller, 2015; Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2018). The author will offer a range of tools from creative leadership to assist his team and other members of the department to harness creativity.

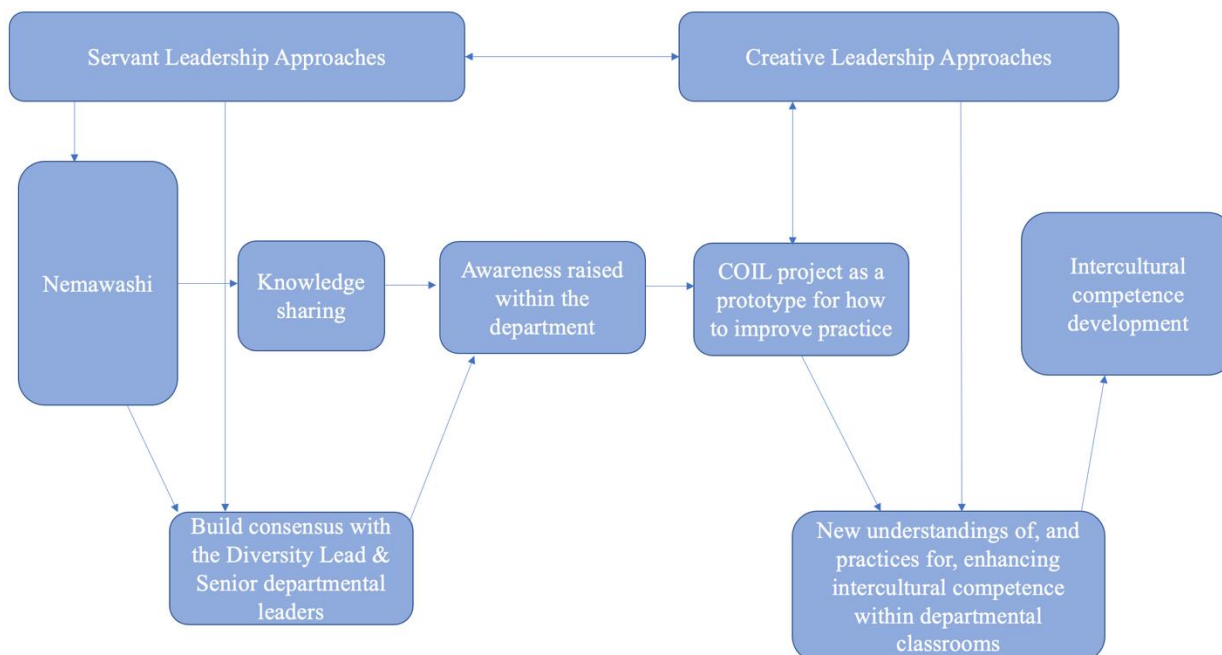
Creative leadership will allow the author to better operationalize servant leadership through a range of fun and important activities. These tools and suggested practices will include timed writing (Puccio et al., 2018); encouraging “yes-and” thinking (Besser et al., 2013; Puccio et al., 2018); imaginary journalism (Puccio et al., 2012); empathetic observation and empathy

maps (Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2018); promoting intrapreneurship (Puccio et al., 2018); divergent and convergent-thinking practices (Puccio et al., 2018); reverse brainstorming (Buller, 2015), “How-how” diagrams (Puccio et al., 2012), and creating pluses, potentials, concerns, and overcoming concerns charts (Puccio et al., 2012).

Intentionally incorporating these tactics when given time in departmental meetings to focus on enhancing student-level intercultural competencies should bolster the collective capacity of the team to design important interventions in their own classrooms to enhance learning in honour of the cultural understanding of academic freedom (Breaden, 2013; Breaden & Goodman, 2020). Focusing heavily on student and organizational needs throughout these practices is key. Figure 2 is a visual representation of the author’s leadership approach.

## Figure 2

### *Visual Representation of Leadership Approaches*



In sum, servant leadership provides a solid foundation for a complementary form of leadership (Dittmar, 2006), and the synergies created by utilizing creative leadership practices to

enhance servant leadership will drive the author's approach. Despite these assertions, the author needs to maintain an ethnographic stance throughout the process to ensure that the combined approach is serving his colleagues, the students, and NGU. In particular, the collaborative and constructivist stances of these approaches may require scaffolding and modelling given the realities of the institution (Breaden, 2013; Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede et al., 2010; Janssen, 2019; Meyer, 2014), and prototypes may need to be offered in honour of the uncertainty-avoidance culture (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede et al., 2010) for incremental improvements to occur (Meyer, 2014). Further consideration of the ethnocultural and professional realities of the department are reflected in the framework for leading the change process.

### **Framework for Leading the Change Process**

The complex, dynamic nature of university environments necessitates a more flexible conceptual framework when initiating and undertaking change efforts (Buller, 2015; Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Manning, 2012; Northouse, 2019). Further, traditional, linear approaches to change management would not be effective in a Japanese university environment (Buller, 2015; Haghirian, 2010; Hofstede, 1980; Meyer, 2014). For example, Kotter's models would not be appropriate because they do not allow for a process akin to *nemawashi*. Furthermore, Kotter's change models are also not theoretically compatible with the author's proposed plan because they rely too heavily on the change leader and are not flexible enough for emergent understandings borne from valuable, critical dialogue (Freire, 2018; Habermas, 2018). Therefore, the robust design that characterizes this proposed change has been chosen to reflect Japan's unique cultural realities and is centred on a flexible vision of the future (Buller, 2015; Manning, 2012; Kezar & Eckel, 2002) that will emerge from a collaborative, participative approach.

The framework chosen for this project incorporates elements from different frameworks to tailor the plan (Ackerman Anderson and Anderson, 2010; Buller, 2015) to NGU's unique context. Therefore, elements of the change leadership roadmap (CLR) (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2010) will be used to support the appreciative inquiry (AI) framework (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Cooperrider & Whitney, 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010) to ensure that the structure is flexible and adaptable enough to serve the needs of the department and NGU.

To achieve the desired state proposed in this plan necessitates a flexible approach that involves creating a shared understanding of the general direction for the project through *nemawashi* (Breaden, 2013; Haghirian, 2014; Meyer, 2014). To successfully lead the change, the author needs to advance the case for enhancing intercultural competencies towards making the on-campus environment more inclusive by sharing tools and practices that could foster change, engaging others in critical dialogue (Freire, 2018; Habermas, 2018), and focusing on helping the team find their own unique answers (Higgs & Rowland, 2005). Thus, AI will drive the process, but the CLR will be used to refocus and realign the project if unforeseen complications occur. The paragraphs that follow explain AI and the CLR in more detail and offer a non-exhaustive set of synergies and potential complications that could result from utilizing these frameworks.

### **Appreciative Inquiry (AI)**

The AI 4-D cycle is flexible enough to be undertaken by a small team within a university department (Cooperrider et al., 2008) and does not need to be undertaken by those most senior in an organization (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Steyn, 2010, 2012). Thus, it is within the author's agency to use time in departmental meetings to focus attention on how the team can enhance student-level intercultural competencies using the AI 4-D cycle.

The first “d” in the AI 4-D cycle stands for discovery. The discovery phase will be supplemented by stories of NGU’s recent successes, including its championing of LGBTQ rights and its support for an instructor-led Black Lives Matter initiative so that the department can recognize and celebrate shared successes (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Buller, 2015; Cooperrider et al., 2008; Schein, 2010) that have already helped to make the on-campus environment more inclusive. Moreover, the author will illustrate the strides NGU has been making in other faculties to encourage partnerships with foreign universities to expand learning across international borders that could enhance student-level intercultural competencies. Through sharing these stories face-to-face or in collaborative cloud-based documents, engaging in dialogue, and encouraging others to share recent successes, themes will be collected and synthesized (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010).

The second “d” in the AI 4-D cycle stands for dream. The dream phase will focus on imagining possible futures based on the collected and synthesized themes from the discovery phase (Cooperrider et al., 2008). A provocative question may be crafted to frame the process (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). Building excitement in the team based on the shared ideas and extracted themes will allow the department to collectively envision a more inclusive, desired future state (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). In this process, the department can co-create a shared vision for what an improved version of the department should look like (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). Moreover, working with all nine members to ensure consensus is crucial (Breaden, 2013; Cooperrider et al., 2008). Much like the discovery process, the sharing activities will need to be altered to accommodate the culture of the department. In both instances, anonymous sharing through qualitative surveys

would be a more culturally appropriate (Breaden, 2013; Hofstede, 1980), effective means of gathering data than face-to-face interviews.

In the design stage, the third “d” in the AI 4-D cycle, the team will develop interventions to bolster intercultural learning opportunities based on a synthesis of the potential futures imagined in the dream activities (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). The process will involve selecting important elements from the previous stages, identifying key internal and external relationships and potential partnerships that need to be consulted or established to advance the project, and bridging the gap between current practices and what could be (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). The Creative Change Model (Puccio et al., 2012) could be incorporated into this process to advance innovative and useful suggestions for improved practices. Prototyping and scaffolding (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2018) could prove a useful strategy at this stage. Further, knowledge sharing (Zhu & Zhang, 2020) through articles on intercultural competence (see Deardorff, 2006; Deardorff, 2017) and COIL (see Appiah-Kubi & Annan, 2020; Duffy et al., 2020; King de Ramirez, 2019; Marcillo-Gomez & Desilus, 2016; Swartz et al., 2020) could be an important supplement to the process.

During the destiny stage, the final “d” in the AI 4-D cycle, innovation and inquiry will be promoted to complement the newly designed practices (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). Furthermore, the positive core will be emphasized by reiterating and celebrating the important strides the team has made to bolster student-level intercultural competencies (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010) towards a more inclusive environment.

Continuous learning and improvisation need to be championed throughout the AI 4-D inquiry process (Cooperrider et al., 2008). Thus, further elements of servant leadership and

creative leadership will be utilized to bolster the change process. Furthermore, focusing the team's attention on what worked well in the process is imperative (Cooperrider et al., 2008). Reflections on how to enhance the inquiry cycle in the future will be helpful for improving practices going forward.

### **The Change Leader's Roadmap (CLR)**

The CLR conceptualizes change into distinct steps like most processes, however, Ackerman Anderson and Anderson (2010) contend that there will be unexpected complications that will prompt the change leader to take alternative paths to achieve the desired goal. For Ackerman Anderson and Anderson (2010), effective change does not follow a specific recipe or series of steps in a linear or logical order (Buller, 2015). To put it another way, the CLR is more of a philosophy to provide structure and depth to support considerations rather than a framework that dictates specific actions (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Buller, 2015).

The CLR is a cogent complement to AI because of its focus on creating a shared vision; empowering constituents through collaborative practices; encouraging new, creative ways of thinking about problems and socially constructing interventions to redress them; prototyping and piloting potential interventions to test their efficacy and effectiveness and focusing the group's attention to on-campus champions of the desired change (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2010). However, the framework differs in that it acknowledges that every change process is context-specific and, thus, does not necessarily follow a uniform path to implementation (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2010). Therefore, the course-correcting elements built in to the CLR could be invaluable should the AI 4-D cycle prove unsuitable for the context. Furthermore, the CLR is divided into nine distinctive stages that will bolster each stage of the AI 4-D cycle by subdividing them into distinct parts.

Effective change leaders understand that they cannot make important breakthroughs happen, they can only inspire the conditions for important innovations to occur (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Buller, 2015). Therefore, co-creating conditions for important changes to bolster practices within the department is an important initial step towards improving learning (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2010). The combined approach of AI and CLR, complemented by servant leadership and creative leadership will provide the author with a strong framework and a long list of strategies and tools to promote important changes.

### **Limitations**

Despite the complementarities between AI, CLR, servant leadership, and creative leadership, the author must be conscientious throughout the process to ensure that the framework and approach to change are creating the necessary synergies to advance student-level intercultural competencies. Further, the flexibility within these models and frameworks, and the focus on actions rather than position within the organization indicate that advancing student level intercultural competencies is within the author's agency. However, the author needs to remain aware of the superior positional power of the members of his team, such as the DL, and work with them to inspire changes. The robust design of this framework will allow the author to focus on the desired future and recognize that there are several ways to get there (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Kezar & Eckel, 2002). The social justice issue of inclusion will be top of mind throughout the process (Chiramba & Maringe, 2020; Maboloc, 2021; Malusa, 2020).

### **Critical Organizational Analysis**

NGU, like most Japanese organizations, has the leadership characteristics of a high-power distance, high uncertainty avoidance culture (Andonian et al., 2018; Haghirian, 2010; Hofstede, 1980; Kirsch et al., 2011; Meyer, 2014; Schein, 2010). Therefore, effectively



promoting and implementing changes in departments and organizational units requires significant, clear, long-term planning that is explicit about the future roles and responsibilities of team members (Andonian et al., 2018; Kirsch et al., 2011; Schein, 2010), and needs to be gradual, iterative, and incremental, and take place over several years (Andonian et al., 2018; Buller, 2015; Clegg & Kono, 2002; Kono & Clegg, 2001). The author is aware of these realities and has taken a long-term approach to this gradual change towards increasing the departmental focus on enhancing student-level intercultural competencies and creating a pilot COIL project.

Despite the perceived rigidity of the bureaucratic processes of NGU, there is a flexibility in the governing structure that gives organizational members the freedom to pursue meaningful goals that could be characterized as a strength (Manning, 2012). Organizational members have significant levels of autonomy to foster change efforts related to enhancing internationalization initiatives. Recent history offers a couple of instructive examples of how lecturers in similar roles to the author initiated successful university-wide changes. In both cases, the lecturers used their “outsider” foreign-born status to drive change, by winning the support of key organizational members and utilizing their perceived status as a knowledgeable agent of internationalization to cross boundaries to inspire and implement needed changes (Breaden, 2013).

Nemawashi plays an important role in an organizational change of any significance in a Japanese organization (Breaden, 2013), and change agents need to be working behind the scenes with important organizational members to gain support prior to formally introducing any changes. To this end, the author has been working with the DL (who is also a member of the Foreign Communications Department) and Dr. U. to focus attention on creating a COIL project and enhancing student-level intercultural competencies. Under normal circumstances, the process of gaining support from organizational actors using nemawashi involves informal

conversations, dinners, and related social events (Breaden, 2013; Meyer, 2014). These types of informal-consensus-building practices have been rendered impossible due to the pandemic, but the author has been using internet-based communications as a substitute. To put it simply, gaining consensus, even within the department, involves demonstrating that there is organizational support from distinguished members of the organization.

Practitioners need to become cultural outsiders to effectively observe institutional patterns (Kezar & Eckel, 2002). However, the inherent complexity involved in higher education contexts, coupled with the ethnocultural differences involved in this change process, require an analytical tool that affords the observer a range of angles from which to analyze the organization, interrogate its practices, and identify opportunities for improvement. To this end, Buller's (2015) ten analytical lenses has been utilized because it provides educationalists and change agents a holistic view of their proposed initiatives prior to proceeding towards implementation. Owing to the complexity involved in this project, the author begins the organizational analysis with an overview of key issues in internationalization initiatives at Japanese universities that are relevant to NGU, and then provides a summary of the analysis in the proceeding paragraphs.

### **Kokusaika (国際化, Internationalization)**

*Kokusaika* is a multivocal term (Goodman, 2007) that can paradoxically promote outward-looking (international), and inward-looking (nationalist) definitions depending on the paradigm of the individual. Although it would be far-fetched to claim that NGU is promoting a type of internationalization that is focused on promoting Japanese nationalism by clearly distinguishing us (*uchi*) from them (*soto*, people from other countries), the complexities inherent in the paradox need to be considered (Breaden, 2013; Inuzuka, 2017).

To illustrate the multivocality of *kokusaika* in NGU's example, some might interpret the drastic increase in the number of international students (see Appendix A) as an unmitigated success, whereas others would argue that simply bringing more international students on campus does not constitute internationalization. For many, the idea of internationalization connotes a process of further integrating international and intercultural learning into post-secondary curricula (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Knight, 2004; Knight, 2012; Mok, 2007), however, this view may not be held by influential figures within the organization, nor by important external stakeholders. Therefore, it is not surprising that some characterize Japanese universities' internationalization initiatives as incoherent (Yonezawa, 2017).

### **Internationalization at NGU**

Few Japanese universities have investigated the organizational understanding of internationalization (Inuzuka, 2017; Yonezawa, 2017). Actively communicating, or socially constructing a definition of the term could have a dramatic impact on the efficacy of practices because departments need to be actively engaged with the internationalization process to increase its organizational impact (Yonezawa, 2017). Aligning departments with the institution's mission for internationalization has been shown as an effective strategy (Ota, 2014; Yonezawa, 2017), yet scant work has investigated the specific practices that internationalize curricular content within the Foreign Communications department at NGU. This is likely because faculty are given complete autonomy to design their courses owing to a domestic understanding of academic freedom (Breaden, 2013; Manning, 2012). Therefore, working with lecturers to better understand intercultural competencies so that opportunities can be created for students to interact and collaborate with international peers on a regular basis could foster a shift in paradigm that promotes learning for its own sake (Freire, 2018; Maboloc, 2021) and bridges the gap between

uchi and soto that characterizes many tertiary-level internationalization efforts in Japan (Breaden, 2013).

Analyzing the Foreign Communications department using Buller's (2015) ten analytical lenses provides important insights into how the department is aligned with the internal and external environments, what should change, and the likelihood of success.

### **The Ten Analytical Lenses (Buller, 2015)**

Buller argues that leaders and change agents in higher education contexts need to examine potential changes considering a wider range of perspectives and impacts than other types of organizations. The ten analytical lenses challenge leaders to ask important questions about: the facts and indisputable data; the bigger picture issues; the important details; near- and long-term possibilities, and how the organization should respond to those contingencies; the people, resources, and assets available; the information required before proceeding; the best- and worst-case scenarios; the alignment between the proposed change and the organization's mission and values; the needs and desires of team members, and how these combined data points fit together before deciding on whether to proceed (Buller, 2015).

The 20/20 lens focuses on what is known about the situation. From this lens, it is obvious that there has been a dramatic increase in international students, primarily from Asian contexts (see Appendix A) that is in keeping with internationalization processes at other Japanese universities (Byun, 2014; Inuzuka, 2017; Liu-Farrer, 2014; Yonezawa et al., 2014). Moreover, it is obvious that the department has not meaningfully considered how to make learning environments more inclusive given the new multicultural environment despite NGU's mission (NGU, n.d.). To continue, some faculties within the university have established partnerships with universities in Europe, North America, and Africa to engage in day-long collaborative learning

sessions once a semester. However, the Foreign Communications department has not yet participated in online collaborative learning sessions with international universities.

The concave lens is used to analyze the situation in its entirety. Using this lens, one must consider the demographic realities that have long propelled Japanese universities towards accepting more international students. Japan has a long history with promoting an internationalization defined by attracting international students to its higher-education campuses (Breaden, 2013; Breaden & Goodman, 2020; Cummings, 2014; Mok, 2007; Ota, 2014; Yonezawa et al., 2014). However, not much has been done at the macro-level to define how an increase in international students on campuses is meant to change classroom practices (Breaden, 2013; Inuzuka, 2017). Thus, a banking concept of education (Freire, 2018) has largely endured. Therefore, enhancing the intercultural competencies of the entire student body could make initiatives more successful.

The convex lens is used to determine the steps required to advance a change, and the resultant costs involved. Enhancing student-level intercultural competencies within the department would require the team to come to shared conceptual clarity, and relevant interventions to enhance targeted traits (Blair, 2017; Gregersen-Hermans, 2017). Thus, the author has already been working with the DL and two senior-level Japanese faculty members to begin the process of enhancing student-level intercultural competencies. The author would need time at departmental meetings (either on-campus or online) to guide the team through the Appreciative Inquiry 4-D cycle (Cooperrider et al., 2005; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010) and creative leadership activities to inspire important classroom interventions. To establish a COIL project, the author would need to forge a connection with a colleague in a foreign university context who is teaching academic writing and co-create a program with them. Appiah-Kubi and

Annan (2020), Duffy et al. (2020), King de Ramirez (2019), Marcillo-Gomez and Desilus (2016), and Swartz et al. (2020) all provide processes that the author could follow.

The telephoto lens allows leaders to focus on the future to consider how trends, demographics and related factors might impact the project. Using this lens, it is impossible not to consider how recently incorporated online practices might impact NGU's future. Demographic, technological, and education-related trends also point towards creating inclusive, international learning environments. Therefore, it would be prudent to further interrogate how technology can be incorporated into future classroom environments. Moreover, it is incumbent on educators to create classroom environments that are more inclusive and globally focused. Effective higher-education environments respond rapidly to changing internal and external conditions (Manning, 2012) and NGU deserves credit for quickly moving its courses online to meet student needs during the pandemic. It would be wise to anticipate that some of these technology-based teaching practices will continue (Bellini et al., 2021; Minkos & Gelbar, 2021).

The bifocal lens focuses on the organization's current infrastructure to identify how people, ideas, and the cultural context might impact upon the change initiative. From this lens, it can be determined that the Foreign Communications department has caring lecturers who are capable and well-trained. However, their individual capacities and course plans should be more widely disseminated within the department to determine best practices for advancing student-level intercultural competencies. Furthermore, given the current realities of online learning at NGU, it is evident that the organization, through its existing technological infrastructure, has the capacity to engage in online learning projects more meaningfully.

The rose-coloured glasses explore the potential benefits of the proposed plan if everything goes as planned. If intercultural competencies became a more intentional learning

focus within the department, students would gain a deeper understanding of the lived realities of their international peers, and people in other countries, and NGU would achieve Freirean cultural synthesis (Freire, 2018). This enhanced understanding of how people live in other countries would foster an increased level of student empathy and help them to lead better lives.

Furthermore, COIL projects could attract more students to the department and lead to lifelong friendships for some pupils with students in other countries (Duffy et al., 2020). In addition, instructors within the department could benefit from publishing their experiences with employing interventions to enhance intercultural competencies in academic journals.

The sunglasses challenge leaders to consider the ramifications if the initiative turns out poorly. Japanese university experts have cautioned change leaders to conscientiously consider *kokusaika* and how it could promote an us-and-them dynamic (Breaden, 2013; Goodman, 2007). In the worst-case scenario, a focus on developing intercultural competencies would promote a xenophobic nationalism that has been identified in Japanese internationalization literature (Breaden, 2013; Goodman, 2007; Mok, 2007; Ninomiya et al., 2009). In either case, whether the department connects with colleagues in a foreign context to advance learning, or focuses its efforts onsite, there are potential issues that need to be anticipated and proactively mitigated.

The rear-view mirror focuses on the organization's mission, vision, and core values. The university's mission supports advancing intercultural competencies (NGU, n.d.). For example, the mission statement demands an education that: transcends national, ethnic, and religious differences; and meaningfully focuses student attention on addressing national and international issues through dialogue and criticism in a spirit of love and trust (NGU, n.d.). This mission echoes Freirean notions (Freire, 2018). The rear-view mirror is also utilized to identify potential

threats and external pressures. From this perspective, Japan's demographic realities and the current novel coronavirus pandemic cannot be overlooked.

The contact lens focuses on who in the organization might be affected by the proposed change. From this perspective, few, if any, instructional or administrative members will be impacted by the proposed change in a significant manner. This is partially because the project is focused on honouring the individual autonomy of each lecturer to design approaches that would work for their classroom environments. The author has the capacity to strongly suggest changes to practice but cannot mandate that his colleagues change their programs given Japanese higher education policies of academic freedom that afford lecturers full autonomy over their course designs (Breaden, 2013). Thus, participants will do so their own volition.

A summary of the findings indicates that this project is a manageable, feasible, and imperative step towards enhancing departmental course offerings, and student-level experiences. NGU's infrastructure, the professional capacities of the educators in the Foreign Communications department, and the demographic and legislative realities that impact upon the organization support the project. Further, the low costs of potential interventions; limited barriers to implementation, and the current state and common adoption of online educational tools can be leveraged to advance the change. Third, the opportunities to enhance the collective efficacy (Donohoo, 2017) of departmental team members through collaborating on potential interventions and the continued autonomy that departmental members would be afforded to improve the situation in creative ways, provide further evidence of support.

### **Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice**

Five possible solutions to address the problem of practice are outlined in the paragraphs that follow. Each solution utilizes the combined servant and creative leadership approach and the



combined framework to leverage existing systems and structures in attempts to bolster student-level intercultural competencies in the Foreign Communications department to complement a COIL project. The flexibility inherent in the discovery, dream, design, and destiny stages of the 4-D cycle (Cooperrider et al., 2005; Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010) will be an important guide to navigate through the process.

### **Possible Solution 1: Create an Intercultural Competencies Rubric**

Shared conceptual clarity is required to meaningfully enhance student-level intercultural competencies (Blair, 2017; Deardorff, 2017). Moreover, this project is focused on creating a more inclusive on-campus environment by enhancing student-level intercultural competencies towards achieving cultural synthesis (Freire, 2018). Gaining a strong, context-specific understanding of an interculturally competent individual (Wang et al., 2017) is thus required before proceeding. A shared understanding of criteria amongst lecturers and learners would provide for more meaningful learning and reflective practices for assessing short-term, and longer-term intercultural interventions.

To this end, there is no single, agreed-upon rubric for measuring intercultural competencies (Deardorff, 2017). Thus, focusing the attention of the Foreign Communications department on NGU's accomplishments and referring to recent successes, could galvanize the support of the teaching staff towards co-creating a context-specific rubric as an ongoing assessment tool for faculty members and students.

This process would need to be preceded by professional reading sessions to ensure that the team members are aware of Deardorff (2017) and related literature. Furthermore, Japanese members of the team would be encouraged to share or summarize scholarly articles from the field that are only available in the local language. Specifically, it would be beneficial to

complement the learning from the English-language articles with the important concepts from the locally published literature (Wang et al., 2017). A synthesis of these findings would likely lead to a stronger rubric and increased buy-in.

Any assessment tool that the team made would need to be created with the full knowledge that developing intercultural competencies is a lifelong endeavour that requires time, dedication, and commitment (Deardorff, 2006; Deardorff & Arasaratnam-Smith, 2017). Furthermore, reflective practices also must be encouraged by the rubric so that learners and educators can document their learning journeys (Freire, 2018), identify challenges and milestones, and create opportunities to develop their skills (Deardorff, 2006, 2017). Gergersen-Hermans (2017) argues that rubrics need to specifically refer to knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours that denote different levels of intercultural competence. Defining these criteria would require significant time and effort.

### ***Required Resources***

Creating an intercultural competencies rubric would require working with the Foreign Communications department members in collaborative meetings for four to six official sessions. These sessions could either be online or on-campus. Furthermore, each team member would be required to do some professional reading on intercultural competence prior to each session. The professional reading required would include articles such as Deardorff (2006). After the meetings, the team would need time to translate the criteria into the native languages represented on-campus to ensure lecturer and student understanding. Throughout the process, it would be important to create the rubric with an understanding of the professional autonomy afforded to each member of the department (Breaden, 2013). The process would proceed with careful consideration of each departmental member's individual, professional and personal needs. A

possible alternative to save time in this process would be to adopt and localize an existing intercultural competence rubric. Moreover, the author could create a prototype to save time. Non-trivial costs may be involved in on-campus meetings to cover food and transportation.

### ***Benefits and Consequences***

One significant benefit of this approach is that it would lead to a greater departmental understanding of student-level intercultural competencies. Furthermore, it would likely lead to a more unified approach to fostering the development of intercultural competencies in class. Moreover, this tool would be useful as an assessment tool for the pilot COIL project that the author has the agency to create within his own classes. Conversely, the process of engaging in professional reading and meeting towards creating an intercultural competencies rubric might require more time than some departmental members would like to commit to the project. Further, given the strong focus on professional autonomy in Japanese universities (Breaden, 2013), could make it difficult to assess how the rubric is being used in classes.

### **Possible Solution 2: Create a COIL Project in the Centre for Diversity and Inclusion**

Scholar-practitioners contend that COIL projects are a simple and cost-effective means of bolstering student-level intercultural competencies (Appiah-Kubi & Annan, 2020; Duffy et al., 2020; King de Ramirez, 2019; Marcillo-Gomez & Desilus, 2016; Swartz et al., 2020). Thus, a COIL project in the Centre for Diversity and Inclusion open to all students would have the greatest potential to positively impact NGU because it could reach a much larger audience than if participation in a pilot COIL project was limited to the students in the author's class. Moreover, this solution would directly address the gaps between the tenets of the mission statement and on-campus practices by meaningfully including students in activities that involve learning with, and about, international counterparts.

Establishing a COIL project at NGU would require gaining informal tacit approval through *nemawashi* (Breaden, 2013; Meyer, 2014). That said, the author's partnership with the DL makes hosting a pilot COIL project open to interested students in the Centre for Diversity and Inclusion a feasible option.

### ***Required Resources***

Creating a COIL project open to all students would require significant on-campus support in addition to the time it would take to establish a partnership with a university department in a foreign country. Significant time and effort would be required to draft and send emails or establish other forms of contact with potential universities. It is impossible to determine how long this process would take at present. Marcillo-Gomez and Desilus (2016), King de Ramirez (2019), and Duffy et al. (2020) provide some details on effective approaches for developing COIL projects that could inform this process. Partnerships with foreign universities in other departments at NGU could also be leveraged to save time if required.

### ***Benefits and Consequences***

COIL projects would afford students meaningful opportunities to learn with students in other countries on projects that would expand their intercultural competencies (Duffy et al., 2020; Marcillo-Gomez & Desilus, 2016; Swartz et al., 2020). Opening the pilot project to all interested students could have a greater impact on promoting on-campus inclusion than limiting enrolment to the project to students from the Foreign Communications department. Moreover, the low costs involved in creating a project make them an attractive alternative to expensive study-abroad and related international learning opportunities on offer (Knight, 2015). Furthermore, the time involved in establishing a partnership could be lessened if existing international university partnerships were leveraged to create a pilot course.

The perceived benefits of COIL notwithstanding, there are some non-trivial potential consequences. To begin, there is no guarantee that faculty members in a foreign university would like to work collaboratively to develop a program with the author or other faculty members. Furthermore, there are opportunity costs involved in planning and designing a COIL project that could be detrimental to another potential departmental initiative.

### **Possible Solution 3: Utilize the Creative-Problem Solving (CPS) Process to Generate Potential Interventions**

The CPS framework (Arbesman & Puccio, 2001; Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2013; Puccio et al., 2018) is a strategy that challenges teams to generate useful, practical ideas that add value or solve an identified problem. In this case, participants would need to address the gaps between departmental practices and the university's mission statement (NGU, n.d.) related to intercultural learning towards making the on-campus environment more inclusive. The team would then need to identify specific challenges that may hinder redressing the issue (Puccio et al., 2012). In the transformation stage, potential ideas to respond to the identified challenges would be explored and workable solutions developed (Puccio et al., 2012). The implementation stage would challenge the team to conscientiously consider the professional context and factors that could support or conspire against the proposed solutions. This stage would close with the development of collaboratively created workable interventions (Puccio et al., 2012). This process could lead to important complements to a pilot COIL project to bolster student level intercultural competencies. Further, it would engage departmental colleagues in critical dialogue (Freire, 2018; Habermas, 2018) focused on improving on-campus practices.

### ***Required Resources***

The CPS framework (Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2013; Puccio et al., 2018) would require time from departmental and planning meetings, and the expense of creative energy and

commitment from departmental members. The amount of time required to develop creative internet-based and in-class interventions to enhance student-level intercultural competencies is unknown. Moreover, the costs of the interventions that could be generated by departmental members cannot be determined in advance of the process. Potential monetary costs could be mitigated prior to the adoption of the process by setting a spending limit.

### ***Benefits and Consequences***

The interventions generated by this process could be wholeheartedly supported by departmental members due to their meaningful involvement. Furthermore, the in-class activities that result from this process could lead to important learning throughout the department. However, there is no guarantee that the CPS framework (Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2013; Puccio et al., 2018) would lead to important classroom interventions to improve intercultural learning. Moreover, it is difficult to accurately determine the resource costs involved given the process. Finally, despite the creative nature of many members of NGU's faculty, aspects of the ethnocultural realities of Japan's Confucian culture need to be considered. For example, some departmental members may be uncomfortable collaborating on authoring unproven interventions given the high-power distance, high uncertainty avoidance, collectivist organizational culture championed in Japan (Breaden, 2013; Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede et al., 2010; Kimura & Nishikawa, 2018; Meyer, 2014), and the low tolerance for failure.

### **Possible Solution 4: Appreciative-Inquiry-Based Intercultural Competencies Learning Teams**

AI learning teams are small groups of professionals who work to redress organizational issues through the prescribed four-stage process (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2008). The Foreign Communications department is a small unit of nine members that could easily form one or two teams to develop creative solutions to address the gaps between departmental practices and the

mission statement (NGU, n.d.) by following the 4-D cycle (Whitney & Trosten Bloom, 2008) to enhance student-level intercultural competencies. Working in smaller teams could also provide professional development and learning opportunities and increase the department's sense of collective teacher efficacy (Donohoo, 2017). Further, it would engage departmental colleagues in critical dialogue (Habermas, 2018) focused on improving on-campus practices. Finally, this approach could lead to better teaching and learning as AI learning teams provide opportunities for lecturers to learn from each other and informally monitor course progress. AI learning teams could be an important complement to a pilot COIL project within the department.

### ***Required Resources***

Time and energy would be required. However, there are few envisioned costs to this approach. Departmental members would need to learn the AI 4-D cycle (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2008) to ensure that the process is followed with fidelity.

### ***Benefits and Consequences***

AI learning teams could be a successful strategy to embed an important inquiry cycle into professional learning within the department. Furthermore, the process has the potential to generate important interventions to enhance student-level intercultural competencies in creative ways that may be more effective than the aforementioned approaches. That said, the process would take longer than some of the potential solutions given the commitment to creativity and collaboration. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that a meaningful intervention can be devised from this process. Finally, ethnocultural realities need to be considered given how the process prescribed by this approach might conflict with local perceptions of effective leadership (Haghirian, 2010; Hofstede, 1980; Kimura & Nishikawa, 2018; Meyer, 2014).

### **Possible Solution 5: The Status Quo**

The author has full authority to create a COIL project within his classes. The author could create a pilot project without involving or creating extra work for his colleagues. No time would need to be devoted to thinking about or designing other types of interventions that would work to foster student-level intercultural competencies at departmental meetings.

#### ***Required Resources***

Time and energy would be required to establish a relationship with an international counterpart to design a project.

#### ***Benefits and Consequences***

Students in the author's classes could benefit greatly from learning alongside international peers in a COIL project. Valuable student experiences of learning and meaning-making with international counterparts could travel organically via word-of-mouth throughout the community and create interest in these internet-based projects. Further, no extra time would be required of the author's colleagues. Despite being limited in scope, this course-based intervention could have an impact over the long-term even if far fewer student needs were served. However, the opportunity cost of limiting the scope of this project could hinder student-level intercultural competence development by not drawing enough attention to the issue.

#### **Assessment of Possible Solutions**

Two tables have been created to evaluate the proposed solutions. Table 1 provides a high-level overview of the resources required for each solution, along with the perceived benefits and potential consequences of the prospective plans. Table 2 examines each of the proposed solutions using applicable guiding questions from chapter 1.



**Table 1***High-Level Assessment of the Five Possible Solutions*

	<b>Required Resources</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Consequences</b>
<b>1: Create an Intercultural Competencies Rubric</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Time (4-6 collaborative meetings)</li> <li>- Computers and internet access</li> <li>- Meeting room (if meetings take place on campus)</li> <li>- Sample rubrics for measuring intercultural competence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deeper understanding of intercultural competence definitions and development</li> <li>- Working collaboratively to iteratively improve upon or create a rubric could foster an enhanced sense of collective teacher efficacy (Donohoo, 2017)</li> <li>- Would be a great complement to a pilot COIL course.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local notions of professional autonomy make it difficult to mandate adoption of the tool</li> </ul>
<b>2: Create a COIL course in the Centre for Diversity and Inclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time and effort</li> <li>- academic articles</li> <li>- LMS</li> <li>- Computers and internet access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students could gain a valuable international learning experience</li> <li>- More inclusive than costly study-abroad excursions</li> <li>- Advances the internationalization mandate when other forms of on-site international learning have been rendered impossible due to COVID-19.</li> <li>- Opening the pilot course to all students of an agreed-upon English-language proficiency level could have a substantial impact across the campus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No guarantee that a partnership can be established</li> <li>- Potential issue with opportunity costs if a course is not created</li> </ul>
<b>3: Utilize the Creative-Problem Solving (CPS) Process to Generate Potential Interventions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time and effort</li> <li>- Undetermined costs if proposed interventions require new equipment, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Working collaboratively to create interventions could lead to meaningful learning and enhance collective teacher efficacy (Donohoo, 2017)</li> <li>- These interventions could be a great complement to a pilot COIL course.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meetings might not produce any meaningful developments</li> <li>- Opportunity costs if solutions are not generated</li> <li>- Not a strong match for the cultural context</li> </ul>
<b>4: Appreciative-Inquiry-Based Intercultural Competencies Learning Teams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time and energy</li> <li>- Undetermined costs if proposed interventions require new equipment, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Working collaboratively to create interventions could lead to meaningful learning and enhance collective teacher efficacy (Donohoo, 2017)</li> <li>- These interventions could be a great complement to the pilot COIL course.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No guarantee that meaningful interventions will be created</li> <li>- Opportunity costs if solutions are not generated</li> <li>- Not a strong match for the cultural context</li> </ul>
<b>5: The Status Quo</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time and energy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The author could focus on enhancing student-level intercultural competencies in the classes he teaches</li> <li>- Potential intercultural conflicts between staff would be avoided</li> <li>- Elements of the status quo are necessary regardless of the solution given departmental and organizational realities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is unlikely that interventions will lead to meaningful intercultural learning in other classes, departments, and faculties</li> <li>- Difficult to create buy-in on the importance of fostering intercultural development</li> <li>- Opportunity costs</li> </ul>

Table 2

*Assessment of Solutions Based on Applicable Guiding Questions*

	<b>How can internet-based learning (COIL) play a role in meeting students' intercultural learning needs?</b>	<b>How can existing participatory exchanges be enhanced to promote learning needs?</b>	<b>What partnerships need to be established in the institution to promote change outside of the Foreign Communications Department?</b>	<b>What role (if any) should shokuin play?</b>	<b>What is an effective way to measure student-level intercultural competence at NGU?</b>
<b>Possible Solution 1: Create an Intercultural Competencies Rubric</b>	- Does not necessarily require internet-based learning outside of the author's pilot COIL course	- Would enhance exchanges by providing students and lecturers with an assessment tool	- Partnerships with Dr. U. the DL and influential leaders in other departments	- Make the rubric available for staff and students in Japanese	- This would create a tool to define and measure intercultural competencies.
<b>Possible Solution 2: Create a COIL course in the Centre for Diversity and Inclusion</b>	- The internet plays a central role	- Would enhance exchanges by extending the duration of meaningful intercultural contact	- Partnerships with Dr. U. the DL and influential leaders in other departments	- Could help with promotion	- A tool would need to be chosen or designed to measure student-level intercultural competencies.
<b>Possible Solution 3: Utilize the Creative-Problem Solving (CPS) Process to Generate Potential Interventions</b>	- Does not necessarily require internet-based learning outside of the author's pilot COIL course	- Has great potential but would not necessarily enhance exchanges	- Partnerships with Dr. U. the DL and influential leaders in other departments	- Cannot be determined	- A tool would need to be chosen or designed to measure student-level intercultural competencies.
<b>Possible Solution 4: Appreciative-Inquiry-Based Intercultural Competencies Learning Teams</b>	- Does not necessarily require internet-based learning outside of the author's pilot COIL course	- Has great potential but would not necessarily enhance exchanges	- Partnerships with Dr. U. the DL and influential leaders in other departments	- Cannot be determined	- A tool would need to be chosen or designed to measure student-level intercultural competencies.
<b>Possible Solution 5: The Status Quo</b>	- A COIL project could be established in the author's classes.	- Would not enhance exchanges	- Partnerships with Dr. U. the DL and influential leaders in other departments	- Cannot be determined	- A tool would need to be chosen or designed to measure student-level intercultural competencies.

Each of the proposed solutions could foster the conditions to advance student-level intercultural competencies. Furthermore, each of the solutions requires knowledge-sharing in accordance with a servant leadership approach. However, a combined approach that involves creating a context-specific intercultural competencies rubric in multiple languages and establishing a COIL project in the Centre for Diversity and Inclusion has the greatest potential to better align in-class practices with NGU's mission statement and address the social justice issue of inclusion (Chiramba & Maringe, 2020; Malusa, 2020).

To begin, the social constructivist approach of co-creating an intercultural competencies rubric would enhance each team members' understanding of what the department collectively defines as the criteria for intercultural competence. Furthermore, the process of working together could also work to enhance the collegial and collaborative capacities of the team. In addition, focusing the department's attention on iteratively improving upon a rubric shared by the author would be a culturally appropriate way of incrementally enhancing an existing product rather than tasking team members to create a new intervention creatively from the ground up. Thus, there would be a higher likelihood of success. Faculty members could use this rubric in their courses by designing diagnostic and formal assessments and promoting student-level reflective practices to support the development of intercultural competencies (Deardorff, 2017).

As the author is co-creating the rubric with his departmental colleagues, he could work within his agency to establish a COIL pilot project with a partner university. The COIL project would be housed in the Centre for Diversity and Inclusion and open to all eligible students to increase its visibility and expand its potential impact. The completed rubric would give the author a tool with which to share the desired learning outcomes with the students. Further, if the

process of establishing a COIL pilot project were unsuccessful for the upcoming academic year, the intercultural competencies rubric could still lead to meaningful change.

The CPS framework (Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2013; Puccio et al., 2018) and AI learning teams (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2008) could also produce important interventions. However, the non-trivial ethnocultural differences that exist within the faculty may be hard to bridge when staff members are expected to share and create interventions without clear guidelines concerning what the desired product should be, given the cultural aversion towards ambiguity (Haghirian, 2010; Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede et al., 2010; Meyer, 2014). Although, the staff could potentially design interventions that are better than the possible solutions that the author has shared, there is no guarantee that anything would come of either process. Furthermore, given the author's level of agency as an informal leader who is subordinate to three collaborating members of the team, it would be better to share prototypical examples, such as a preliminary draft of an intercultural competencies rubric than to rely solely on creating collaborative products from scratch.

As a final thought, the author has successfully gained support for this project through utilizing nemawashi-based (Breaden, 2013) approaches. There is nothing that prohibits the possibility of using the other interventions in the future. Given the long-term approach that NGU and other Japanese organizations are accustomed to (Breaden, 2013; Haghirian, 2010; Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede et al., 2010), it would be better to iteratively foster the conditions for change than to overwhelm the department with a complicated initiative.

### **Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change**

Educators and educational institutions need to be mindful of how their individual and collective actions impact upon others, and consistently and meaningfully interrogate how their

choices are aligned with the moral purpose of education (Ehrich et al., 2015). Further, it is imperative to ensure that inclusive learning environments have been fostered and promoted throughout the change process, and that enhanced student learning drives the work (Capper, 2019; Capper & Young, 2014; Maboloc, 2021). In addition, the social construction involved in this project requires championing the free will of the participants (Burnes, 2009; Cooperrider et al., 2008; Manning, 2012; Thaler & Sunstein, 2009) and being mindful of culturally specific understandings of effective collaboration and leadership (Haghirian, 2010; Hofstede, 1980; Kimura & Nishikawa, 2018; Meyer, 2014).

To continue, the author's positionality as a cis-gendered, middle-class, Canadian man, needs to be considered throughout the process to ensure that the plans outlined in this document do not constitute cultural invasion (Freire, 2018). Serving the needs of others by sharing knowledge and engaging in critical dialogue (Freire, 2018; Habermas, 2018) to come to new understandings, must remain at the forefront throughout this initiative so that the department can come to new understandings on how to best serve both Japanese students, who may be experiencing learning with people from other cultures for the first time, and international students, who should not be expected to simply adopt a Japanese identity. The school's mission statement has clear tenets that embody intercultural learning and development (NGU, n.d.) that should manifest in changes to curricula, as leading definitions of internationalization prescribe (Knight, 2012, 2015). This plan will help to ensure that happens in an ethical manner.

The following paragraphs outline the genesis of the author's plan for this project, Japanese cultural and organizational realities, and the ethical justifications for the leadership approach and change framework.

## **Guiding Principles**

To begin, the author's philosophy of education is focused on affording students as many opportunities as possible to learn and develop so that they can help themselves, their families, their communities, and the world. This philosophy of education complements NGU's mission owing to its other-focused nature and social-justice based teaching approach. The complementarities between these belief systems will guide this change process and offer opportunities for reflective practices (Freire, 2018; Maboloc, 2021). The flexibility provided in both the author's and the organization's principles will be important guides if ethical issues arise.

## **Ethical Justifications for the Plan**

This project was borne from the author's personal and professional reflections (see Appendix D). In particular, the author's relationships with international students at NGU have stood out as a driving motivation for the work. Having witnessed several instances where international students experienced difficulties in interacting with Japanese students (and vice versa) in in-class activities, and even a Japanese student's refusal to work with an international peer, the author is hoping to create a more inclusive and welcoming learning environment than what is currently on offer through providing students with increased interactions with international peers towards enhanced intercultural understanding. The author believes that the ideas shared in this chapter constitute an ethical approach to mitigating intercultural issues and creating a more inclusive, productive learning environment.

Further, as this project is focused on bolstering student-level intercultural competencies, the author and his team need to conscientiously demonstrate and model the types of behaviours that they are trying to promote, and display vulnerability and humility with the process to model that developing these traits and abilities is a lifelong commitment (Deardorff, 2006; Deardorff &

Arasaratnam-Smith, 2017; Marcillo-Gomez & Desilus, 2016). Moreover, the team needs to specifically create an NGU-specific rubric to ensure concept clarity, so that students can reflect, set goals, and improve upon their abilities (Deardorff, 2006; Gregersen-Hermans, 2017).

Furthermore, lecturers need to utilize the tool for both short-term exchanges, and throughout the semester so that development can be assessed, and goals can be set.

### **Cultural and Institutional Realities**

Ethnocultural realities play a significant role in how people determine ethical practices (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede et al., 2010; Janssen, 2019; Meyer, 2014). To assist leaders in acting in culturally appropriate ways, Meyer (2014) provides a guide for leaders working professionally in other countries that the author plans to reference throughout the process. The book organizes cultures based on eight themes (communication; evaluating; persuading; leading; deciding; trusting; disagreeing; scheduling) that leaders need to consider when professionally engaged with organizations in foreign contexts (Meyer, 2014). According to Meyer (2014), and corroborated by the author's lived experience, effective communication in Japanese culture is sophisticated, nuanced, and layered and requires the receiver to read between the lines. In other words, messages are often implied (Meyer, 2014). Persuading organizational members involves developing theories or complex concepts before sharing opinions, and supporting ideas with facts and principles (Meyer, 2014). Therefore, the author has proposed drafting a prototype rubric and creating a COIL course that can be iteratively improved upon rather than overemphasizing creative processes without a clear end goal. There is a fine line between fostering creative practices and appearing unprepared in Japanese contexts (Meyer, 2014).

As a cultural outsider (Breaden, 2013) at NGU, there are a range of ethical and ethnocultural considerations that need to be considered throughout the process. To begin, the

meaning of ethical leadership converges or diverges with the definition of ethical leadership in other countries depending on the issue (Kimura & Nishikawa, 2018). Japanese organizational cultures have similarities with organizations in other countries such as: valuing accountability; displaying consideration and respect for others; promoting fairness and non-discriminatory treatment, and encouraging openness and flexibility, as a non-exhaustive list of similar traits (Kimura & Nishikawa, 2018). However, in addition to those themes, Japanese organizational members also value visionary and directive leadership and cool judgment and logicity (Kimura & Nishikawa, 2018), and consensus (Breaden, 2013; Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014; Schein, 2010). Thus, openly disagreeing with a colleague or organizational superior is highly undesirable (Kimura & Nishikawa, 2018; Meyer, 2014). Furthermore, adhering to schedules is imperative (Kimura & Nishikawa, 2018). Arriving late or unprepared is highly unethical (Kimura & Nishikawa, 2018) and considered to be extremely rude (Meyer, 2014). Therefore, the author needs to honour his commitments, work to achieve informal support for suggested changes based on ethnocultural practices (Breaden, 2013; Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede et al., 2010; Meyer, 2014), and engage in continuous learning to support the team throughout the process. Moreover, it is imperative that he embodies Japanese ethical leadership standards.

There are also ethical considerations that are specific to Japanese university contexts. First, Japanese universities play a more paternalistic role towards students than in many other countries (Breaden, 2013). Therefore, it is imperative that student interactions be closely monitored when working with international peers to ensure that pupils are being good organizational ambassadors for NGU, and that their counterparts are engaging with them in a fair and respectful manner. Perceived or actual dereliction of duty in honouring this parent-like role can result in harsh professional criticism and negative media attention (Breaden, 2013).



Another ethical consideration is that responsibilities amongst the administrative staff are not clearly delineated because it is culturally understood that each worker is focused on, and devoted to, doing what is best for the group regardless of their perceived role (Breaden, 2013; Ota, 2020; Yonezawa, 2020). This can lead to ethical issues, because unlike higher-education institutions in other countries, Japanese university administrators are not specialists in specific aspects of university administration (Breaden, 2013; Ota, 2020; Yonezawa, 2017). Therefore, issues involving students whose first language is not Japanese may be difficult to resolve in certain instances (Breaden, 2012, 2013; Yonezawa, 2017). Owing to the wide range of professional responsibilities that the administrative staff is expected to perform, and the potential complications involved in meaningfully engaging with international students to advance learning, the author and his team should do their utmost to create conditions where situations can be resolved within the department.

### **Servant Leadership and Creative Leadership**

The author conscientiously identified servant leadership as an effective approach to lead change based on research that shows its effectiveness in Confucian-based and Japanese contexts (see Kobayashi et al., 2020; McCune Stein et al., 2020; Zhu & Zhang, 2020). The other-focused nature of servant leadership promotes harmony and development in keeping with the author's philosophy of education, and the organizational practices observed at NGU. Similarly, creative leadership was selected as a complement to servant leadership due to its focus on working harmoniously with others, and continuous improvement that are congruent with Japanese professional environments. Furthermore, creative leadership encourages developing prototypes to iteratively improve upon (Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2018) and professional experiences dictate that the author's colleagues are adept at improving upon existing products.

## **Appreciative Inquiry and the Change Leader's Roadmap**

Appreciative Inquiry was chosen for its focus on directing departmental attention to the positive core of the institution, promotion of collective reflection on past successes and future departmental potentialities, and the collaborative co-construction of meaning (Cooperrider et al., 2008) that suits the Foreign Communications department. However, it is important to note that there is a gap in the professional literature on the efficacy of AI in Japanese organizations that needs to be considered, even if the processes involved resemble the author's past experiences with change events within the department. This is why the author has complemented AI with the CLR. The flexibility inherent in the CLR (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2010) should refocus the energy of the group if changes do not go according to plan. Moreover, the CLR could help to break AI down into smaller steps that might make it an easier process to follow.

Positive progressive changes have occurred on campus. Departmental colleagues have been instrumental in fostering campus-wide changes in support of LGBTQ students and Black Lives Matter by utilizing *nemawashi* and the *ringi* system. Therefore, important change can happen through existing Japanese leadership practices. Furthermore, the organization's success in recruiting international students, and its strides towards internationalization could also galvanize support for change. To be successful, the author needs to be considerate of the dominant Japanese culture and engage in continuous learning to mitigate any potential actions or issues that could arise based on intercultural gaps in understanding (Meyer, 2014).

## **Chapter 2 Conclusion**

Chapter 2 explained the servant leadership and creative leadership approaches the author will be using at NGU to drive change. Appreciative inquiry (AI) and the Change Leader's Roadmap (CLR) have been synthesized into a combined framework to complement the

leadership approach to advance the change process. AI's focus on the positive core of the organization and its social constructivist, participatory nature makes it a strong match for the departmental culture, and the CLR's flexibility supplements AI by providing alternative routes if the plan goes off course. Buller's (2015) ten analytical lenses provided an important analysis of NGU and the department from a variety of perspectives. The organizational analysis outlined that there are a variety of factors that support the need for this change. Further, the author selected a combined strategy of developing a context-specific intercultural competencies rubric and establishing a COIL course to address the PoP. Finally, the ethical considerations and implications of this plan were explored. The final chapter offers a plan for implementing; monitoring and evaluating, and communicating the change process.

### **Chapter 3: Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication**

This closing chapter outlines how the author plans to collaboratively create and implement a departmental rubric with his colleagues to assess and evaluate student-level intercultural competencies starting in the spring of 2022. It also provides the process for how the author will create a pilot COIL project in the Centre for Diversity and Inclusion in the spring or fall of 2022. The implementation plan offers a detailed account of how the Foreign Communications department at NGU can work together to define criteria, set goals, and achieve collaboratively created targets. Resources, a non-exhaustive list of potential issues, and mitigation plans are shared that reflect the author's professional agency and acknowledge past successes. The section also outlines how the author plans to work with his colleagues to resolve potential issues.

The monitoring and evaluation plan provides a detailed description of the ways the author envisions the intercultural competencies rubric will be collaboratively created and utilized within the Foreign Communications department, along with a non-exhaustive list of qualitative and quantitative evidence that will be collected and measured to gauge its effectiveness. Further, the author offers a subsequent plan for how the pilot COIL project will be monitored and evaluated.

The communication plan (see Appendix E) demonstrates how the author will use NGU's existing infrastructure, Japanese leadership approaches, media, internet-based communication tools, and formal and informal modes of communication to share information and garner support. In each case, the author will make use of his outsider status (Breaden, 2012, 2013), *nemawashi* (Breaden, 2013), and entrepreneurial skills (Brotherhood et al., 2020; Poole, 2016; Miller, 2018) to foster the conditions for meaningful change.

### **Change Implementation Plan**

The author's goal is to enhance student-level intercultural competencies to better align classroom practices in the Foreign Communications department with NGU's mission through COIL and a collaboratively created rubric. A departmental intercultural competencies rubric would be a meaningful tool that would afford students and lecturers the ability to engage in a range of practices to measure and enhance their intercultural competencies over time. Further, a pilot English-language-learning-based COIL project housed in the Centre for Diversity and Inclusion and open to all NGU students with a partnering institution, would offer a meaningful opportunity to learn alongside international counterparts in a dynamic manner that could further enhance their intercultural learning and create a more inclusive on-campus environment. The subsections that follow provide a detailed outline of the emancipatory complementarities between critical theory and AI (Grant & Humphries, 2006) that could contribute to a more inclusive learning environment and the practical steps the author intends to take with his colleagues to create the intercultural competence rubric and a pilot COIL project by April of 2022.

#### **Critical Theory and AI**

Critical theory and AI have synergies (Grant & Humphries, 2006; Ridley-Duff & Duncan, 2015) that should be explored and exploited to ensure that the co-inquirers are taking sufficient account of the situation they are striving to improve (Grant & Humphries, 2006). For example, the intention of fostering environments for humans to flourish is common to both AI and critical theory (Grant & Humphries, 2006), and thus, requires that practitioners take sufficient account of situations, including both positive and negative accounts (Grant & Humphries, 2006; Ridley-Duff & Duncan, 2015), to enhance the generative capacity (Ridley-

Duff & Duncan, 2015) of the team to move toward a socially constructed desired state. The focus should be on sharing and analyzing meaningful narratives rather than eliminating critical voices (Ridley-Duff & Duncan, 2015). Simply defining problems as issues to be overcome is overly positivist (Koster-Kooger, 2016).

If organizations are a mystery to be embraced (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Grant & Humphries, 2006; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010), focusing too heavily on feel-good accounts and positive stories, would privilege certain types of evidence and could suppress generative possibilities for collaboratively constructing a desired future state (Grant & Humphries, 2006; Ridley-Duff & Duncan, 2015). Therefore, the synergies between principles of critical theory and AI will be explored throughout the AI 4-D cycle to ensure that pertinent generative possibilities (Ridley-Duff & Duncan, 2015) are explored. To “appreciate”, in these inquiries, means to take sufficient account of the issue (Grant & Humphries, 2006), rather than to focus solely on the positive, feel-good aspects of NGU.

### **Intercultural Competencies Rubric**

The process for collaboratively designing and implementing a departmental intercultural competence rubric utilizing a truncated AI 4-D cycle (Paige et al., 2015; Steyn, 2010, 2012) is outlined in the paragraphs that follow. The author believes that collaboratively creating the rubric with his departmental colleagues will lead to an outsized level of departmental buy-in given his outsider status at NGU (Breaden, 2012, 2013) towards fostering a more inclusive environment.

The intercultural competencies rubric is a foundational component of this change effort because it would provide the department, and NGU, with an agreed-upon assessment tool that could be utilized by both lecturers and students in future on-campus and internet-based learning activities. Moreover, the department will gain a deeper, stronger understanding of intercultural

competencies by creating this tool (Blair, 2017; Deardorff, 2017). Buller's (2015) telephoto lens analysis indicates that NGU must develop a better understanding of how to meet the needs of Japanese and non-Japanese students given changing demographic trends. Moreover, Buller's (2015) concave lens indicates that the department needs to move away from a banking concept of education (Freire, 2018). Developing an intercultural competencies rubric is an important step towards addressing these needs.

### ***AI and the Intercultural Competencies Rubric***

A shortened AI 4-D cycle (Paige et al., 2015; Steyn, 2010, 2012) will be utilized to engage the Foreign Communications department in creating an intercultural competencies rubric. The AI 4-D cycle will begin in March of 2022 when the department meets to plan for the spring semester. The process will involve the first three stages of the AI 4-D cycle (discover, dream, design) with the destiny stage lasting for the whole semester. The convex lens (Buller, 2015) analysis was useful in for determining the process and time required to create this rubric.

In the discovery phase, the author will distribute an online questionnaire to the departmental members prior to the first planning meeting in March of 2022. A questionnaire is an effective tool in Japanese university contexts because it affords respondents anonymity and the ability to share their candid thoughts more freely (Breaden, 2013; Haghirian, 2010). AI's recommended practice of interviewing (Cooperrider et al., 2008) would not be appropriate at NGU, because one-on-one interviews could create a level of discomfort that would be untenable (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede et al., 2010; Meyer, 2014).

The questionnaire will include open-ended questions that will allow departmental members to share their impressions of what NGU is like at its best (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). Hypothetical notions of how

NGU could have been better will also be encouraged so that critical interpretations of past practices are shared (Grant & Humphries, 2006; Ridley-Duff & Duncan, 2015). These questions will also ask respondents to share their thoughts on their positive experiences with internationalization and what an interculturally competent individual is like (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). The goal of this questionnaire is for the author to gain a stronger sense of how the team understands intercultural competence. Responses will be aggregated to create a visual (such as a word cloud) that represents their collective understanding to share at the opening planning meeting.

At the opening planning meeting, in March of 2022, the visual of the aggregated responses will be shared with the departmental members. Using the visual as a guide, the author will task departmental faculty to work in pairs (Steyn, 2010, 2012) to imagine activities that could be done in classrooms or online environments to help students and the university realize some of the ideas represented. Servant leadership tenets like knowledge sharing and altruistic calling (Coetzer, 2018; Sendjaya, 2015) are important to this process. Moreover, being cognizant of Buller's (2015) sunglasses analysis is key to ensure that shared responses do not promote a xenophobic nationalism.

To continue, creative leadership practices like timed-writing (Puccio et al., 2012) and rapid prototyping (Puccio et al., 2018) will be a useful complement to this process. Following the sharing in pairs, the author will ask partners to share their ideas in plenary. Responses could be mapped in a visual form like an opportunity map (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). The author would then continue the dream phase, by asking the department to work in small groups to create a list of can-do statements, or related criteria, that the department would like to see students



exhibit. Paired discussion and sharing in plenary would follow. The author would then aggregate these responses in an appropriate on-site or virtual format.

The next step would involve the author reviewing his colleagues' responses and commonly used intercultural competence rubrics like Deardorff (2017) and Gray et al. (2019) to synthesize a draft departmental rubric to share at a future meeting. Sharing a draft departmental rubric suits the high-uncertainty avoidance culture (Hofstede et al., 2010; Meyer, 2014). It also respects the findings of Buller's (2015) contact lens analysis. Further, sharing prototypes is in keeping with servant leadership (Coetzer, 2018; Sendjaya, 2015). After collecting his colleagues' responses in plenary, the author will create a subsequent draft of the document based on the department's agreed-upon ideas. The modified rubric would then be sent to members of the Foreign Communications department to review.

For the destiny stage, lecturers would be encouraged to use the rubric at various points throughout the semester. Furthermore, lecturers would be encouraged to tailor the content of the rubric to student needs, and assignment types. The author believes that the collaborative nature incorporated in creating the rubric will foster a level of buy-in necessary to support widespread adoption. However, Buller's (2015) contact lens analysis reminds the author not to force change on others. Further details of how information from the rubric will be collected and analyzed will be outlined in the subsequent Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation Framework section.

At the end of July in 2022, the author will distribute a questionnaire with open-ended questions to his colleagues that invites them to share their experiences with using the rubric. Iterative improvements to the tool may be made based on feedback. If iterative improvements to the rubric are required, creative leadership activities will be utilized to make the process of revising the rubric enjoyable. Furthermore, open-ended questionnaires will also be prepared for

students to gain an understanding of how the rubric impacted upon their self-reported understandings of intercultural competence.

### ***Potential Issues in Creating and Utilizing the Rubric***

There are a few contingencies that are important to note. To begin, the author's plan is to create the intercultural competencies rubric in English. The main reason for this is because the author's departmental colleagues all teach English classes. Moreover, utilizing an all-English design would afford students and lecturers an important opportunity to assess their intercultural abilities in the foreign language that they are teaching and studying.

Despite these intentions, it would be wise for the author to draft different versions of the rubric to suit the English levels represented in each lecturer's class. This is in keeping with the findings from Buller's (2015) contact lens analysis because it would lessen the burden on colleagues. This would certainly be more work and could delay the implementation date. However, given the Japanese understanding of academic freedom (Breaden, 2013) and the author's level of professional agency, it would not be prudent, nor culturally appropriate to task colleagues to revise the rubric's language to suit their corresponding students' English abilities without prototypes. Simply put, it would be best to create rubrics with varying levels of English criteria to suit the students' language-learning levels, and to work with the DL to translate the document into Japanese so that it can be adopted by other departments.

It is the author's hope that the rubric is utilized in all departmental classes to enhance internationalization efforts. However, given the Japanese understanding of academic freedom, some lecturers may be reluctant to incorporate the rubric into their teaching plans (Breaden, 2013). Thus, the author needs to use his influence (Breaden, 2013; Brown, 2014) and social entrepreneurialism (Brotherhood et al., 2020; Miller, 2018; Poole, 2016) to ensure that students

are given opportunities to self-assess their abilities and set goals to enhance their intercultural competencies. The author may ask the DL and Dr. U. to play a more active role in promoting the project if lecturers choose not to participate.

### **Pilot COIL Project**

The author and the DL have already begun work on designing a pilot English-language based COIL project. The pilot project will be open to all NGU students and promoted by the Centre for Diversity and Inclusion to enhance visibility and promote the project. Buller's (2015) concave lens analysis illuminated that despite the school's success in establishing international partnerships in other departments, no connection has been made with a Central or South American institution. Thus, the goal is to establish a partnership with a university English-language-learning program in Central or South America prior to April of 2022.

The following paragraphs describe how the AI 4-D process will be utilized to establish a not-for-credit short course with a partnering institution. It is the author's hope that this pilot COIL project will lead to further adoption of COIL and similar internationalization-at-home (Knight, 2012; Soria & Troisi, 2014) initiatives at NGU, and other campuses. Further details for how a collaborative partnership will be established are outlined later in the chapter.

### ***AI and the Pilot COIL Project***

Collaboratively creating a pilot COIL course necessitates a genuine desire to altruistically explore the meaningful potentialities that the partnership could create for both institutions in keeping with a servant leadership approach (Coetzer, 2018; Sendjaya, 2015). Further, the AI 4-D process (Cooperrider et al., 2008) and creative leadership (Puccio, 2013; Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2018) will play an important role in designing the project, given their focus on collaborative potential, and enhancing learning through synergistic relationships. Exploring

meaningful critical narratives that promote generative possibilities for enhancing intercultural competencies is also essential (Grant & Humphries, 2006; Ridley-Duff & Duncan, 2015).

To begin, in the initial (discovery) phase, which is scheduled to take place between the fall of 2021 and the spring of 2022, the author will engage with his international counterpart in information-sharing sessions about what their institutions are like, or could be like, at their best (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). This collaborative sharing session will allow the collaborators to gain a better understanding of what they respectively admire about teaching, learning, and their institutions, and will provide a baseline recognition for the kind of project and learning potentialities that their partnership could offer.

In the dream phase (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010), the collaborators will work together to imagine what their co-created project could be. A variety of creative leadership tools (Puccio, 2013; Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2018) could be utilized at this stage of the collaborative effort to aid in the creation of the project. Given that the author has approval to design a pilot, not-for-credit English-language-based project, it would be best to clearly communicate these parameters prior to this stage to avoid confusion. Further, scholarly literature has outlined several project designs that may be applicable if required (see Duffy et al., 2020; King de Ramirez, 2019; Marcillo-Gomez & Desilus, 2016; Swartz et al., 2020).

In the design stage (Cooperrider et al., 2008), the collaborators would decide on the particulars of the project including the duration, the technologies required, and the learning activities. Buller's (2015) 20/20 and convex lenses could be instructive tools at this stage to help the team determine how to proceed. Moreover, sharing learning activities that have been used in other COIL projects focused on enhancing intercultural competencies such as: partner biographies (Duffy et al., 2020); discussions about culture (Boehm et al., 2010; Dorner, 2018;

King de Ramirez, 2019; Marcillo-Gomez, 2016); presentations about family (Marcillo-Gomez & Desilus, 2016), culture (Boehm et al., 2010), as well as more discipline-specific work (Appiah-Kubi & Annan, 2020; Duffy et al., 2020) would also help. These tasks could inform the COIL project's design and mitigate issues concerning collaboratively creating assignments. Furthermore, sharing this knowledge is in keeping with a servant leadership approach (Coetzer, 2018; Sendjaya, 2015).

To continue, Marcillo-Gomez and Desilus (2016) recommend that initial COIL projects last for four to six weeks, and that communication-based internet technologies that students are familiar with provide a good complement or substitute for an institution's LMS. These and other considerations may be instructive in the design stage of this project. Moreover, the partners will decide whether the course will be delivered in a synchronous or asynchronous fashion.

The destiny stage (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010) would take place for the agreed-upon duration of the project in either the spring or fall of 2022. During this stage the collaborators will meet at agreed-upon intervals to reflect on the project, and to make any suggestions, or incremental changes to improve the program. It is important to reiterate that this will be a non-credit pilot course, and that each partner will decide on their own assessment and evaluation tools. Furthermore, at the end of the initial project, the collaborators may decide to establish future projects and make modifications to the pilot course as necessary.

### ***Potential Issues with the Pilot COIL Project***

The issues described hereafter assume that a COIL project can be established in the spring or fall of 2022. Given the complexity involved in co-creating a pilot project with an international counterpart, the tenets of servant leadership (Coetzer, 2018; Sendjaya, 2015), creative leadership (Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2018), and the focus on meaningful

potentialities in AI (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Grant & Humphries, 2006; Ridley-Duff & Duncan, 2015; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010) will be particularly important. Maintaining a flexible and adaptable approach throughout the process is crucial (Brown, 2014; Buller, 2015).

Student interest may not be as high for the project as the author expects. Therefore, an effective communication plan (see Appendix E) is required. Should student interest not be as robust as the author expects, learning activities for the project may need to be altered such as partnering one NGU student with more than one student from the participating institution. Second, the author assumes that NGU's LMS will be easy for students to use and understand. However, the author's presentism could be misguided. More familiar online learning tools may need to be adopted if the participating students are not comfortable using NGU's LMS. In fact, Marcillo-Gomez and Desilus (2016) argue that tools such as private Facebook groups are just as effective and easier to use if there are technical issues. Finally, to mitigate any potential cultural misunderstandings, it is important that the author and participating students learn about the partnering institution's national culture prior to the initial interaction (Swartz et al., 2020). Being mindful of Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions theory and Meyer's (2014) culture map could help to mitigate misunderstandings and contribute to a successful project.

### ***Required Resources***

These initiatives are feasible given that they would not cost NGU much money to design. In fact, the only envisioned monetary costs involved include the printing of posters, snacks (if meetings are in-person), and a gift for the partnering institution. The biggest resource expenditures will be the time and effort required to create the rubric and design the COIL course. Certainly, the time and effort required to create these initiatives are substantial and represent a non-trivial opportunity cost. However, the important opportunities that these initiatives could

create for members of the Foreign Communications department to conduct research, should foster support given the departmental members' desire to publish in language-learning-related academic journals. Thus, there is a level of personal valence (Armenakis & Harris, 2002, 2009) connected to the project that should offset any potential negative reactions.

In summary, two separate AI 4-D cycles will be utilized to create and implement a department-specific intercultural competencies rubric and establish a pilot COIL project. The rubric will be designed during the initial planning meetings prior to the spring semester in March of 2022, and the COIL project will be established sometime between the spring and fall of 2022. The next section outlines how these projects will be monitored and evaluated.

### **Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation**

The following paragraphs outline how collaboratively creating a department-wide rubric and developing a pilot language-learning-based COIL program will be monitored and evaluated towards enhancing student-level intercultural competencies at NGU. The author plans to collaboratively develop an operational intercultural competencies rubric with the DL and his departmental colleagues by April of 2022 and to establish a language-based COIL partnership with a university in Central or South America sometime during the 2022 academic year. Further, the author hopes that an enhanced focus on developing intercultural competencies will remain a departmental priority for years to come.

Meaningfully and effectively involving stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation is crucial in ensuring the success of these initiatives (King, 2012; Mertens, 2016). Furthermore, following a data collection plan, such as the nine-step model offered in Mertens and Wilson (2018), that determines salient factors such as how to: involve stakeholders in the data collection process; design and test data collection instruments; determine the number of times data needs to

be collected; establish rapport with students, lecturers, and others from whom data will be collected; record the data; reflect on the process; ensure the quality of the data, and draft reports based on an analysis of the information is crucial. These, and related determinations will be decided upon in a collaborative manner in the spring of 2022. Moreover, a collective understanding of the axiological, ontological, epistemological, and methodological factors that contribute to a unique organizational issue are important considerations in designing an appropriate strategy to address a complex problem (Mertens, 2016).

For clarity, monitoring refers to collecting and analyzing evidence related to the development of the context-specific intercultural competencies rubric and the resultant ongoing impact of decisions taken, and application of the tool. It would also involve ongoing observation and data collection concerning the design and implementation of the COIL project. Conversely, evaluation refers to forming holistic judgments about the processes involved in the creation and adoption of the rubric and the pilot course (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Despite the definitional distinction between monitoring and evaluation, the complementarity of these processes must be acknowledged as the data collected from monitoring impacts upon evaluative processes and promotes departmental and organizational learning (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016).

Servant leadership tenets such as focusing on the needs of students, displaying vulnerability in difficult situations, and providing moral justifications for the project will help to maintain departmental commitment (Eva et al., 2018). Proven servant leadership traits such as listening, empathy, awareness, foresight, organizational stewardship, and commitment to growth (Coetzer, 2018; Kobayashi et al., 2020; Sendjaya, 2015) will also be key drivers in decision making in creating the monitoring and evaluation framework. In addition, encouraging



participative practices and iterative improvements to existing approaches will be a deliberate strategy towards achieving collaboratively developed standards.

Universities should critically monitor student learning and collect evidence to gauge the effectiveness of teaching programs (Beerkens, 2018). Therefore, collecting and measuring evidence using the collaboratively created rubric and related tools, and designing a successful pilot COIL program are crucial elements of this project. Thus, departmental support in designing and adopting a plan that involves routinely collecting and analyzing relevant data, and formatively evaluating the program to enhance intercultural learning is essential.

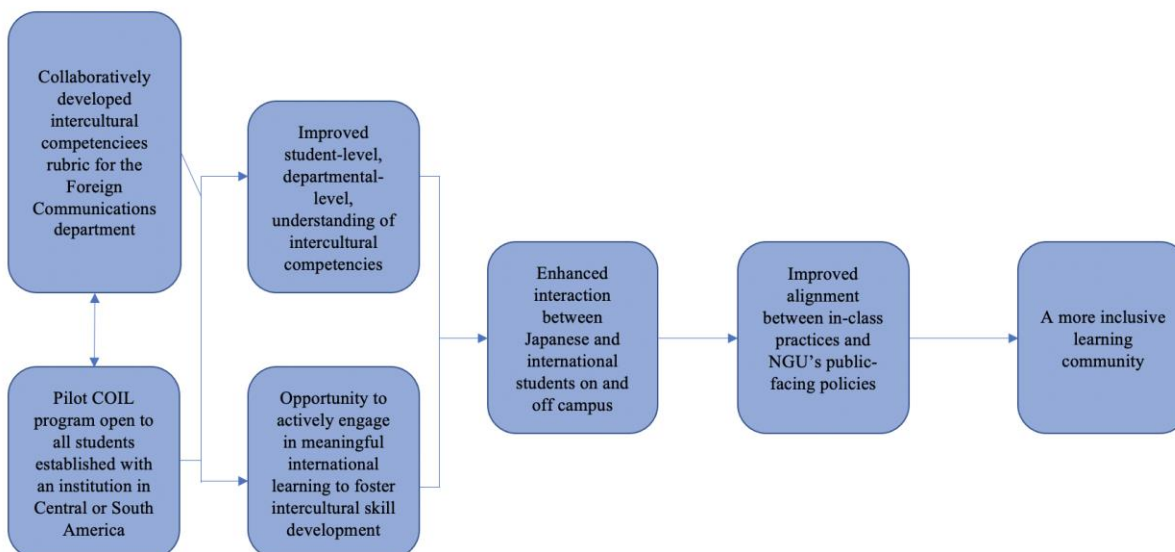
A successful monitoring and evaluation framework for this project needs to be collaboratively constructed, ongoing (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016), evidence informed (Datnow & Park, 2014), involve departmental staff and students, and focus attention on what NGU's Foreign Communication department could be at its best (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Grant & Humphries, 2006; Ridley-Duff & Duncan, 2015; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). The monitoring plan should also encourage regular reflection and focus the collective attention of the department on advancing learning (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016).

Successful monitoring and evaluation are borne from a culture where the group takes responsibility for the improvement process, and avoids blaming others (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2010). Participants should be tasked with collecting a range of quantitative, qualitative, primary, and secondary data sources to promote corroboration and triangulation and further the inquiry towards enhancing departmental learning (Armenakis & Harris, 2009; Bamberger, 2015; Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016; Mertens, 2016). To meet this demanding aforementioned criteria, the author has constructed a program theory (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Figure 3 explains the synergies that could be created between a department-specific

intercultural competencies rubric and a pilot COIL project towards creating a more inclusive learning environment.

### Figure 3

#### *Armstrong's Program Theory to Enhance Student-Level Intercultural Competencies*



Appealing to relevant research, such as Poole's (2016) call for more faculty members to adopt social entrepreneurship in Japanese university departments to better align teaching practices with the tenets outlined in the mission will also be leveraged to gain and maintain support for this project. The author's professional experiences at NGU and other Japanese educational institutions has demonstrated that appeals to research and sharing practices from other institutions (Breaden, 2013; Buller, 2015) are important strategies for gaining support for an initiative. Given the author's early success in gaining support for this initiative through sharing evidence-informed examples with influential institutional members such as Dr. U. and the DL, developing an intercultural competencies rubric and establishing a COIL partnership with a university in Central or South America in the 2022 academic year appears to be a

reasonable timeline. The following paragraphs provide specific details for how the author envisions a participative monitoring and evaluation plan (King, 2012) using an AI approach (Coghlan et al., 2003; Dunlap, 2008; MacCoy, 2014; Ojha, 2010).

### **AI in Monitoring and Evaluation**

The author will utilize an AI model for monitoring throughout the intervention, and evaluation at agreed-upon intervals (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016) after departmental implementation of the rubric. AI's collaborative, formative approach to monitoring and evaluation can build capacity for continuous learning and lead to important improvements (Coghlan et al., 2003; Dunlap, 2008; MacCoy, 2014; Ojha, 2010). Moreover, AI evaluations are only complete when strategies and plans for successive interventions have been improved upon and refined, and thus, the approach is suitable for the author's long-term aspirations for this program (Ohja, 2010). Furthermore, the 4-D cycle can be customized to suit an organization's unique context (Coghlan et al., 2003; MacCoy, 2014; Steyn, 2010, 2012).

AI involves all stakeholders in monitoring and the evaluation cycle and focuses collective attention on specific aspects of a program that worked well and why (Grant & Humphries, 2006; Ojha, 2010). Moreover, when AI is used in evaluation efforts, it challenges participants to tell stories of their real or imagined successes and best practices (Coghlan et al., 2003; Dunlap, 2008; MacCoy, 2014; Ojha, 2010; Ridley-Duff & Duncan, 2015). In addition, this collaborative sharing contributes to communal learning and development as prescribed by servant leadership (Hays, 2008; Zhu & Zhang, 2020). Much like the implementation process, the AI 4-D cycle in evaluation should continue to focus mainly on the positive aspects of an attempted initiative (MacCoy, 2014), whilst being mindful of critical interpretations (Dunlap, 2008; Grant & Humphries, 2006; Ridley-Duff & Duncan, 2016).

AI's focus on the positive aspects of an organizational culture, and its championing of social constructivism (Cooperrider et al. 2008; Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005), are effective in evaluation, but the approach is not a panacea (MacCoy, 2014). The professional realities of the teaching semester could have a deleterious impact on the staff's commitment to the change, pacing, and related issues (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2010). Thus, it is important to use AI tools such as reframing, to transform deficits into assets (MacCoy, 2014) to pragmatically reframe negative thoughts into ideas with more positive potential. Table 3 outlines how deficit-focused statements can be reframed in a more constructive, asset-focused manner.

**Table 3**

*Reframing Deficit-Focused Responses*

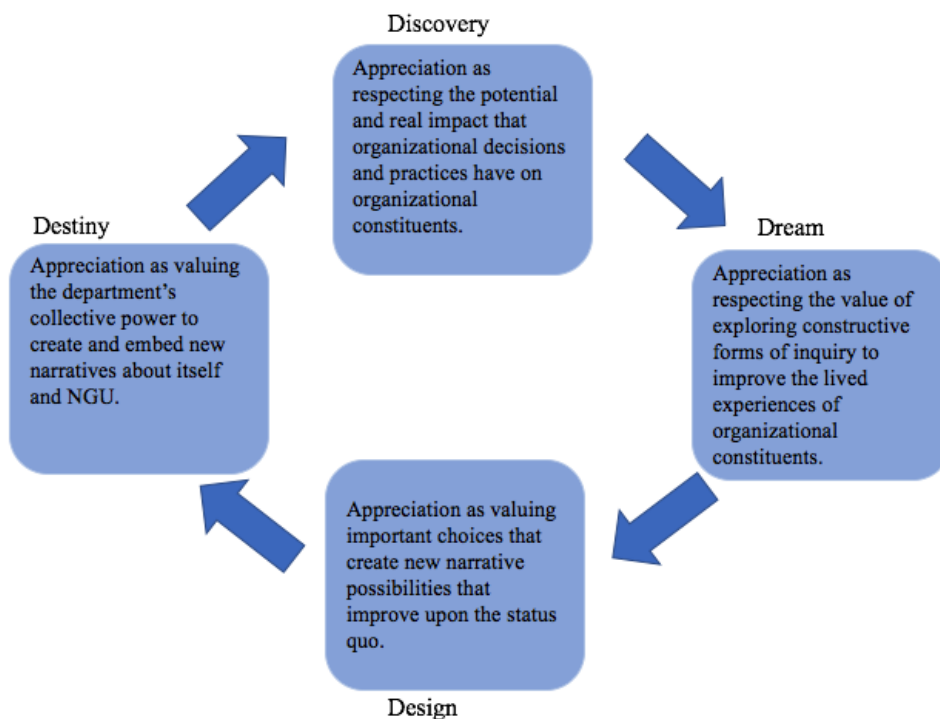
<b>Deficit-Focused</b>	<b>Asset-Focused</b>
Students are terrible at starting conversations.	What are the best examples of how students started conversations?
Students do not take self-reflection activities seriously.	What was the best example of a self-reflective journal entry that you received this semester?

To continue, a critical approach to AI (Grant & Humphries, 2006; Ridley-Duff & Duncan, 2015) is useful in monitoring and evaluation because it provides a more nuanced understanding of the intended goals of the program. A critical approach to AI could also serve as an important reminder to refocus negative energy towards the constructive potentialities for continuous learning and improvement. Figure 4 provides a visual overview of how Ridley-Duff and Duncan's (2015) critical approach to AI would complement monitoring and evaluation. The visual provides a high-level overview of how a critical approach could add a reflective element to monitoring and evaluation processes by focusing attention on hypothetical questions such as "what might have been?" to challenge participants to reflect on actions and decisions.

Resultantly, the discovery process involves reflecting on the potential and real impact of decisions on organizational constituents rather than focusing exclusively on positive aspects or ramifications of decisions. The focus needs to be on student development in keeping with servant leadership (Searle & Barbuto, 2010; Sendjaya, 2015) and critical pedagogy (Freire, 2018). The dream process involves reflecting on how exploring constructive forms of inquiry impacted upon the status quo. The design process involves reflecting upon the decisions that were made and imagining other possibilities that could improve upon the status quo. Finally, the destiny process involves assessing the department's collective power to create new shared narratives about itself and NGU. Figure 4 offers a context- and problem-specific justification for using a critical AI 4-D process to monitor and evaluate this project.

#### Figure 4

##### *A Critical Approach to AI Monitoring and Evaluation at NGU*



*Note. This figure provides a philosophical guide for each stage of the AI 4-D process in the monitoring and evaluation process using Ridley-Duff and Duncan's (2015) example.*

### **The Intercultural Competencies Rubric**

Once the rubric has been designed and agreed-upon (by the spring of 2022), the department will design a timeline for how student data will be collected and analyzed. Japanese universities commonly employ survey designs to collect student data (Breaden, 2013), and utilizing an approach that collected quantitative, Likert-scale and binary questions, with qualitative, reflective, self-reported, written answers would likely yield valuable information to analyze, evaluate, and triangulate various sources of data in a manner that suits the organizational context (Bamberger, 2015; Mertens & Wilson, 2018; Murray-Garcia & Tervelon, 2017). NGU and faculty members commonly collect data from students at the beginning, mid-point, and end of semesters through survey instruments and a similar practice could be adopted. These questions could even be added to an existing survey instrument pending administrative support.

A mixed-methods approach has been advocated as a cogent strategy for gaining a holistic understanding of an inquiry into levels of intercultural competence (Bamberger, 2015; de Hei et al., 2020; Mertens, 2016; Mertens & Wilson, 2018). Thus, the author will create a Google document with an inventory of questions to share with his departmental colleagues after the rubric is created in the spring of 2022, so that they can add or remove questions. These questions would provide a range of qualitative and quantitative data. The author will work with the DL to select questions from the inventory so that they can be added to a survey instrument to gain important data from students. Collected data will be further analyzed based on comparing the student's self-reported responses against the mission. Translating the data into English or Japanese will likely be required throughout the process (Mertens & Wilson, 2018). Furthermore,

lecturer-assessed data on student intercultural developments (where applicable) will be considered alongside self-reported data to triangulate the process.

The author will draft a report based on the analyzed and synthesized information to share with his departmental colleagues prior to the start of the 2022 fall semester. At the first departmental meeting, a truncated AI 4-D cycle (Paige et al., 2015; Steyn, 2010, 2012) will foster iterative improvements to the rubric based on the synthesized findings. These data will be an important complement to student-assessed, lecturer-assessed data provided by the collaboratively created rubric as they could foster incremental improvements to the rubric. Creative leadership activities will be utilized during these sessions to make them more enjoyable.

The author will keep in contact with his colleagues throughout the process and have informal conversations with them about how they are using the rubric, how students are responding to the rubric, and what has been working particularly well. These correspondences are crucial because Japanese higher education institutions provide lecturers near complete autonomy in how they design their instructional programs (Breaden, 2013), thus the author does not have the positional authority to mandate changes to his colleagues' teaching practices. However, the author will work with his departmental colleagues in the spring of 2022 to mitigate the lack of a uniform teaching approach by suggesting a list of self-reflective, potential uses for the rubric that honour each lecturer's professional autonomy.

### **The Pilot COIL Project**

The author has more control over monitoring and evaluating the pilot COIL project because it is smaller in scope. The monitoring and evaluation plan will be developed with the DL after a partnership has been formed with an institution in Central or South America and the monitoring and evaluation activities and processes will focus on student learning and

development based on self-reflection, self-reporting, and lecturer-assessed assignments.

Although this initial COIL project will be a pilot, non-credit offering, utilizing the intercultural competencies rubric is essential so that students have a tool they can use to assess their ongoing intercultural learning (Blair, 2017; Deardorff, 2017). Furthermore, working with students in setting goals for intercultural development is doubtlessly an important component of the project.

Effective monitoring and evaluation are key components for enhancing the probability of success in the initial program, and important strategies for measuring the students' self-reported levels of success, and the processes involved in establishing a COIL project have been offered by Marcillo-Gomez and Desilus (2016), Appiah-Kubi and Annan (2020), Duffy et al. (2020), and King de Ramirez (2019). Important activities to monitor intercultural learning focus on initiatives that foster conditions for enhancing student agency, cross-cultural engagement, and communicative competence (Sawir & Marginson, 2012; Swartz et al., 2020). Lecturers can engage in culturally appropriate practices such as: joint classes (Takimoto Amos & Rehorst, 2018); lesson study (Baba, 2007; Isoda et al., 2007; Fujii, 2016; Okubo, 2007; Tanaka, 2007); instructional rounds (City et al., 2009); and facilitating and observing video-conferencing sessions (Dorner, 2018; Schuessler, 2020; Volungeviciene et al., 2020) to learn effective practices from their colleagues towards enhancing student-level intercultural development.

Group learning activities (de Hei et al., 2020); collecting quantitative data from student posts on learning management systems and social media websites (Marcillo-Gomez & Desilus, 2016; Volungeviciene et al., 2020); reading student-produced stories and anecdotes (Volungeviciene et al., 2020); reading and extracting evidence from e-portfolios (Deardorff, 2017; Kennedy et al., 2012), and evaluating survey data have also been identified as important monitoring and evaluation practices from research. In addition, recent Japanese research, and



reflections on the author's professional teaching practice illuminate web-based video tools such as Flipgrid, as important sources for promoting student-level metacognitive processes towards enhancing learning (Tano et al., 2017).

To share an example of a monitoring technique that could complement an AI approach to monitoring and evaluation, Volungeviciene et al. (2020) acknowledged an exemplary student post each week of their intervention. Celebrating an exemplary post could be an important tool in the pilot COIL program because it acknowledges student development in a public manner. This is in keeping with the continuous focus on learning and development prescribed by servant leadership (Eva et al., 2018; Hays, 2008; Searle & Barbuto, 2010; Sendjaya, 2015). Moreover, data mining and data visualization techniques are promising potential complements that could also increase the organizational visibility of this project. These approaches have been identified by Wang et al. (2016) and despite a lack of recognized methodologies to support these approaches, data visualization tools, such as word clouds, could provide important visual representations of student posts.

In summary, a variety of monitoring and evaluative approaches will be utilized to ensure that the collaboratively created intercultural competencies rubric, and the pilot COIL program are a success. Servant leadership tenets (Coetzer, 2018; Eva et al., 2018; Kobayashi et al., 2020; Sendjaya, 2015) will be important guiding principles in helping departmental colleagues and students, and creative leadership approaches (Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2018) will be utilized to devise novel teaching practices to advance learning. Further, the AI 4-D cycle has proven to be important in monitoring and evaluation (Coghlan et al., 2003; Dunlap, 2008; MacCoy, 2014; Ojha, 2010), and will be utilized to advance organizational learning throughout the implementation of the intercultural competence rubric, and the pilot COIL project.

### **Plan to Communicate the Need for Change and the Change Process**

Changes in Japanese organizations need to be gradual, iterative, incremental, and occur over several years (Andonian et al., 2018; Breaden, 2013; Buller, 2015; Clegg & Kono, 2002; Kono & Clegg, 2001). Further, the collective nature of Japanese culture requires that departmental changes be inclusive of input from each participant. Thus, the author has prepared a communication plan (see Appendix E) that illustrates a year-, to year-and-a-half-long change process. However, this plan represents the first stage in what the author foresees to be a longer-term change process.

Organizational members need to be convinced of the need for change, and encouraged by an effectively communicated, desirable future state that is achievable (Armenakis & Harris, 2002, 2009). Thus, effective leaders clearly articulate why people should care about the vision (Fisher, 2016; Klein, 1996; Sinek, 2009) in a way that makes the justifications for changes and the vision of the future believable in the minds of those that receive the message. In addition to making the future state desirable and achievable, leaders also need to generate an advanced collective understanding of the initiative and promote the adoption of any new tools or processes connected to the change (Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010).

Change messages also need to be aligned with the organization's vision and conveyed in a persuasive manner that encourages active participation to enhance support (Armenakis & Harris, 2002, 2009). The following paragraphs outline the strategies and tactics that will be utilized to effectively foster the conditions for meaningful change. In addition, a high-level overview of the communication strategies and tactics that will be utilized in this plan based on Rucchin's (2021) example can be found in the appendix (see Appendix E).

## **AI and Communication**

Principles of AI will govern communication practices throughout this change process. It is important to reiterate that the AI processes involved in the changes proposed in this manuscript have been modified to suit the context. Therefore, email exchanges and questionnaires have been chosen in place of formal conversations (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010), as these communication methods better represent NGU's current and past practices. Further, the term "appreciation" in the author's conception also incorporates the critical-theory-infused idea of taking sufficient account of a situation or a problem (Grant & Humphries, 2006). Thus, communicative processes need to be focused on gaining and evaluating knowledge in addition to the more positive aspects that are commonly associated with AI.

AI principles clearly connect with the communication practices outlined (see Appendix E). To begin, the author will carefully construct all email-based exchanges in a manner that utilizes positively worded questions to inspire change and encourage sharing (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Cooperrider et al., 2008; Dunlap, 2008; Ridley-Duff & Duncan, 2015). Utilizing positive questions to inspire change connects with both the anticipatory principle (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Dunlap, 2008; Steyn, 2010) and the positive principle (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Dunlap, 2008). Secondly, the constructionist principle relates to interactions between stakeholders (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Steyn, 2010, 2012). Therefore, when the author communicates with his departmental colleagues in March of 2022 and encourages them individually and collectively to share their positive experiences at NGU, and their thoughts on what an interculturally competent individual is like, these communications will help to build a collective understanding of these topics (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). Moreover, sharing and

reflecting on NGU's past successes, connects with the poetic principle (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010) as these exchanges provide for an enhanced understanding of the department members' experiences at NGU.

All communications will be conducted in a manner that fosters the sharing of meaningful narratives (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Ridley-Duff & Duncan, 2015). Follow-up sharing in the form of in-person conversations, departmental meetings, or group and individual email exchanges will work to clarify, solidify, modify, and communicate a socially constructed understanding.

### ***Servant Leadership, Creative Leadership, and Communication***

Tenets of servant leadership and creative leadership will inform how the author communicates messages with a variety of audiences. To begin, the author will consistently reflect on how the micro- and macro-level behaviours he models, and that are encouraged by his messages and actions, could enhance organizational development (Coetzer, 2018; Searle & Barbuto, 2010), and better align practices with the NGU's mission (Sendjaya, 2015). Further, servant leadership's other-focused qualities (Coetzer, 2018; Sendjaya, 2015) that emphasize focusing on the greater good (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2016; Sendjaya, 2015); empathy (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2016; Sendjaya, 2015); establishing and building trust (Searle & Barbuto, 2010; Sendjaya, 2015); the positive aspects of individuals and organizations (Searle & Barbuto, 2010; Sendjaya, 2015); using positive feedback to enhance engagement (Coetzer, 2018; Sendjaya, 2015); developing individuals, organizations, and communities (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2016; Coetzer, 2018; Searle & Barbuto, 2010; Sendjaya, 2015); sharing knowledge (Coetzer, 2018; Searle & Barbuto, 2010); community development and outreach activities (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2016; Searle & Barbuto, 2010); fostering persistence in the pursuit of achieving goals (Barbuto

& Wheeler, 2016; Coetzer, 2018; Searle & Barbuto, 2010), and that encourage the team to consistently monitor developments to enhance performance (Coetzer, 2018) will be considered throughout the change process.

Creative leadership tenets and practices will also complement the communication plan. Being mindful of how communications are structured and problems are framed (Hunter et al., 2013; Puccio et al., 2018); deferring judgment (Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2018); encouraging people to share as many ideas as possible (Arbesman & Puccio, 2001; Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2018); thinking like an ethnographer (Puccio et al., 2018); entertaining imaginative possibilities (Puccio et al., 2018); connecting similar ideas (Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2018); seeking new understandings (Hunter et al., 2013; Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2018); reading broadly to get inspired (Puccio et al., 2012; Puccio et al., 2018); reflecting on objectives (Puccio et al., 2012); having a clear vision (Puccio et al., 2012); being flexible and adaptable (Buller, 2015; Puccio et al., 2012); tolerating ambiguity (Puccio et al., 2018); incorporating metacognitive processes (Puccio et al., 2012); being descriptive rather than prescriptive (Puccio et al., 2012); focusing on opportunities (Puccio et al., 2012), and consistently offering praise (Puccio et al., 2012) will also enhance communications throughout the process.

### ***Evidence-Informed Principles of Effective Communication***

Being mindful of evidence-informed communications strategies will aid in the communication process as well. Armenakis and Harris (2002, 2009) and Klein (1996) provide important insights into how to craft change messages that will inform how the author conducts his communications. To begin, communicating the gap between current practices and an achievable future state (Armenakis & Harris, 2002, 2009); emphasizing the team's individual

and collective abilities to affect change (Armenakis & Harris, 2002, 2009); conscientiously connecting tools and practices to address organizational issues (Armenakis & Harris, 2002, 2009); gaining support from organizational leaders (Armenakis & Harris, 2002, 2009); and making positive outcomes relevant to each participant (Armenakis & Harris, 2002, 2009), are important elements of an effective communications strategy. These understandings have already been represented in the communications that have taken place via email exchanges and *nemawashi* and will inform the change messages that will be crafted throughout the process.

To continue, Klein's (1996) insights into effective communication are represented in the plan (see Appendix E) and add depth to Armenakis and Harris' (2002, 2009) criteria. For example, Klein (1996) encourages message redundancy and repetition. Thus, important messages will be communicated several times via a variety of means (Klein, 1996). Further, Klein's (1996) principles that support hierarchies and supervisors, have been operationalized through scheduled communications with the DL and Dr. U. The DL is an opinion leader who is well respected within the department and regular communication with her could support impactful change according to Klein (1996) and is reflected in the plan (see Appendix E).

### *NGU's Administrative Staff*

NGU's administrative staff (*shokuin*) will be informed of developments throughout the process. The author has developed strong professional relationships with the administrative staff and wholeheartedly believes in their ability to aid in supporting the change effort. The author envisions the potential for *shokuin* to reiterate messages to students about the pilot COIL project. These communications could happen if students need additional information about the project, require technical assistance, are unable to participate, or sundry other potential reasons.

## **The Intercultural Competencies Rubric**

The manner and methods employed by the author in establishing the need for the rubric, fostering the conditions for collaboratively creating the rubric, and adopting its usage need to reflect his positional authority within the Foreign Communications department, be respectful of Japanese cultural norms, and be conveyed in a manner that promotes the positive outcomes involved in constructing and utilizing the tool. Moreover, the author will need to engage in *nemawashi* (Breaden, 2013; Haghirian, 2010; Meyer, 2014) prior to the creation of the tool given that Japanese university departments need consensual support before making changes to practice.

### ***Communication with Formal Leadership***

The author's goal is to gain departmental support for creating the rubric prior to March of 2022. Therefore, engaging in regular information exchanges with the DL, and strengthening professional relationships, are important strategies for gaining support for the rubric initiative. At this preliminary stage of the change process, the author has already engaged in internet-based discussions with the DL regarding the rubric's creation.

The initial informal communication involved knowledge sharing (Armenakis et al., 1993). The author had heard that the DL was involved in a project focused on raising awareness of Indigenous issues related to Japan's Ainu people and shared some information with her that he thought would help to promote the cause. This knowledge sharing, and subsequent communications have helped to establish the author's position as a capable change agent (Armenakis & Harris, 2009). The author remains engaged in regular informal communication with the DL concerning the importance of making a rubric. To this point, information has been shared, potential research opportunities have been discussed, and interest has been building.

The DL is an important organizational leader. Her interest in, and support for, a collaboratively created intercultural competencies rubric will have a significant impact on promoting its department-wide adoption. Thus, the author intends to continue to engage in active communication with the DL. Moreover, given the DL's enthusiastic, positive response to the author's previous knowledge-sharing communication, the author will continue to share information that may be relevant to NGU-related, and non-NGU-related research projects to maintain and enhance professional rapport with her.

### ***Communication with Departmental Colleagues***

Due to the current novel coronavirus pandemic, departmental meetings have moved online. Thus, the author plans to leverage these current realities by utilizing internet-based communications throughout the process should online meetings persist. The communication plan (see Appendix E) provides a high-level overview of how the author will communicate with his colleagues, and when those communications will take place.

### **The Pilot COIL Project**

Effective communication will play an outsized role in establishing a pilot COIL project. The author needs to communicate effectively with stakeholders inside and outside NGU to establish a COIL project. Servant and creative leadership approaches will provide important synergies with evidence-informed practices to foster meaningful engagement with potential partner schools. Furthermore, cultural dimensions theory (Hofstede, 1980) and Meyer's (2014) culture map will aid in the author's communications with potential international partners.

## **Chapter 3 Conclusion**

This closing chapter explains how the intercultural competencies rubric and pilot COIL project will be implemented, monitored and evaluated in a context-specific manner consistent



with the author's positional authority. Traditional Japanese organizational practices will be adopted and respected to complement each of the practices outlined throughout the process. The author is confident that this plan will result in increased departmental and organizational interest in developing student-level intercultural competencies to make the on-campus environment more inclusive.

### **Next Steps and Future Considerations**

Japanese universities have been advised to take the work of internationalization more seriously (Breaden, 2013; Brotherhood et al., 2020; Inuzkua, 2017; Ninomiya et al., 2009; Poole, 2016; Schuessler, 2020). Internationalizing curricula and increasing the number of opportunities that students can engage in meaningful work with international counterparts is of critical importance in enhancing internationalization efforts. The plans contained in this document represent important initial steps towards enhancing curricula within the Foreign Communications department. Collaboratively constructing criteria and defining outcomes focused on intercultural competencies in NGU's unique context should create a shared understanding amongst the teaching staff of what developing and practising those traits and skills looks and sounds like. Subsequent to operationalizing these plans, however, much work needs to be done to ensure that important developments in enhancing internationalization efforts continue. What follows are a set of recommendations to sustain, and incrementally improve upon practices once they have been operationalized.

To begin, the intercultural competencies rubric that will be created in the spring of 2022 should be considered a living document. This means that the document should be re-visited and edited at agreed-upon intervals to ensure that the criteria it contains continues to represent a shared sense of what NGU and the department consider as intercultural competence. Therefore,

the author will be intentional in requesting colleagues to review and offer suggestions for improvements to the document before and after teaching semesters. This practice of revisiting the document could also provide opportunities for the staff to further familiarize themselves with the criteria and prioritize developing student-level intercultural skills at the forefront of their teaching plans. In addition, although the Foreign Communications department has not had any staff turnover since 2018, it is highly likely that there will be staffing changes in the future. Thus, reviewing the document will allow any new hires an opportunity to learn about the document and make meaningful contributions to it.

Second, it is incumbent on the author to regularly communicate significant developments in the pilot COIL, and subsequent projects with Dr. U. and the DL. Regular communication with these formal leaders offers the greatest potential for these, and other internet-based learning practices to scale across the campus, and ideally, to other institutions. Clearly, Dr. U. has fostered a campus climate that promotes the social entrepreneurialism advocated in Japanese university literature (Brotherhood et al., 2020; Miller, 2018; Poole, 2016), and sharing stories concerning the development, and progress of these initiatives with formal leaders could inspire important changes via the contributions of enterprising educators in other faculties and departments. In addition, it is imperative that the author work with departmental members in action research or related projects, so that articles connected to these projects can be published in the on-campus, and other relevant, academic journals to increase the work's visibility. Moreover, it would also be fruitful to make presentations at academic conferences and to explore COIL organizations that the school could join if the initial project is successful to increase exposure.

Third, it is imperative that the author actively works to establish a pilot COIL project in future semesters even if the target 2022 project does not work out. There is a non-trivial

probability that the timeline in this document is unrealistic given the unknown variables involved in planning a COIL project with international counterparts in an unfamiliar context. Thus, the author needs to remain flexible, adaptable, and open-minded throughout the process. The DL has already approved the project and has offered to incorporate a COIL-based unit into her current program if the attempt at establishing a pilot project is unsuccessful. Moreover, she has suggested that although the ideal candidate for a partnering institution would be in Central or South America, existing international partnerships in other faculties could be explored if establishing a new collaborative partnership is untenable.

As a final thought, focusing on the positive core (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010), and creative potentialities (Puccio et al., 2018) connected to enhancing student-level intercultural competencies could present alternative, meaningful delivery methods to achieve the same desired ends. Although the author has expended much time and energy in researching and devising the plans contained in this manuscript, the talented colleagues and supportive leadership at NGU have the potential to create meaningful synergistic methods to enhance these ideas. Remaining open-minded, and resolute on serving the needs of students and NGU as it continues its important work to internationalize the campus must remain top of mind throughout the process. In the final analysis, the goal of this project is to give students as many opportunities as possible to learn and develop their intercultural competencies so that they can help themselves, their families, and their communities. Whichever ways the author can assist in serving these goals will ultimately guide his practice.

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## Appendix A: International Student Population Data

### NGU's Student Population Data (Modified for the Purposes of this OIP)

Country	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
China	53	76	130	275	446
South Korea	80	95	147	232	297
Taiwan	11	10	13	15	17
Indonesia	3	3	4	4	8
Thailand	4	4	2	4	8
Vietnam	1	1	1	3	
Malaysia	2	3	2	2	4
Norway	0	0	2	2	2
United Kingdom	0	0	1	2	2
Australia	0	0	0	1	1
Cyprus	0	1	1	1	1
Laos	0	1	1	1	1
Singapore	0	1	1	1	0
Madagascar	0	0	0	1	1
New Zealand	0	0	0	1	1
The Netherlands	0	0	0	1	0
United States	1	1	1	0	2

### NGU's Total Student Population

	2018	2019	2020
Student Population (all countries)	2,884	2,988	3,285
International Student Population	308	548	799
Japanese Student Population	2,576	2,440	2,486

## Appendix B: NGU's Organizational Change Readiness Questionnaire

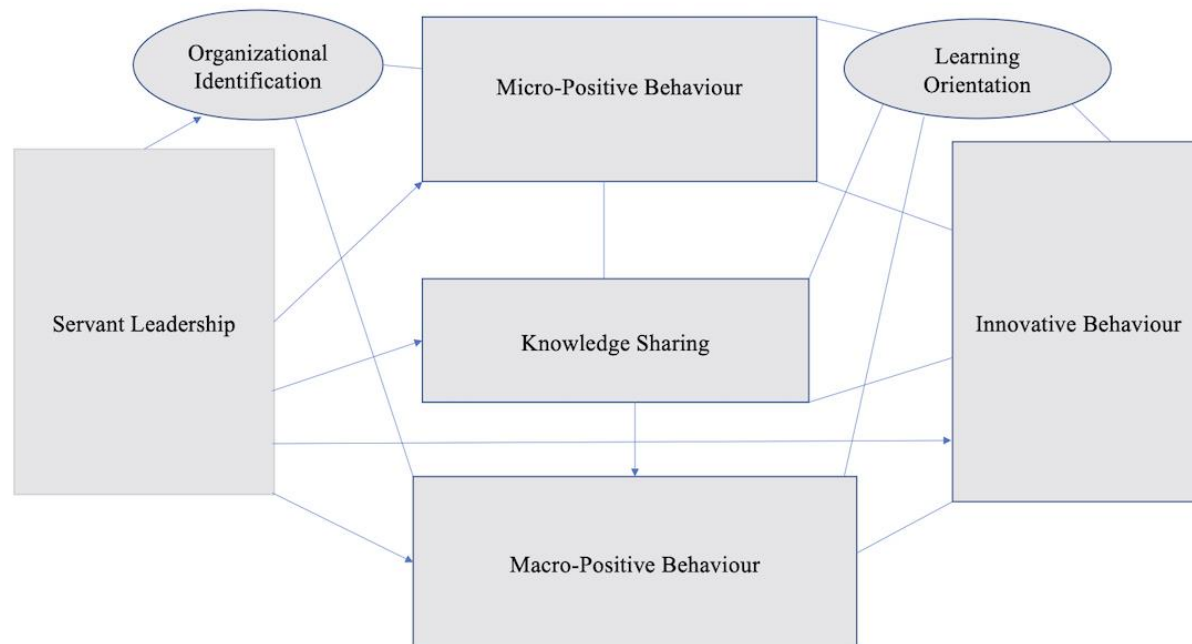
### Rating NGU's Organizational Change Readiness (Cawsey et al., 2016)

Questions	Readiness Score
<b>Previous Change Experiences</b>	
Has the organization had generally positive experiences with change?	1
Has the organization had recent failure experiences with change?	0
What is the mood of the organization: upbeat and positive?	1
What is the mood of the organization: negative and cynical?	0
Does the organization appear to be resting on its laurels?	0
<b>Executive Support</b>	
Are senior managers directly involved in sponsoring the change?	2
Is there a clear picture of the future?	0
Is executive success dependent on the change occurring?	0
Has management ever demonstrated a lack of support?	0
<b>Credible Leadership and Change Champions</b>	
Are senior leaders in the organization trusted?	1
Are senior leaders able to credibly show others how to achieve their goals?	1
Is the organization able to retain capable and respected change champions?	2
Are middle managers able to effectively link senior managers with the rest of the organization?	1
Are senior leaders likely to view the proposed change as generally appropriate for the organization?	2
Will the proposed change be viewed as needed by the senior leaders?	2
<b>Openness to Change</b>	
Does the organization have scanning mechanisms to monitor the environment?	0
Is there a culture of scanning and paying attention to those scans?	0
Does the organization have the ability to focus on root causes and recognize interdependencies both inside and outside the organization's boundaries?	1
Does "turf" protection exist in the organization?	-1
Are the senior managers hidebound or locked into the use of past strategies, approaches, and solutions?	-1
Are employees able to constructively voice their concerns or support?	1
Is conflict dealt with openly, with a focus on resolution?	0
Is conflict suppressed and smoothed over?	0
Does the organization have a culture that is innovative and encourages innovative activities?	1
Does the organization have communications channels that work effectively in all directions?	1

Will the proposed change be viewed as generally appropriate for the organization by those not in senior leadership roles?	0
Will the proposed change be viewed as needed by those not in senior leadership roles?	0
Do those who will be affected believe they have the energy needed to undertake the change?	0
Do those who will be affected believe there will be access to sufficient resources to support the change?	2
<b>Rewards for Change</b>	
Does the reward system value innovation and change?	0
Does the reward system focus exclusively on short-term results?	0
Are people censured for attempting change and failing?	-1
<b>Measures for Change and Accountability</b>	
Are there good measures available for assessing the need for change and tracking progress?	0
Does the organization attend to the data that it collects?	1
Does the organization measure and evaluate customer satisfaction?	1
Is the organization able to carefully steward resources and successfully meet predetermined deadlines?	1
	19

### Appendix C: Servant Leadership Model

#### A Synthesis of Coetzer (2018), Searle and Barbuto (2010), and Zhu and Zhang's Servant Leadership Models



## Appendix D: Autoethnographic Reflections

Autoethnography (Butz & Bezio, 2009; Simmons & Chen, 2017) has been utilized to illustrate intercultural and race-based issues that the author has experienced during his time in Japan. Simmons and Chen (2017) used autoethnography to explain the contrasts of a Japanese student visiting America and an American language teacher working in Japan. Further, Adamson and Brown (2012) used autoethnographic reflections as evidence to evaluate a Japanese university-based language program. Therefore, the approach has been utilized in research. The author's autoethnographic reflections are shared to provide some insight into the types of issues that international students may be experiencing in their communities. Moreover, they provide evidence into why some international students may feel excluded in their new community.

### Scenario 1

“Passport?”

“I live here. I don't have my passport with me. I'm sorry, but I'm in a rush.”

“Alien card? Alien card, please?”

Why is this police officer asking for my identification when I'm clearly wearing a suit because I'm on my way to work?

“Here you are, officer?”

“What do you do in Japan?”

“I'm a teacher.”

“Here's your card.”

This is not good. I might be late. Why did he need to see my card?

### Scenario 2

“Thank you for dinner. Everything was delicious.”

“Your eyes are so blue. They are really blue. Can you see?”

I chuckle a little, but I can see from the expression on my acquaintance's face that he is genuinely perplexed.

“Yes. I can see just fine.”

“Do all Canadians have blue eyes?”

Is he really asking me this question?

### Scenario 3

“Is your girlfriend Japanese?”

“Yes, she is.”

“Wow! That's great. I'm glad that you could get a Japanese girlfriend.”

“Thank you.”

“I wouldn't want my daughter to date a foreigner. I'd like her to marry a Japanese man. I guess I'd be happy if she married a white man.”

Does he not know that this is inappropriate?

**Scenario 4**

My friend and I approach a shop that has a lot of interesting historical artifacts. We enter the shop because we're curious to see what we can find. The shopkeeper crosses his arms in an "x" shape and says the Japanese equivalent of, "No foreigners! Get out!"

Unfortunately, this is not the first time this has happened. We had been denied entry into a restaurant a few weeks earlier. They said the same thing.

These autoethnographic reflections from my personal life as a foreigner in Japan provide important insights into the experiences of international students. Certainly, the experiences are not reflective of the learning environment on offer at NGU. However, it would not be surprising if international students face similarly uncomfortable encounters in their everyday experiences.

**Appendix E: Communication Plan**

**NGU**

**Foreign Communications Department**

**Intercultural Competencies Rubric**

**Communications Plan**

**Project:** NGU Foreign Communications Department, Intercultural Competencies Rubric

**Date:** March 2022

**Project Partners:** Foreign Communications Department (English-language lecturers)

**Project Leader:** (Removed for the purposes of this OIP Evaluation)

**Overall Goal:** To collaboratively create a department-specific intercultural-competence-based assessment tool.

**Objectives:**

**To create communications that:**

- celebrate the Foreign Communications department successes toward creating a collective understanding of the positive potentiality that exists in the team's collaborative potential.
- share important evidence-informed research articles with the staff to inform them of what other institutions around the world are doing to enhance student-level intercultural competencies.
- request feedback about drafts of the rubric and how lecturers are using it in their classrooms.
- invite suggestions for improvement from staff and students.
- encourage departmental members to use the rubric to collect feedback from their students.
- invite departmental members to use the rubric for research purposes.
- inform relevant (on-campus, off-campus) media sources about the rubric to encourage widespread adoption of the tool.

**Target Audiences:**

- Foreign Communications department members
- The DL
- Dr. U.
- Students
- Administrative staff
- On-campus and off-campus media sources



## Pre-Launch

### Key Message:

1. An intercultural competencies rubric will be collaboratively created by the Foreign Communications department in the spring of 2022.

<b>Tactic</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Key Message</b>	<b>Measurement Rate</b>
Nemawashi	Ongoing (September 2021 to March 2022)	The DL, Foreign Communications Department colleagues, Dr. U.	Focus attention on the importance of enhancing student-level intercultural competence to make the on-campus environment more inclusive.	Qualitatively gauge support based on colleagues' commitment to action.
Leadership email	March, 2022	The DL Dr. U.	The Foreign Communications department will create and use a rubric for measuring intercultural competencies in the fall semester.  The goal of the rubric is to gain information about student-level intercultural competencies towards enhancing NGU's important internationalization efforts.	A positive response from the DL and Dr. U. would be a success.
Email Questionnaire	Mid-March, 2022	Foreign Communications Department (English- language lecturers)	Share stories of your positive experiences at NGU.  Share your thoughts on what an interculturally competent individual is like.	A 100% response rate would be a success.
Email	Late-March, 2022	Foreign Communications Department (English- language lecturers)	Invite departmental members' feedback on the rubric.	A 0% response rate would indicate that there were no problems with the rubric.
Leadership email	Late-March, 2022	Dr. U.	Share the rubric with Dr. U.  Invite feedback.	A positive response from Dr. U. would be a success.

### Launch

<b>Tactic</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Key Messages</b>	<b>Measurement</b>
Nemawashi	Ongoing (April 2022 to July 2022)	The DL, Foreign Communications Department colleagues, Dr. U.	Focus attention on the importance of enhancing student-level intercultural competence to make the on- campus environment more inclusive.	Qualitatively gauge support based on colleagues' commitment to action.
Departmental email	April, 2022	Foreign Communications Department (English-language lecturers)	Strongly encourage the Foreign Communications department members to use the rubric in their classes.  Invite suggestions for how lecturers plan to use the tool in their classrooms.	The success of this communication will be judged by the suggestions shared by the departmental members. The hope is that every team member will use the rubric.
Individual emails	April, 2022	Individual Foreign Communications Department (English-language lecturers)	Thank you for your important contributions towards creating the departmental intercultural competencies rubric.  Please share any suggestions for how you plan to use this tool, or how this tool could be used in language-learning classrooms.	The success of this communication will be judged by the suggestions shared by the departmental members. The hope is that every team member will use the rubric.

### Post-Launch

<b>Tactic</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Key Messages</b>	<b>Measurement</b>
Nemawashi	Ongoing (April 2022- July 2022)	The DL, Foreign Communications Department colleagues, Dr. U.	Focus attention on the importance of enhancing student-level intercultural competence to make the on- campus environment more inclusive.	Qualitatively gauge support based on colleagues' commitment to action.
Departmental email	Late June, 2022	Foreign Communications Department (English-language lecturers)	Please share how you have used the rubric in your classroom. Your colleagues could benefit greatly from your insights.  Please share how students have responded to the rubric. What goals have they set for themselves?	The success of this communication will be judged by the suggestions shared by the departmental members. The hope is that every team member will use the rubric.
Individual emails	Late June, 2022	Individual Foreign Communications Department (English-Language lecturers)	Please share how you have used the rubric in your classroom. Your colleagues could benefit greatly from your insights.  Please share how students have responded to the rubric. What goals have they set for themselves?	The success of this communication will be judged by the suggestions shared by the departmental members. The hope is that every team member will use the rubric.
Questionnaire email	Early July, 2022	Foreign Communications Department (English-language lecturers)	Please share how you used the rubric in your classroom this semester.	If 100% of the staff complete the survey and share some insights into how they incorporated the rubric into their class, that would be a success.
Questionnaire email-reminder	Mid-July, 2022	Individual Foreign Communications Department (English-Language lecturers)	This is a gentle reminder to share how you used the rubric in your classroom this semester.	If 100% of the staff complete the survey and share some insights into how they incorporated the rubric into their class, that would be a success.

**NGU  
Foreign Communications Department  
Pilot COIL Project  
Communications Plan**

**Project:** NGU Foreign Communications Department, Pilot COIL Project

**Date:** September 2021 to September 2022

**Project Partners:** Foreign Communications Department (English-language lecturers)

**Project Leader:** (Removed for the purposes of this OIP evaluation)

**Overall Goal:** To establish an English-language-learning-based COIL partnership with a tertiary-learning institution in Central or South America.

**Objectives:**

**To create communications that:**

- introduce NGU and establish the university as an exciting potential partner.
- share important evidence-informed research articles to inform the process of establishing a COIL project.
- invite and encourage ongoing communication and support collaborative practices.
- celebrate successes and offer suggestions for improvement.
- create excitement about the project amongst the student body.
- inform relevant (on-campus, off-campus) media sources about the project.
- sustain commitment to, and enthusiasm for the project.
- encourage a long-term partnership.

**Target Audiences:**

- potential partner institution faculty members
- Foreign Communications department members
- The DL
- Dr. U.
- Students
- Administrative staff
- On-campus and off-campus media sources

## Pre-Launch

### Key Message:

1. An English-language-learning-based COIL project will be established with a partnering university in Central or South America by the spring/fall of 2022.

<b>Tactic</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Key Message</b>	<b>Measurement Rate</b>
Nemawashi	Ongoing	Shokuin, The DL, Foreign Communications Department colleagues, Dr. U.	Focus attention on the importance of enhancing student-level intercultural competence to make the on-campus environment more inclusive.	Qualitatively gauge support based on colleagues' commitment to action.
Email	September, 2021	The DL	Share a draft email message that would invite a partnering institution to co-create an English-language-learning-based COIL project with NGU and request suggestions for improvement.	An approving response or a reply with suggestions for improvement would be a success.
Email	September, 2021	The DL	Request approval for the email message that will be sent to potential partner institutions.	Receiving approval would be a success.
Email	Late-September, 2021	Faculty members at potential partner institutions  ***These emails will be sent to each institution individually. The author will work with the DL to determine which institution to partner with.	Introduce the university.  Explain the benefits of COIL projects.  Share the overall vision for the project.  Invite faculty members at the recipient institutions to respond if they have interest in exploring the project further.	Receiving a response from any of the selected institutions would be success.
Follow-Up Email	October, 2021	Faculty members at potential partner institutions	Share articles about COIL to promote the project if necessary.	Appreciative responses would be a measure of success.
Email	Late September-December, 2021	Faculty members at potential partner institution	Thank the potential partner for their interest.  Reiterate the benefits of COIL (if necessary) and explain the author's vision for the project.  Invite the potential partner to collaboratively create a COIL project.	A response that confirms a commitment to the project would be a success.  Should no agreement be reached, the author would need to

				revisit an earlier stage of this plan.
Email	Upon successfully establishing a partnership	Dr. U.	Announce the partnership.  Share the vision for the project.	A response that approves the project would be a success. Dr. U. has already demonstrated interest in this project.
Email	Upon successfully establishing a partnership	The DL	Announce the partnership.  Share the vision for the project.	A response that approves the project would be a success. The DL has already demonstrated interest in this project.
Email, video conference, voice over internet calls, phone calls	January, 2022	Faculty member(s) at partnering institution	Each communication will be focused on designing the project.	The creation of a COIL project would be a success.
Email	February, 2022	Foreign Communications Department (English-language lecturers)	Share information about the COIL project.	Enthusiastic, supportive responses would be a great success.  Responses acknowledging the project would be a moderate success.  No responses would be a disappointment.
Email, video conference, voice over internet calls, phone calls, in-person meetings	February-April, 2022	The DL  To be determined	Decide on how the project will be promoted to students.  Design promotional materials.  Post promotional materials (virtually and on-campus).	Recruiting the collaboratively agreed-upon number of students would be a success.

### Launch

<b>Tactic</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Key Messages</b>
Departmental email	April-July, 2022	Foreign Communications Department (English-language lecturers)	<p>Share clear details about the COIL project.</p> <p>Thank colleagues for their insights and help in designing the project.</p> <p>Encourage colleagues to design other internet-based projects.</p>
Internet-based communication methods	April-July, 2022	Faculty member(s) at partnering institution	Request ongoing feedback about the project in a friendly, supportive manner. Focus on the positive aspects of the collaboration.
Internet-based communication methods	April-July, 2022	Participating students at NGU	Request ongoing feedback about the project in a friendly, supportive manner. Focus on the positive aspects of the collaboration.

### Post-Launch

<b>Tactic</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Key Messages</b>	<b>Measurement</b>
Nemawashi	Ongoing	Shokuin The DL, Foreign Communications Department colleagues, Dr. U.	Focus attention on the importance of enhancing student-level intercultural competence to make the on-campus environment more inclusive.	Qualitatively gauge support based on colleagues' commitment to action.
Internet-based communication methods	Upon completion of the project	Faculty member(s) at partnering institution	Thank the international counterpart(s) for their partnership.  Invite feedback on the process.  Invite the partner(s) to work with NGU again (if applicable).	Positive responses would be a success. A great success would be the establishment of an ongoing relationship.
Internet-based communication methods	Upon completion of the project	Participating students at NGU	Thank the students for their hard work.	No need to measure this.
Email	Upon completion of the project	Foreign Communications Department (English-language lecturers)	Thank departmental colleagues for their support.	No need to measure this.
Email	Upon completion of the project	The DL	Thank the DL for her support.	No need to measure this.
Email	Upon completion of the project	Dr. U.	Thank Dr. U. for his support.	No need to measure this.
Questionnaire email	Upon completion of the project	Participating students at NGU	Ask students to complete the open-ended, Likert-style questions on the questionnaire.	A 100% response rate would be a success.
Email	After receiving and analyzing the questionnaires	Foreign Communications Department (English-language lecturers)  Dr. U.  The DL	Share the findings from the analyzed questionnaire responses.  Invite feedback on how the findings should inform future projects.  Invite suggestions for how the findings should be shared with NGU's stakeholders (blog post on the school website, an academic journal article, an academic conference, etc.).	Constructive feedback expressing support for the pilot COIL project and future projects would constitute a great success.