

ATTITUDES OF INTERNATIONAL MUSIC STUDENTS FROM EAST ASIA  
TOWARD U.S. HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Jin Ho Choi, B.M., M.C.M.

Dissertation Prepared for the Degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

May 2009

APPROVED:

Debbie Rohwer, Major Professor and Chair of the  
Division of Music Education

Donna Emmanuel, Committee Member and Music  
Education Graduate Program Coordinator

Warren Henry, Committee Member and Associate  
Dean of Academic Affairs for the College  
of Music

James C. Scott, Dean of the College of Music

Michael Monticino, Interim Dean of the Robert B.  
Toulouse School of Graduate Studies

Choi, Jin Ho. Attitudes of International Music Students from East Asia toward U.S. Higher Education Institutions. Doctor of Philosophy (Music Education), May 2009, 129 pp., 3 tables, references, 144 titles.

Nine universities in the United States with the greatest number of international students and having an accredited music program through the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) were selected. Survey research methodologies were used to identify the status of the international music students from East Asia in U.S. higher education institutions and to determine their attitudes toward their schools.

Among East Asian international music students at US higher education institutions, the results indicated that the professor's reputation, scholarships, and the program's reputation were perceived as the most influential factors impacting the program choice; a good relationship with professors, good feedback from professors, and emotional stability were perceived as the most influential factors impacting academic success; and the professor's teaching, the professor's expertise, and the improvement of musical skills were perceived as the most influential factors impacting students' satisfaction level. The most problematic issues reported were the language barrier and the cultural differences between their host and own countries. In addition, many of the East international music students in this study noted financial difficulties.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foremost, I wish to thank God for being with me all the way. This project would not have been possible without the help and support of many dedicated individuals. I would like to acknowledge my dissertation committee members, Dr. Debbie Rohwer, Dr. Donna Emmanuel and Dr. Warren Henry for their guidance, support, wisdom and encouragement. A special thanks to my advisor, Dr. Debbie Rohwer, the Chair of Music Education who helped and guided me from the beginning of my doctoral coursework to completing this project. Words cannot express my gratitude for her patient guidance, invaluable suggestions and constant encouragement. Through her guidance, I could open my critical eyes to the new research world and complete this dissertation.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to my lovely wife, Yong-Ok, for her unconditional love, patience, encouragement and willing support throughout this journey. Without her constant support, it would have been impossible to complete this degree. I also wish to express my gratitude to my son, Sam, for his patience and helpful behavior. While I was studying, he was a very patient and good student himself, which made me very proud. Lastly, I would also like to acknowledge my father and mother, Tong-Moon and Hyun-Cho Choi, for their support throughout the entire schooling process.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
LIST OF TABLES .....	vi
Chapters	
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
The Purpose of the Study	
Limitation of the Study	
2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE .....	10
International Students in U.S. Higher Education Institutions	
U.S. Policy and International Students	
Difficulties of International Students	
Understanding Asian Students	
Attitudes of Asian International Students	
College Choice of International Students from East Asia	
Perceptions and Experiences of Music Students	
Conclusion	
3. METHODOLOGY .....	34
Participants	
Data Collection Procedures	
Measurement Instrument	
Data Analysis	
Validity and Reliability	
Result for the Pilot Test	
4. RESULTS .....	49
Findings for Research Question I	
Findings for Research Question II	

Findings for Research Question III  
Findings for Research Question IV

5.	CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.....	57
	Summary	
	Conclusions	
	Recommendations for Future Research	

Appendices

A.	LIST OF THE 9 UNIVERSITY NAMES .....	73
B.	INFORMED CONSENT NOTICE (IRB) .....	75
C.	LETTER FOR INTERNATIONAL MUSIC STUDENTS .....	80
D.	LETTER FOR 9 UNIVERSITIES .....	82
E.	LETTER FOR CONTENT VALIDITY CHECK.....	84
F.	APPROVAL LETTERS FROM 9 UNIVERSITIES .....	86
G.	QUESTIONS FOR CONTENT VALIDITY CHECK .....	101
H.	SURVEY INSTRUMENT.....	108
	REFERENCES .....	115

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
1. Program choice of East Asian international music students.....	50
2. Academic success of East Asian international music students .....	51
3. Perceived satisfaction level of East Asian international music students .....	53

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Over the past several decades, the importance of international students has been increasingly emphasized in the United States institutions of higher learning. According to the 2007 report of *Immigrant and Customs Enforcement (ICE)*, “as of April 3, 2007, there were 951,654 active non-immigrant students, exchanging visitors, and their dependants” (p. 3). Indeed, the United States of America has been the leading country in hosting international students. The number of international students in U.S. higher education institutions has been greater than that of any other country (Edmonds, 2006).

The contributions of international students have been crucial to U.S. higher education institutions and the economy in general (Farnam, 2005). Students have spent approximately 13.5 billion dollars on tuition and living expenses each year (Chow, Baumgartner, Bhandari, & Donahue, 2007). Internationalized campuses of U.S. colleges and universities have promoted understanding of other cultures among all students and broadened academic knowledge through emphasizing multiple ways of thinking (Bruce & Beth, 2002). King and Koller (1995) indicated that international students in U.S. higher education...

...have special importance to our local communities not only because they support current needs for our economic development, but also because they lay a foundation for the coming changes in the American workplace that will demand cross-cultural sensitivity and improved interpersonal skills (p. 22).

Especially, the number of Asian students at colleges and universities in the United States has dramatically increased over the last decades and has reached the two-thirds



mark among the entire international student population in U.S. higher education institutions ([www.ice.gov/numbers](http://www.ice.gov/numbers)). Based on the 2006 report of *Immigrant and Customs Enforcement (ICE)*, the total percentage of international students from Asia was 65% among foreign students in U.S. higher education institutions, and “the top five countries (Korea, India, China, Japan, and Taiwan) of citizenship by active foreign students were from Asia and represent 48% of the foreign student population” ([www.ice.gov/numbers](http://www.ice.gov/numbers), ¶ 3). Moreover, except for India, every country among the top five was located in East Asia. From this fact, it can be concluded that international students from Asia, and especially East Asia, have occupied a substantive place in U.S. institutions.

The greater the importance of international students, the greater is the need to profile international students for the benefit of U.S. higher education institutions. There has been an initial look at the basic profile of international students. The U.S. government publishes statistical reports annually, such as the *Opendoors Reports of the Institute of International Education (IIE: Opendoors 2007)*). Also, numerous researchers in the United States have studied the status of international students, producing basic profiles of international students in professional education journals, such as *Higher Education, Higher Education Research and Development, and TESOL Quarterly*.

The content of these studies can be summarized into two areas. The first area is the status of international students in the United States, such as how many students are studying in U.S. higher education institutions, how many students are coming from each region in the world to the United States, which school has the most international students

in the United States, and which program has the most international students in U.S. higher education institutions.

The second area is the adjustment of international students in U.S. higher education institutions. Because international students come from different socio-cultural backgrounds, they often face problems in adjusting to the U.S. society. Studies have indicated that the most problematic matter is language (Fu, 1995; Hong, Roy, & Dario, 2007; Wilkins, 1974). In addition, international students often experience a cultural shock from the difference between the home and host culture. Studies of international students have concentrated on perceived difficulties in order to help understand international student adjustment issues (Barratt & Huba, 1994; Charles & Stewart, 1991; Parr, 1992; Pedersen, 1991; Surdam & Collins, 1984; Wilton & Constantine, 2003). For example, Parr (1992) surveyed 163 international students in U.S. higher education institutions and asked about the greatest difficulties the students experienced in their studies and concluded that cultural differences and financial problems were the most common difficulties for international students studying in the United States.

The more international students occupy an important position in U.S. higher education institutions, the greater the need to understand international student issues. Through an understanding of international students in their institutions, colleges and universities can set strategic plans to help international students and to attract more international students to their institutions. For this reason, studies have attempted to identify the cultural difference between the home countries of international students and the host countries and to discover the similarities between international students' cultural backgrounds and adjustment levels (Kagan & Cohen, 1990; Perrucci & Hu, 1995). In

summary, international students are very important to U.S. institutions of higher education, and many studies have identified the status of international students in the United States and the difficulties international students face in adjusting their lives to the U.S..

Asian students have also occupied a substantive place in music schools in U.S. institutions of higher education. The Julliard School of Music, one of the finest music schools in the U.S., is often called *Kolliard* because there are so many Korean international students in the school (Korean Concert Society, 2004). In fact, more than half of the students in the Julliard pre-college class have been documented as coming from Korea, China, and Japan (Thomas, 2003). Indeed, it is not difficult to find East Asian international students in any U.S. music institution regardless of institution size and location (Brand, 2001), and yet there is a lack of research that has been conducted on Asian music students in U.S. institutions of higher education.

There have been numerous studies conducted on U.S. music students in higher education institutions. Studies have indicated that music students' previous musical experiences before entering college were one of the most important factors music majors used in their college choice (Gilbert, 1994; Gillespie & Hamann, 1999; Jones, 1964; Ploumis-Devick, 1983; Schmidt, Zdzinski, Ballard, 2006; Shelter, 1985; Sichivitsa, 2003; Smith-Maddox, 1994; Wims, 1994). Jones (1964) indicated that there was a positive relationship between the previous musical experience and career choice of college music students, and the support from parents and teachers was a very important factor in the career choice of college music students. Ploumis-Devick (1983) also found that parental

support among the influence of others including music teachers, peers, and friends was the strongest factor in college music major career choice.

Gillespie and Hamann (1999) investigated 153 string music education majors from 17 colleges of music about their backgrounds, reasons for choosing teaching, and recommendations to attract more students into string music education, and concluded that the music students chose string music education as their major because they loved playing string instruments and teaching music in the public schools; in addition to their own previous musical experiences, the string students' music teachers were an influential factor in choosing string music education as their major. Similarly, Sichivitsa (2003) also found that previous musical experiences were an important factor in college choir students' choice to enroll in collegiate-level choir. In terms of the previous musical experiences of the music students, the parents were the most common influential factor.

While these studies have produced fruitful results for investigating reasons why college music students choose music as their college majors (the career choice of music majors), other studies have addressed identifying factors on the college choice of music majors (why college music students choose a specific school) (Kreinberg, 1990; Locke, 1982; Ludenman, 1964; Milton, 1982). For example, after investigating 631 freshmen music majors in 22 colleges and universities in Illinois, Locke (1982) concluded that the reputation of the music department and faculty were influential factors in the college choice of music majors. Also, he found that the reputation of the performing groups and the academic reputation of the school, the possibility for commuting from home to school, and the friendliness of the faculty were other influential factors. These results coincide with the results of the studies about the college choice of Asian international students in

U.S. higher education institutions (Chen, 2006; Kelly, 1988; Poock & Love, 2001; Talbot, Maier, & Rushlau, 1996) in that the reputation of the programs and the faculty were the most influential factors in their college choices.

However, there have been few studies about international music students, especially East Asian international music students, even though:

Asian music students who come to Western countries for music study, often at great financial and social sacrifices, not only enrich themselves as musicians, but also substantially enrich the quality of music learning and teaching for all music students and faculties throughout the world. (Brand, 2001, p.177)

Brand (2001) further emphasized the importance of studying Asian international music students by stating:

Since so many music faculties throughout North America, Europe and Australia seek and subsequently teach Asian students, what is known about these students' learning style? For example, are their motives for learning and learning strategies similar to American students? Asian music students arrive in classes and studios from differing cultural perspectives, educational backgrounds and social experiences than most American music students. What are the implications of these differences as Asian and American music student journey together studying in music classes and studios, undertaking assignments, performing at juries and completing tests..... Indeed, systematic studies concerning Asian music students can assist in a greater understanding of the vary students who substantially enrich the music teaching, learning and performing in music schools, departments and conservatories throughout the world. (pp. 172-173)

Indeed, Asian international students of music are prominent in performance and are, therefore, interested in getting a quality music education so as to improve their career options. For example, there are many famous world star musicians from East Asia who have studied in the United States, such as, Myung-Hun Chung, Seiji Ozawa, Sarah Jang, Midori, YoYo Ma, etc.. Notably, while American students have lost interest in Western classical music, East Asian students have taken a growing interest in the art form (Korean Concert Society, 2004; Thomas, 2003). East Asian international students are occupying a very important place in the Western classical music society, as well as in U.S. higher education institutions of music, and the contributions of international music students to U.S. higher education are substantive in that they have spent a considerable sum of money on tuition and living expenses (Farnam, 2005) and have helped to broaden the understanding of music learning for every student regardless of whether they were American or international students (Brand, 2001).

Even though international music students from Asia have occupied an important part in U.S. higher education institutions, studies of international music students, especially East Asian music students have been limited. Moreover, international music students from East Asia (Korea, China, Taiwan, Japan) have been documented as an important body in U.S. music institutions (Korean Concert Society, 2004; Thomas, 2003), but research specific to East Asian music student issues is needed. It would be valuable to examine the perceptions and experiences of music students in U.S. higher education institutions in order to understand the perceptions and experiences of East Asian international music students in U.S. higher education institutions. There is a need to identify the status of international music students in U. S. higher education institutions;

reasons why Asian international music students in U.S. higher education institutions choose their institutions, which factors are important in their academic success, what is the perceived program satisfaction level, and what are possible solutions for their difficulties in U.S. higher education institutions. This information could be beneficial for both U.S. higher education music institutions and international music students in their institutions in that the institutions could develop strategies to attract more East Asian international music students to their institutions and the students could avoid pitfalls and increase their opportunities in the music institutions.

### The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe the attitudes of East Asian (Korea, China, Taiwan, and Japan) international music students in U.S. higher education institutions toward U.S. higher education issues. Subjects were international students from East Asia in U.S. higher education institutions in music. Survey research methodologies were used to identify the status of the international music students from East Asia in the U.S. higher education institutions and to determine their attitudes toward the curriculum of their schools. The specific research questions for this study were:

- I. What were the perceived factors that influenced the program choice of East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions?
- II. What were the perceived factors influencing academic success of East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions?
- III. What was the perceived program satisfaction level of East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions?

IV. What were the perceived solutions to problems encountered as East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions?

#### Limitation of the Study

This study was limited to surveying the 9 U.S. higher education institutions with: (1) the most international students and, (2) music programs accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). Therefore, the generalizability of this study's findings should be limited only to the 9 U.S. higher education institutions. In addition, because the participants of this study were all volunteers, there might be different opinions from others, which also limits the potential generalizability of the findings.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The following review of literature highlights pertinent issues related to the topic of international students, including: international students in U.S. higher education institutions, U.S. policy and international students, difficulties of international students, understanding Asian students from an historical/cultural perspective, attitudes of Asian international students toward U. S. higher education institutions, college choice of international students from East Asia, and perceptions and experiences of music students in U.S. higher education institutions.

#### International Students in U.S. Higher Education Institutions

The number of international students in U.S. higher education institutions has dramatically increased from 48,486 students in 1955 to 582,984 students in 2007 (IIE: Opendoors 2007). The Opendoors 2007 Report of the Institute of International Education (IIE), supported by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, reported that India sent the largest number of their students to U.S. higher education institutions (83,833 students), followed by China (67,723), South Korea (62,392), Japan (35,282), Taiwan (29,094), Canada (28,280), Mexico (13,826), Turkey (11,506), Thailand (8,765), Germany (8,656), United Kingdom (8,438), Saudi Arabia (7,886), Nepal (7,754), Hong Kong (7,722), Indonesia (7,338), Brazil (7,126), and Colombia (6,750). Overall, the top five countries were from Asia and comprised 47.8 % of the total number of international students in U.S. higher education institutions. Regarding fields of study, business/management was the top field that international students were studying, followed by engineering. Fine arts and applied arts were ranked

as the 6<sup>th</sup> field of study in the top 10 fields of study of international students in the United States.

This report also indicated that California was the state with the most international students (77,987) followed by New York (65,884), Texas (49,081), Massachusetts (28,680), Florida (26,875), Illinois (25,594), Pennsylvania (23,182), Michigan (21,143), Ohio (18,607), Indiana (14,450), Maryland (13,562), New Jersey (13,111), Georgia (12,183), Virginia (11,991), Washington (11,663), North Carolina (10,064), Arizona (9,993), Missouri (9,805), Minnesota (9,048), and Oklahoma (8,364). In addition, the University of Southern California was the institution with the largest number of international students in U.S. higher education institutions, followed by Columbia University (5,937), New York University (5,827), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (5,685), Purdue University Main Campus (5,581), University of Michigan – Ann Arbor (5,429), University of Texas at Austin (5,303), University of California – Los Angeles (4,704), Harvard University (4,514), Boston University (4,484), University of Pennsylvania (4,484), The Ohio State University Main Campus (4,345), SUNY Buffalo (4,103), Arizona State University – Tempe Campus (4,062), Indiana University at Bloomington (3,976), Michigan State University (3,968), University of Florida (3,921), Texas A & M University (3,857), University of Wisconsin – Madison (3,829), and Stanford University (3,751).

International students in U.S. higher education institutions have not only contributed to the enrollment in U.S. colleges and universities but have also contributed to the U.S. economy. According to the Open Doors 2007 Report, the largest primary source of funding for international students in U.S. higher education institutions came

from their own funds and funds from their family (61.5%), followed by financial aid from U.S. colleges and universities (26.1%). Hence, international students have been found to bring their personal funds to the United States. This is one way that international students in U.S. higher education institutions have contributed to the U.S. economy.

### U.S. Policy and International Students

Abel (2002) stated, “As an international student, you may not realize that American education differs significantly from the education you are accustomed to...” (p. 13). Indeed, U.S. higher education institutions may have different policies from other countries. Manning, Willingham, and Breland (1977) indicated that it was important to have standard admission policies for colleges and universities so as “to build academic and social communities” (p. 11) and try to select the most qualified students regardless of international or non-international student status. To select the most qualified students, U.S. colleges and universities have often set a standard admission policy (Hicks, & Shere, 2003; Litten, Sullivan, & Brodigan, 1983; Manning, Willingham, & Breland, 1977). Based on the standard admission policy, U.S. institutions of higher education have attempted to review the level of scholarship, experience, and knowledge of entering students (Holley, 2006; Walker, 2008). General admission criteria have included grades of prior schools (GPA), test scores (usually SAT and GRE), special academic interests and abilities (including honors and awards), and special experiences (including performing arts and community services) (Manning, Willingham, & Breland, 1977; Mattson, 2007; U.S. News & World Report, 2008; Walker, 2008).

Regarding admission of international students to U.S. higher education institutions, Abel and Sementelli (2002) noted “the three basic requirements for

admission to U.S. colleges and universities are (1) a sufficient command of the English language, (2) adequate financial resources, and (3) a strong academic record” (p. 53). In order to document sufficient command of the English language, international students often submit results of a standardized test. The *Test of English as a Foreign Language* (TOEFL) has been the most common (U.S. News & World Report, 2008; Walker, 2008). However, there has been controversy about the usefulness of the TOEFL test.

Some studies have documented the relationship between achievement and TOEFL scores. Stoyhoff (1997) found a positive relationship between international student TOEFL scores and academic achievement, with higher scorers on the TOEFL tending to be more active in their classes, studying more, and showing greater academic achievement than lower scoring international students. In addition, Hwang and Disney (1970) surveyed 63 Chinese students studying at the University of Oregon to determine the relationship between TOEFL scores and first semester GPA of international students, and found a positive relationship between TOEFL and first semester GPA.

Even though studies have documented a relationship between TOEFL scores and academic achievement for international students, the strength of the relationship may be too weak to confirm the usefulness of the TOEFL (Johnson, 1988; Light, Xu, & Mossop, 1987; Stoyhoff, 1997). Indeed, some studies have specifically questioned the usefulness of the TOEFL (Hwang & Disney, 1970; Sharon, 1972; Sugimoto, 1966). Sharon (1972) studied 975 international students from 24 U.S. universities and reported that the TOEFL and GRE scores did not correlate to the academic achievement of international students. Sugimoto (1966) investigated 2075 international students at the University of California at Los Angeles and found that GRE and TOEFL scores were not strong predictors of

academic achievement for international students. The first semester GPA of the international students was found to be a more accurate predictor of academic achievement. Sugimoto recommended that U.S. higher education institutions reconsider admission policies concerning language proficiency for international students.

Regarding visa policy issues for international students in the United States, Sementelli (2002) noted the challenges that international students have faced in obtaining student visas. The National Academies (2005) have indicated that after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001, the U.S. government established the *Student Exchange Visitor Information System* (SEVIS) for regulating F-1 student visas in order to fortify the national security system and immigration laws. As a result, it has become difficult for international students to obtain student visas (Hamilton, 2003). Chen (2006) stated, “in the post-September 11 era, some international students prefer to pursue foreign graduate studies in a country perceived to be more peaceful and politically stable” (p. 95). Because of this, the numbers of international students in U.S. higher education institutions have dramatically declined from 2001 through 2003 (National Academies, 2005). Indeed, Chen (2006) surveyed 140 East Asian international students in Canada and found that many international students in Canadian colleges or universities went to Canada because they could not obtain U.S. visas.

#### Difficulties of International Students

International students in U.S. higher education institutions may face challenges in adjusting their lives to the United States ways because they have come from different social/cultural backgrounds. The biggest difference between their home country and the host country is often language. In fact, many studies have indicated that most

international students whose primary language was not English have expressed difficulty in learning English (Fu, 1995; Hong, Roy, & Dario, 2007; Solberg, Choi, Ritsman, & Jolly, 1994; Wilkins, 1974). In addition, other differences between cultures, such as food, life style, or social system, have been found to hinder international students' smooth transition to the host culture (Barratt, & Huba, 1994; Charles & Stewart, 1991; Pedersen, 1991; Surdam, & Collins, 1984; Wilton & Constantine, 2003).

### *Language*

Studies have indicated that language is a problematic area for international students (Fu, 1995; Hong, Roy, & Dario, 2007; Wilkins, 1974). Abel (2002) stated, "Academic success for the international students flows from the confluence of a number of factors, including language proficiency, learning strategies, and classroom dynamics" (p. 18). In one study (Solberg, Choi, Ritsman, & Jolly, 1994), language was the biggest roadblock for the international students wishing to study in U.S. institutions. Due to this difficulty, most U.S. colleges and universities require documentation of English proficiency for international students through tests such as the *Test of English as Foreign Language* (TOEFL), because the level of English proficiency could affect academic work as well as quality of life in the United States.

In addition, Fu (1995) indicated that the confidence of international students in adjusting to a new cultural life was dependant on the level of English skills; the more English language competence that international students had, the easier they adjusted their lives to the new culture. Macrae (1997) advised that international students should possess competence in the English language before entering classes at U.S. higher education institutions.

Other studies have also emphasized that international students should possess competent writing skills in English similar to those of American students, because writing skills are important for doing scholarly work (Anson, Brady, & Larson, 1993; Ashton-Jones, & Thomas, 1990; Brodkey, 1987). Ying (2003) found that regardless of having international or American student status, the level of writing skills was decisive in the students' scholarly success in college. In this study, Ying investigated 155 Taiwanese graduate students to examine academic success factors. The results indicated that English writing skills were a significant predictor of academic success for international students. However, in this study the writing skills of the international students did not meet the expectations of the American professors. In addition, Green (2007) pointed out that students who possessed high level English writing skills showed better adjustment to the host culture than students who had lower level writing skills in English.

Another important language factor is the communication skill of listening and speaking. Seiler, Schuelke, and Lieb-Brilhart (1984) emphasized the importance of communication skills and noted, "Learning cannot occur without communication" (p. 3). To achieve effective communication, oral skills, including listening and speaking, are crucial for expressing thoughts and emotions as well as interacting with professors and other students (Honig, 2007; Kim, 2006).

Competent listening and speaking skills are necessary not only for international students but also for American students. Mandel (2000) stated:

Around 350 B. C. Aristotle wrote his famous Rhetoric, now considered to be one of the finest formal books on the subject. Now 2,300 years later, we are still

struggling with the same problems the Greeks encountered and that speakers have struggled with throughout the ages. (p. viii)

In fact, Hills (1988) indicated that most U.S. colleges or universities recognize the necessity of oral skills training for their students. Regarding the oral skills of international students, U.S. higher education institutions have been concerned with the lack of speaking skills of international students because it has led to failure in the students' studies (Butler, 2004).

Birrell (2006) tested the spoken English abilities of international students who obtained permanent resident visas from the Australian government. Even though they graduated from Australian universities with advanced degrees, the results of this study showed that the international students' scores were below the average level normally required by professional workplaces, especially for spoken English. Birrell concluded that the Australian government should not grant visas to international students failing spoken English tests since one third of all international students in Australian universities lacked spoken English abilities. Oral skills have also been found to be important for scholastic activities such as oral presentations which contribute to an active scholarly classroom instead of a passive learning environment (Bligh, 1972; Gibbs & Jenkins, 1984; Jenkins & Pepper, 1988). Wilkins (1974) indicated that oral presentations changed "knowledge from a language-learning situation to a language-using situation" (p. 76).

Even though it may be important that international students possess competent oral presentation skills, in one study, international students noted that language was the biggest obstacle they faced in adjusting their lives to a new culture (Barratt & Huba, 1994). Also, many international students, though possessing sufficient academic English



skills to study in U.S. higher education institutions, have tended to be weak in conversational English (Leki, 1992). Indeed, Cummins (1979) indicated that there was a difference between academic English and conversational English. For this reason, Williams, Woodhall, and O'Brian (1986) recommended that international students take ESL courses before taking regular classes in U.S. higher education institutions in order to improve their written as well as spoken English skills.

### *Socio-cultural adjustment*

Studies investigating the attitudes of international students concerning their adjustment to their host society have found that Asian international students have more negative attitudes toward adjustment in U.S. higher education institutions than those attitudes of European international students (Barratt & Huba, 1994; Yeh & Inose, 2003). Rosenthal, Russell, and Garry (2007) indicated that connectedness of international students to the host culture was closely related to cultural background; Asian international students tended to be less connected to the host culture than any other international student subgroup. Boyer and Sedlacek (1988) indicated that a personal relationship with friends in the host culture could be an important variable to help overcome barriers in adjusting to a new cultural life for international students; international students may need to receive assistance from American students. It may be, therefore, that international students who possess the skill to make friends may make an easier adjustment in U.S. institutions than students who have difficulty making friends.

Scholars have noted that international students often experience cultural shock in that they come from different social/cultural backgrounds with unique experiences, knowledge, and challenges (Barratt & Huba, 1994; Charles & Stewart, 1991; Pedersen,

1991; Surdam & Collins, 1984; Wilton & Constantine, 2003). Biggs (1990) indicated that the learning style differences of students may be related to their previous backgrounds, including language and personal experiences. Parr (1992) surveyed 163 international students in U.S. higher education institutions and asked about the greatest difficulties the students experienced in their studies. The results indicated that cultural difference and financial problems were the most common difficulties for international students studying in the United States.

To investigate international student adjustment to U.S. higher education institutions, Kaczmarek, et al (1994) administered the *Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire* to international and U.S. students and found that the level of international student adjustment was lower than that of American students; international students were experiencing a cultural shock that American students were not experiencing. Abe, Talbot, and Geelhoed (1998) also indicated that Asian international students, specifically, were experiencing the greatest number of difficulties of all the international students studying in the United States.

Investigating 359 international students in the United States, Yeh and Inose (2003) found that the stress levels of international students with European backgrounds were prominently lower than those of Asian international students. In addition, Schram and Lauver (1988) studied 600 international students and indicated that non-European students were at high risk for alienation. After surveying 412 international students about their academic stress levels, Wan, Chapman, and Biggs (1992) found that cultural distance was the most influential factor related to academic stress, followed by lack of language skills and lack of a social support network. Shin and Abell (1999) surveyed 201

international students from Korea and China and found that there was a negative relationship between homesickness and life contentment in the United States, with higher levels of homesickness tending to correspond to lower levels of contentment.

Studies have indicated that the most important factor related to international student adjustment is socio-cultural connectedness (Kagan & Cohen, 1990; Perrucci & Hu, 1995). Kagan and Cohen (1990) surveyed 92 international students and found that cultural adjustment of international students was affected by “language spoken at home and having both American and native friends” (p. 133). Also, after studying 600 international graduate students, Perrucci and Hu (1995) indicated that contact with U.S. students and language skills were strongly related to the academic satisfaction of international students. Indeed, Yeh and Inose (2003) indicated that there were close relationships among the level of English fluency, the contentment of social support networks, and the social connectedness of international students.

Correspondingly, research has indicated that fluent English speaking can positively influence international students’ academic achievement and connectedness to the host society. Stoyhoff (1997) found a strong relationship between the academic achievement and the socio-cultural adjustment of international students. After surveying 77 freshman international students, Stoyhoff noted how the students’ English study skills influenced their academic achievement; high achievers accepted study help from their host society, and were better able to summarize main ideas from lectures and books than low achievers. Surveying 159 international and American students, Kagan and Cohen (1990) concluded that having both American and native friends was one of the most important factors influencing the academic achievement and the cultural adjustment of

international students. Perrucci and Hu (1995) had similar findings in their study of satisfaction of international students in the United States that found a positive relationship between contact with U.S. students and social/educational satisfaction.

Another adjustment issue for international students can be the difference between the academic issues of the home country and the host country (Day & Hajj, 1986). White, Brown, and Suddick (1983) indicated that international students tended to experience difficulty in adjusting their scholastic lives because of the academic circumstances in the culture of U.S. higher education institutions, including studying, testing, and classroom culture, were different than those of their own countries. In sum, the socio-cultural differences between the host and home countries can make an impact on both the daily and the scholastic lives of international students in U.S. higher education institutions.

This lack of a social support network may also hinder international students in their adjustment to the United States. Scarcella (1990) found that international students can experience emotional troubles due to socio-cultural differences. Lacina (2002) stated that “because their family and social networks are left behind in their home countries, international students are forced to form new social networks” (p. 21). From this stress, international students have been found to experience uneasiness, anxiety and loss of confidence (Bradley, 2000; Hong, Roy, & Dario, 2007; Oberg, 1960; Poyrazil, Kavanaugh, Baker, & Al-Timimi, 2004). Bulthuis (1986) and Sakurako (2000) indicated that these experiences made international students passive about getting into the host society, and hindered the building of social support networks. Indeed, international students have been found to have less of a social support network than American students (Leong & Sedlacek, 1986).

## Understanding Asian Students from an Historical/Cultural Perspective

To understand international students from East Asia, it may be important to examine their historical/cultural background in that “culture provides tools, habits, and assumptions that pervasively influence human thought and behavior, and the task of learning does not escape this influence” (Tweed & Lehman, 2002, p. 89). Indeed, studies have indicated that international students from East Asia may use different learning styles and may achieve differently than American students, and these differences may be attributable to culture (Barron & Arcodia, 2002; Tweed & Lehman, 2002).

In one study investigating the historical/cultural background of East Asian international students, Leung (2001) noted, “East Asian students have consistently outperformed their counterparts in Western countries” (p. 35). Indeed, research has indicated that Asian students in U.S. Higher Education institutions have been outstanding in their academic achievements in spite of their rote learning styles (Biggs, 1990; Wang, 1992). Yee (1976) pointed out that the academic achievement of Asian students has led to the success of Asian Americans as well as Asian countries. Biggs (1990) noted that the academic success of Asian students perhaps comes from their cultural background that emphasizes education.

Historically, East Asian countries, especially Korea, China, and Japan, have had similar cultural/social backgrounds in that education has been an important aspect in their societies. Yang, Kim and Kim (1995) and Tweed and Lehman (2002) stressed that the reason that these three countries had a common tradition was due to the influence of the Asian concept of respect for education. Barron and Arcodia (2002) indicated that this common tradition came from the Confucian concept of emphasizing education.

Ancient China had a test called the *Chin-Shih*, which was an examination to be a high imperial official (Leung, 2001). Chinese people had respect for people who passed the *Chin-Shih* and eventually became one of the high imperial officials (Yee, 1976). Chinese parents were known to provide their children with the best education in order to prepare for the *Chin-Shih* (Beleze, 1964).

Similar to China, Confucianism has provided a philosophical basis in the Korean society. Korea had a test called the *Gua-ger*, or the civil service examination (Bea, 1991), similar to the *Chin-Shih*. As with Chinese people, Korean people had respect for people who passed the *Gua-ger*. Parisi, Tompson, and Williams (1995) testified that Japan has also emphasized education influenced by Confucianism. Even though the *Chin-Shih* in China and the *Gua-ger* in Korea are now gone, Korea, China, and Japan have continued to follow in the tradition of valuing education. In summary, the idea of valuing education has influenced East Asian countries and provided a driving force for the Eastern Asian world.

In terms of culture and Asian students' learning styles, Tweed and Lehman (2002) compared the Confucian (Eastern style of learning) and Socratic (Western style of learning) learning approaches and noted:

A Confucian-Socratic framework is used to analyze culture's influence on academic learning. Socrates, a Western exemplar, valued private and public questioning of widely accepted knowledge and expected students to evaluate others' beliefs and to generate and express their own hypotheses. Confucius, an Eastern exemplar, valued effortful, respectful, and pragmatic acquisition of essential knowledge as well as behavioral reform. (p. 89)

A similar study by Barron and Arcodia (2002) compared Confucian heritage culture students with Western students and concluded that Confucian heritage students showed “preferences for reflector learning styles” while Western students displayed “preferences for activist learning styles” (p. 23).

Leung (2001) also contrasted the East Asian and the Western systems in mathematics education and concluded:

The East Asian and the Western views seem to differ on what the centre of the teaching and learning process should be. Student-centered education is the basic tenor in Western theories, while East Asian educators are affirming the importance of the teacher and the subject matter. This tripartite emphasis on the student, the teacher and the subject matter is perhaps the essence of an East Asian identity in mathematics education. (p. 47)

Regarding the attitudes of East Asian international students, Niles (1995) indicated that Asian international students tended to show attitudes of collectivism while Australian students tended to be individualistic. He found that “The adoption of strong collaborative approaches to learning by Asian students has been frequently linked to the influence of Confucian cultural values and its focus on the group rather than the individual” (p. 345). Niles (1995) found another important cultural influence on Asian students from this study; Asian international students were more motivated in their studies and more competitive than Australian students. Indeed, Asian students have been found to be generally strong in competitive situations because they have been educated under “excessive pressure from the highly competitive examinations” (Leung, 2001, p. 36).

## Attitudes of Asian International Students toward U.S. Higher Education Institutions

In general, studies have indicated that the attitudes of Asian international students in U.S. higher education institutions have been related to the students' cultural backgrounds. Generally, Asian students have been found to be quieter and less active in their class participation, while American students have been found to be more active in their class participation (Leung, 2001; Ramburuth, & McCormick, 2001; Wang, 1992). In addition, Asian students have tended to be passive learners, stemming from the students' past academic cultural influences (Biggs, 1990; Kim, 2006).

Also, Yuen and Tinsley (1981) found that international students showed different attitudes toward professional psychological help than those of American students; while international students tended not to use counseling centers even though they were experiencing mental distress, American students tended to use counseling centers provided by their schools when they had problems (Sue & Sue, 1977). Moreover, certain subgroups of international students have been found to have differing attitudes toward accessing help in U.S. higher education institutions. Sohrab and Myrna (1982) studied the attitudes of international students toward professional psychological help and found that cultural background was one of the most important variables. In this study, the attitudes of European students toward psychological help were more positive than those of Asian students.

Xie (2007) interviewed 20 Chinese international graduate students in the United States and found that most Chinese international students never took part in psychological counseling even though they were aware of the concept of psychological counseling. Participants reported that they doubted the effect of psychological



counseling in that they were concerned about “stigma, confidentiality, and practical barriers (time, cost, convenience) to seek counseling” (Xie, 2007, V). Also, language was another barrier stopping the participants from taking part in psychological counseling in this study. Chinese international students were concerned about their lack of English skills to express their problems and did not trust American counselors to understand the Chinese culture and their difficulties as international students in the United States.

#### College Choice of International Students from East Asia

Studies concerning college choice have noted the reasons that international students chose U.S. higher education institutions. Chen (2006) noted, “The United States was the first choice country for many international students” (p. 94). In fact, the number of international students in U.S. higher education institutions has been 10 times greater than in any other country, and the number of international students from East Asia has also been greater than any other region (Institute of International education, 2007). Cummings and So (1985) stated, “Parallel to America’s political advance into Asia was its promotion of opportunities for educational and cultural exchange” (p. 407). Moreover, the economic development of East Asian countries has been one of the factors attracting international students to U.S. higher education institutions (Chen, 2006; Poock & Love, 2001).

Similarly, Shive (1991) stressed that a cultural/social background emphasizing education, and the economic development of East Asia have both increased the number of students studying abroad; Shive described East Asia as “the land of Confucius’s legacy and the scene of the most dynamic economies in the world” (1991, p. 386). In addition, Cummings and So (1985) testified that many Asian international students who received

advanced degrees from U.S. higher education institutions returned to their own countries, “introduced key features of the American system to their own systems” (p. 413), and influenced their students to study in U.S. higher education institutions.

Another reason that international students have often chosen U.S. higher education institutions has been to obtain F-1 visa status as an immigration tool (Agarwal & Winkler, 1985). However, this situation has changed since it has become more difficult to obtain F-1 visa status due to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Chen (2006) noted, “a strong negative *pushing factor* from the United States and also a strong *pulling* factor for Canada” (p. 101). In this study, he surveyed 140 international students from East Asia, including China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea and Taiwan in Canadian graduate schools and found that many Asian international students chose Canadian universities “for utilitarian reasons, such as ease of visa/immigration, financial aid, and proximity to the U.S.” (p. 85).

Regarding the choice of a specific school, studies have indicated that the reputation of the school including faculties and facilities was the most important factor in attracting international students (Chen, 2006; Kelly, 1988; Poock & Love, 2001; Talbot, Maier, & Rushlau, 1996). Chen (2006) also found that international students from China and Taiwan weighed the reputation of their schools more than the Korean and Japanese students did. Other important factors in attracting international students have been found to be cost, including tuition, financial aid, opportunities for assistantships, location of the institution, and living expenses (Chen, 2006; Poock & Love, 2001; Talbot, Maier, & Rushlau, 1996).

Another factor that may affect the program choice of international students is racial discrimination in the locale of the school. Poock and Love (2001) surveyed doctoral students and program coordinators in 24 U.S. higher education institutions in order to determine doctoral student program choice and found that minority students cared more about the location of the schools and the attitude of the schools toward minority groups concerning “cost of living and affordability of off-campus housing” (p. 214) than American students when they selected their programs.

#### Perceptions and Experiences of Music Students in U.S. Higher Education Institutions

As indicated by Brand (2001), numerous Asian students have studied music in U.S. higher education institutions due to the recruitment of “talented music students from Asia” (p. 170). While there may be a large number of music students in U.S. institutions, there are few studies documenting international music student perceptions. There are, however, studies documenting the programs themselves, and American music students’ perceptions of the programs.

The status of programs has been documented in studies and in directories. According to Bailey (2006), in 2006 over 3,000 music departments existed in U.S. higher education institutions. In addition, 633 schools of music were accredited through the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) as of 2007 (NASM Directory, 2007). In the United States, there are commonly three types of music schools: 1) music conservatories focusing on performance, 2) schools or colleges of music in universities that provide both performance and related fields, and 3) music departments serving music majors who study both music and other areas (Casey, Ferrara, Lowry, & Wolff, 2004).

The 2006 Directory of Music Schools listed in the *Instrumentalist* introduced 93 schools of music, with information pertaining to tuition for residents and non-residents, type of degrees, performing organizations, and number of music students and faculties for each school. Based on this report, there were seven schools that had over 1000 music students (*University of Southern California, Florida State University, Indiana University (Bloomington), University of Michigan (Ann Arbor), New York University, University of Cincinnati, University of North Texas*), and 35 schools of music that had over 500 music students.

Studies have indicated that music students' previous musical experiences before entering college were one of the most important factors music majors used in their college choice (Gillespie & Hamann, 1999; Sichivitsa, 2003). Gillespie and Hamann (1999) investigated 153 string music education majors from 17 colleges of music about their backgrounds, reasons for choosing teaching, and recommendations to attract more students into string music education. The participants stated that they chose string music education as their major because they loved playing string instruments and teaching music in the public schools; in addition to their own previous musical experiences, the string students' music teachers were an influential factor in choosing string music education as their major. The participants stated that they wanted to be a role model for children to lead them into string music education as their music teachers had done for them. Also, the participants indicated that the most important thing to be a role model was to show children enthusiasm toward music and music education.

Similarly, Sichivitsa (2003) also found that previous musical experiences were an important factor in college choir students' choice to enroll in collegiate-level choir. In

terms of the previous musical experiences of the music students, the parents were the most common influential factor. That is, if parents enjoyed musical activities, valued music, and/or provided musical experiences for their children, the possibility that their children would continue in music was greater.

For the college preparation of music students, Wurst (2004) emphasized early preparation to get accepted to a music school. Tritle (1996-1997) also stressed that students who want to get accepted to a music school need to have enough time for searching appropriate schools, knowing the admission procedure of each school, and preparing auditions and tests as early as possible. Berg (2004) presented the essentials for getting accepted to music colleges, including “taking the SAT early, keeping your grades up, applying on time” (p. 48) and preparing for the audition. Among these essentials, the preparation for the audition may be one of the most important factors for music college entrance. To be successful in the audition, Stees (2004) emphasized that it is very important for prospective music students to have a good choice of repertoire for the audition and students should have instruments checked and tuned before the audition.

In preparation for college, Wurst (2004) suggested that it is best for prospective music students to prepare for college-level music theory and music history including basic piano skills, rhythmic and harmonic dictation, sight singing and biographies of important composers and their works in that these subjects are very essential to be a professional musician, and every music college requires these courses. In fact, Merritt (2000) indicated that music students in U.S. higher education institutions showed weak skills in these subjects, and he made suggestions that those who want to study in music

colleges should study these subjects before entering music colleges to be successful in their studies.

For music students attending college, research has documented that increased performance skill is a great priority for freshmen music students. Burt and Mills (2006) investigated 13 college music majors and found that they tended to cite the importance of the first performance after entering their schools of music; feedback about the first performance greatly influenced their confidence. Thus, to obtain positive feedback, music majors have been found to place emphasis on improved performance levels and prioritization of private lessons and personal practice (Kostaka, 2002; Wolfgang, 1990; Teachout, 2001). Similarly, after studying 46 music college students concerning ways to increase their performance skills, Woody (2000) concluded that a private lesson was the most important activity compared to ensembles or other music classes. In this study, music students commonly indicated that their private lesson teachers served as role models for them, and their private lessons and their teachers influenced their own personal practice.

Research has also documented that the more performance is emphasized for college music students, the more the students tend to say that they feel overwhelmed by the pressure to increase their performance skills. Dews and Williams (1989) studied the college student stress of 201 music students who wanted to be professional musicians and found that impatience with progress was the greatest stressor for the students. Other factors that were stressors of music students were also related to performance, such as pre-performance nervousness or musical versus personal life conflicts. Moreover,

Williamson and Thompson (2006) indicated that these stressors often caused performance anxiety.

In terms of relieving stress related to music performance, Dews and Williams (1989) found that 96% of the measured college music students in the study required assistance in solving their music-related stress and they tended to seek informal help foremost, such as friends instead of professionals. Formal counseling was commonly the last choice. In this study, the students noted that they would have asked for help if there would have been formal counselors who could have understood the special situations of music students. In addition, Williamson and Thompson (2006) indicated that when music students in their study had physical and psychological problems, they tended to seek help from their applied music professors before seeking help from formal counselors or medical doctors.

Job insecurity has been found to be another stress factor for music students (Dews & Williams, 1989). Research has indicated that college music students were often concerned about their future careers (Bergee, 1992; Dew & Williams, 1989; Mills, 2005; Schmidt, Zdzinski, & Ballard, 2006). Bergee (1992) investigated 91 music students and found that they had heard negative comments about future careers for music students from newspapers, family, or friends. These messages made music students concerned about their future job security.

Regarding the future careers of music students, teaching in the public schools has been a commonly researched area (Cooley, 1961; Gillespie & Hamann, 1999; Mills, 2005; Schmidt, Zdzinski, & Ballard, 2006). Cooley (1961) surveyed 180 music college students and found that 113 out of 180 students wanted to have a teaching job in the

public schools. Also, Schmidt, Zdzinski, and Ballad (2006) studied 148 undergraduate music education majors, and found that 69.4% reported “public school music teaching as the *immediate* career goal, while just 49% of those responding indicated public school teaching as a *long-term* career goal” (p. 150), with some students wanting to teach in colleges or universities as a *long-term* goal. In this study, female students tended to cite teaching as a *long-term* goal more often than male students did.

### Conclusion

Through this review of literature, it would be possible to conclude that the contribution of international students in U.S. higher education institutions has been considerable, both economically and academically, especially, that of East Asian international students. According to study results, East Asian students tend to experience more difficulties in adjusting to the U.S. than other international students’ experience. It is possible that the cultural gap between East Asian countries and the United States is larger than the gap between the U.S. and other countries with European backgrounds. On the other hand, studies have documented that East Asian students often experience academic success due to their culturally-based respect for education. In addition, there are numerous studies documenting the status of international students in the United States. However, the studies about East Asian international students in U.S. higher education music institutions have been relatively limited even though East Asian international music students occupy an important part in U.S. higher education institutions.



## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

The following chapter presents the methodological procedures for the current study, including participants, data collection procedures, measurement instrument, data analysis, validity and reliability, and results of the pilot test. The purpose of this chapter is to present how the participants were selected, how the measurement instrument was developed, and how the data were collected and analyzed.

#### Participants

The population of this study was East Asian (Korea, China, Taiwan, and Japan) international music students attending nine U.S. major universities with a large number of international students and with music programs accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). All participants in this study were volunteers. After the international offices or schools of music forwarded the participant invitation email to the East Asian international music students at their universities, 182 people accessed the *East Asian International Music Student Inventory (EAIMSI)*; ninety-nine people started the *EAIMSI*, and 7 people did not complete the *EAIMSI*. As a result, 92 participants completed the *East Asian International Music Student Inventory (EAIMSI)* and were used as the responding sample for this study. The average time taken to complete the questionnaire was 12.96 minutes (SD = 4.38, ranging from 8.20 to 32.15), and the completion rate was 93%.

In this study, there were 63 females (68%) and 21 males (23%) from Korea (n = 49, 53%), China (n = 13, 14%), Japan (n = 10, 11%), and Taiwan (n = 9, 10%), and 8 people (9%) who did not indicate their gender and 11 people (12%) who did not report

their nationality. The average age was 27.83 years (SD = 3.76, ranging from 18.00 to 39.00). Among them, 63 participants were single (68%), 20 participants were married (22%), and 9 people (10%) who did not indicate their marital status. Regarding their studies, the most common major was piano performance (n = 38, 41%), followed by voice (n=11, 12%), violin (6, 7%), composition (n = 6, 7%), conducting (n = 5, 5%), jazz studies (n = 5, 5%), cello (n = 2, 2%), music theory (n = 1, 1%), flute (1, 1%), saxophone (n = 1, 1%), organ (n = 1, 1%), harp (n = 1, 1%), musicology (n = 1, 1%), and music education (n = 1, 1%); there were 12 people (13%) who did not indicate their music major fields.

The participants' degree levels were doctorate (n = 48, 52%), masters (n = 28, 30%), undergraduate (n = 7, 8%), and 9 people (10%) who did not report their current degree level. For language proficiency, there was a greater number of participants (n = 59, 64%) who had submitted Test of English as Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores than participants (n = 17, 18%) who had completed English as a second language (ESL) courses and there were 6 participants (7%) who were not required to submit English proficiency and 1 participant (1%) who did document English proficiency another way. Nine people (10%) did not indicate their English proficiency documentation. Additionally, 13 participants submitted Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores (14%).

Regarding primary economic funding sources for their studies, parents (n = 38, 41%) were the most common primary economic source, followed by TA/TF positions (n = 22, 24%), scholarships (n = 17, 18%), personal (n = 4, 4%), and others (n = 2, 2%). Lastly, the average number of years residing in the United States was 5.11 (SD = 2.51,

ranging from 0.25 to 14.00). Nine people did not report the number of years they had resided in the United States. In addition, the largest number of participants lived in off-campus apartments (64, 70%), followed by on-campus apartment (14, 15%), dormitory (3, 3%), and others (2, 2%). Nine people did not indicate their living status.

This study used a convenience sampling procedure to choose the potential participants in this study. Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003) noted:

The researcher selects a sample that suits the purposes of the study and that is convenient. The sample can be convenient for a variety of reasons: the sample is located at or near where the researcher works; the administrator who will need to approve data collection is a close colleague of the researcher; the researcher is familiar with the setting, and might even work in it; some of the data that the researcher needs already have been collected. In fact, many research studies that appear in journals involve college students because the researcher is a professor and these students provide a convenient sample. (p. 175)

For this study, it was more appropriate to use convenience sampling for the following reasons. First, it was necessary to choose U.S. higher education institutions with significant numbers of international students so as best to represent the international student population. Past research has documented that international students tend to choose several particular institutions (Chen, 2006; Kelly, 1988; the Opendoor 2007 report of the Institute of International Education (IEE), Poock & Love, 2001) and so this study needed to portray the type of school that would commonly attract large numbers of international students. Second, it was necessary for the institutions to have music programs. Since there are U.S. higher education institutions that do not have many

international students or a music program (U.S. News & World Report, 2008), this study used convenience sampling to ensure representativeness of international students and music students in the accessible population.

In order to improve the generalizability of this study, several universities were selected that had the greatest number of international students and that had an accredited music program. To select U.S. higher education institutions that were to be used in this study, there were two considerations; 1) U.S. higher education institutions that had the largest number of international students, and 2) U.S. higher education institutions that had music programs accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) in that NASM “has been recognized by the United States Department of Education as the agency responsible for the accreditation of all music curricula” (NASM: handbook, 2003, p. 6).

Concerning U.S. higher education institutions with the largest number of international students, the Opendoor 2007 report of the Institute of International Education (IEE), supported by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational Cultural Affairs, documented the status of international students in U.S. higher education institutions by listing the 20 U.S. higher education institutions with the most international students as following: University of Southern California, Columbia University, New York University, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Purdue University Main Campus, University of Michigan – Ann Arbor, University of Texas at Austin, University of California – Los Angeles, Harvard University, Boston University, University of Pennsylvania, The Ohio State University Main Campus, SUNY at Buffalo, Arizona State University – Tempe Campus, Indiana University at Bloomington, Michigan State

University, University of Florida, Texas A & M University, University of Wisconsin – Madison, and Stanford University.

From these 20 schools, 11 universities also had music programs accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), while 9 universities did not hold an accreditation from NASM. Indiana University at Bloomington and Boston University did not allow this study to be completed in their schools; as a result, the following 9 universities were used for this study:

1. University of Southern California
2. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
3. University of Michigan – Ann Arbor
4. University of Texas at Austin
5. The Ohio State University Main Campus
6. Arizona State University – Tempe Campus
7. Michigan State University
8. University of Florida
9. University of Wisconsin – Madison.

After these 9 universities were chosen, an email was sent to the international office in each school to obtain approval to conduct the study at the institution. The email letter included an introduction, the purpose of the study, the reason for the email, and the explanation of *the East Asian International Music Student Inventory*. In addition, because the universities could not release personal information due to privacy issues, the email asked the office to forward the invitation email letter to every international student

at their institution. Based on an approval, the international office forwarded the participant invitation email to the East Asian international music students in the 9 schools.

The participant invitation email included the purpose of the study, the reason for the email, an informed consent notice (Appendix B), and the website connecting-address for the online questionnaire. In order to access the questionnaire, the participants needed to consent to the protocols of the study. There was an informed consent notice at the end of the invitation email. Completion of the questionnaire provided evidence of the participant's willingness to participate in this study and their consent to have the information used for the purposes of the study.

#### Data Collection Procedures

This study was a descriptive study using survey research methodological procedures, with an online, web-based questionnaire. The *QuestionPro* online survey tool was used for assisting survey research data gathering from the East Asian international music student participants, in that “*QuestionPro*'s online survey software is a one-stop solution for managing feedback via email” ([www.questionpro.com](http://www.questionpro.com), ¶ 1). There were several advantages to using *QuestionPro* survey software: (1) it allowed the researcher to “create unlimited survey questionnaires with unlimited questions and collect unlimited responses” ([www.questionpro.com](http://www.questionpro.com), ¶ 2), and (2) it did not require additional software or hardware of the participants. The website of *QuestionPro* explains the web-based protocol in the following way:

*QuestionPro* is web-based software for creating and distributing surveys. It consists of an intuitive wizard interface for creating survey questions, tools for distributing your survey via email or your website, and tools for analyzing and

viewing your results. You simply build your survey and email it to a list of potential respondents. *QuestionPro* will take care collecting and recording the responses. Results are available in real time

(<http://www.questionpro.com/home/howItWorks.html>, ¶ 1).

After the international office forwarded the participant invitation email to the East international music students in the schools, 182 people accessed the *East Asian International Music Student Inventory (EAIMSI)*, 99 people started the *EAIMSI*, and 7 people did not complete the *EAIMSI*. As a result, 92 participants completed the *East Asian International Music Student Inventory (EAIMSI)* voluntarily. The average time taken to complete this survey was 12.96 minutes, and the completion rate was 93%.

#### Measurement Instrument

This study was a descriptive study using survey methodological procedure with an online, web-based questionnaire. Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003) stated, “the purpose of survey research is to use questionnaires or interviews to collect data from a sample that has been selected to represent a population to which the findings of the data analysis can be generalized” (p. 223). Instead of conducting interviews, this study used an online questionnaire in that “questionnaires have two advantages over interviews for collecting research data; the cost of sampling respondents over a wide geographic area is lower, and the time required to collect the data typically is much less” (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003, p. 222). Because the population of this study was international music students in U.S. higher education institutions, a questionnaire was more effective to collect data over a wide geographic area than interviews would be. Therefore, the measurement instrument of this study was a questionnaire.

Based on the research questions, the *East Asian International Music Student Inventory (EAIMSI)* was developed. The *EAIMSI* questionnaire contained a total of 68 questions that were divided into three sections: 1) 53 questions in Likert scale format (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree) for measuring the perceived factors influencing the program choice, academic success, and program satisfaction level of East Asian international students: 2) 2 questions in an open-ended format for identifying the greatest challenges encountered by East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions, and any perceived solutions to those challenges: and 3) 13 demographic questions including 8 multiple choice questions and 5 open-ended questions. Each question of the *EAIMSI* was developed after reviewing literature related to the research questions.

The first research question addressed the perceived factors that influenced the program choice of East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions. There were 18 questions concerning the program choice of East Asian international students: (1) 4 questions addressing the reputation of the school program, including the reputation of the curriculum or the professor (Chen, 2006; Kelly, 1988; Poock & Love, 2001; Talbot, Maier, & Rushlau, 1996), (2) 3 questions concerning financial matters, including tuition cost, scholarships, and teaching assistantship positions (Chen, 2006; Poock & Love, 2001; Talbot, Maier, & Rushlau, 1996), (3) 1 question concerning the school's location (Chen, 2006; Poock & Love, 2001), (4) 3 questions concerning influential others, such as parents, teachers, or friends (Gillespie & Hamann, 1999; Sichivitsa, 2003; Shive, 1991), (5) 3 questions concerning school policy (Chen, 2006), and (6) 4 questions concerning the perceived benefits of getting a degree from a



U.S. institution, in that past studies have indicated that students perceived benefits, including increased career options (Cummings & So, 1985), improved ability to speak and write English (Birrell, 2006), and, simply a chance to live in the United States (Agarwal & Winkler, 1985; Chen, 2006; Cummings & So, 1985; National Academies, 2005).

The second research question addressed the perceived factors influencing the academic success of East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education Institutions. There were 15 questions concerning the perceived factors: (1) 3 questions on language, including 1 written language question (Green, 2007; Ying, 2003) and 2 conversational language questions (Barratt & Huba, 1994; Fu, 1995; Macrae, 1997; Williams, Woodhal, & O'Brian, 1986), (2) 4 questions concerning social support network (Kagan & Cohen, 1990; Perrucci & Hu, 1995; Yeh & Inose, 2003), (3) 5 questions concerning connectedness to the host culture, including familiarity with the American school system (Day & Hajj, 1986; White, Brown, & Suddick, 1983), relationships with American friends (Kagan & Cohen, 1990), and relationships with professors (Burt & Mills, 2006; Williamon & Thompson, 2006), (4) 2 questions concerning Asian learning styles (Niles, 1995; Leung, 2001; Yee, 1976), and (5) 1 question concerning emotional stability (Schram & Lauver, 1988; Wan, Chapman, & Biggs, 1992; Yeh & Inose, 2003). Regarding English skills, each general question was accompanied by an additional question asking about 'my English skills' in order to see the similarities between the perceived influence of English skills, in general and in terms of their own skills, on the academic success of the East Asian international students.

The third research question addressed the perceived program satisfaction level of East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions. There were 20 questions concerning students' perceived program satisfaction: (1) 1 question concerning school reputation (Chen, 2006; Poock & Love, 2001), (2) 1 question concerning finances (Chen, 2006; Poock & Love, 2001; Talbot, Maier, & Rushlau, 1996), (3) 2 questions concerning professional opportunities (Chen, 2006; Poock & Love, 2001; Talbot, Maier, & Rushlau, 1996), (4) 5 questions concerning future careers (Cooley, 1961; Dew & Williams, 1989; Gillespie & Hamann, 1999; Mills, 2005; Schmidt, Zdzinski, & Ballard, 2006), (5) 2 questions concerning professors (Chen, 2006; Poock & Love, 2001; Kostaka, 2002; Wolfgang, 1990; Williamon & Thompson, 2006; Woody, 2002), (6) 6 questions concerning facilities (Poock & Love, 2001; Talbot, Maier, & Rushlau, 1996; Woody, 2002), and (7) 3 questions concerning overall program satisfaction level.

The fourth research question addressed the perceived challenges and possible solutions to the challenges encountered by East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions. Two questions were asked in an open-ended format in order to obtain in-depth, descriptive information from the East Asian international music student participants: (1) 1 question concerning three of the most difficult problems encountered as an East Asian international music student attending a U.S. higher education institution, and (2) 1 question concerning a possible solution to each listed problem.

Fowler (1989) noted several advantages to open-ended questions. For example, open-ended questions allow the researcher to collect unanticipated information and to

“describe more closely real views of the respondent” (p. 87). In depth knowledge of participant perceptions is needed, since the literature review indicated that international students in U.S. institutions have faced challenges in adjusting their lives to the United States because of the differences between their home country and the host country, such as language (Fu, 1995; Hong, Roy, & Dario, 2007; Solberg, Choi, Ritsman & Jolly, 1994; Wilkins, 1974) and culture (Barratt, & Huba, 1994; Charles & Stewart, 1991; Pedersen, 1991; Surdam, & Collins, 1984; Wilton & Constantine, 2003).

The last part of the questions addressed the demographic characteristics of East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions. There were 13 questions addressing the demographic characteristics of the international music students, including 8 multiple-choice questions and 5 open-ended questions. The questions were divided into 4 areas: (1) personal: age, gender, marital status, and nationality, (2) school: the name of the school, current degree program, (3) language proficiency test scores: TOEFL and GRE, and (4) economic sources for study: personal, parents, scholarship.

#### Data Analysis

Once each respondent completed *the East Asian International Music Student Inventory (EAIMSI)*, the data analysis began. Because the *EAIMSI* was grouped into five sections for the four research questions and the demographic questions, the responses were analyzed for each section; Research Question I (program choice: question 1 through 18); Research Question II (academic success: question 19 through 33); Research Question III (satisfaction: question 34 through 53); Research Question IV (challenges and solutions: questions 54 and 55); and the 13 demographic questions.

*QuestionPro* generated charts and graphs and descriptive statistics for each question. For research questions I through III, responses for the 5–point Likert rating scale questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and ranges. For research question IV, the open-ended responses for the perceived challenges and solutions that participants provided were grouped into similar categories and were presented as qualitative results. The demographic information was reported with frequencies and percentages. In addition, because two questions were interval level among the 13 demographic questions; Question 1 (age) and Question 4 (the period of time in the United States), means, standard deviations and ranges were provided.

#### Validity and Reliability

To check the validity of *the East Asian International Music Student Inventory (EAIMSI)*, content validity was evaluated. Gall, Gall, Borg (2003) noted that “Questionnaires and interviews must meet the same standards of validity and reliability that apply to other data-collection measures in educational research” (p. 223), and “content-related evidence typically is determined systematically by content experts, who define in precise terms the universe (also called domain) of specific content that the test is assumed to represent, and then determine how well that content universe is sampled by the test items” (p.191-192).

A panel of three experts was invited to check the validity of *the East Asian International Music Student Inventory (EAIMSI)*. The panel included: one female who had a MA degree in *Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Language (TESOL)* and experience with East Asian international students as a director of an international office

at a U.S. higher education institution; one male who had a DMA degree and 12 years of teaching experience as a faculty member in music at a U.S. higher education institution; and one male who had a Ph. D degree and experience in East Asian survey research studies as a faculty member in social work at a U.S. higher education institution. In addition, two of the experts had experiences as international student themselves because they came from East Asia to study in a U.S. higher education institution.

There were 20 content validity questions. The 20 questions were divided into four parts: (1) how well the survey questions represented each research question (program choice, academic success, program satisfaction, and difficulties and solutions: 6 questions); (2) how effective the survey format was (4 questions); (3) how clear the survey questions were (4 questions); and (4) how the survey questions could be improved (6 questions). The complete list of the questions is provided in the appendix (F).

Once the three panel members were selected, an email letter was sent to each member. The email included the purpose of this study, the reason for the email, and an invitation to assist in the content validity procedures for the *East Asian International Music Student Inventory (EAIMSI)*. Two days later, the 20 content validity questions with the *EAIMSI* were sent to the three members because all three members returned an acceptance email.

There were minor revisions based on the suggestions of the panel of experts. Regarding program satisfaction questions, the question, “I am satisfied with the service of the international office at my school” was added because the expert perceived that the quality of the international office’s work may influence the lives of international students. In addition, question 37 was removed because there was a redundancy between question

37 and question 42. Due to the addition of one question and the subtraction of another, the number of questions for program satisfaction was not changed. To improve the open-ended questions, question 54 was rephrased as “Give at least one possible solution for the three most difficult problems listed above” instead of “Give at least one possible solution for each problem listed above.” Question 3 was rephrased as “What country are you a citizen of” from “Which country did you come from?”

After the content validity check for the *EAIMSI* was finalized, a field test was conducted. Three East Asian students in a U.S. higher music education institution were selected for the field test: one female studying piano performance in a DMA program, one male studying composition in a DMA program, and one female studying organ in a MM program. Several questions were asked of the field test participants; (1) what do these survey questions mean to you? (2) how can these survey questions be related to your lives as East Asian international music students? (3) are these questions clear? (4) do you have any suggestions for improving these questions? In general, the three students replied that the survey questions were related to their lives as East Asian international music students in U.S. higher education institutions. In addition, each question was clear and easy to follow, and there were no further suggestions.

Once the field test was completed, the reliability check was conducted. Participants in the pilot test were East Asian international music students at a southeastern university with a large number of music students in the United States and had music programs accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). Based on an approval from the IRB (Appendix B), an invitation email was sent to the university’s international office, and the international office forwarded the email to every

international music student at the university. Once the pilot test was completed, test-retest reliability was calculated for all interval level questions (question 1 through 52). The participants' retest was completed from 7 to 10 days after the initial questionnaire was completed. A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson  $r$ ) was computed for the reliability check for every question.

There were 12 test-retest reliability respondents who completed the *East Asian International Music Student Inventory (EAIMSI)* twice. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson  $r$ ) ranged from 0.88 to 1.00 for each question. Based on the relatively high reliability coefficients, all questions were retained in the questionnaire.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

The following chapter presents the summary of research findings. There were four research questions in this study: (1) What were the perceived factors that influenced the program choice of East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions?, (2) What were the perceived factors influencing academic success of East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions?, (3) What was the perceived program satisfaction level of East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions?, and (4) What were the perceived solutions to problems encountered as East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions? The findings will be presented in the order of the four research questions.

#### Findings for Research Question I

Table 1 reports the means and standard deviations for the ratings of the factors perceived to influence the program choice of East Asian international music students in U.S. higher education institutions (Research Question I). The range of the means was from 2.21 to 4.03.

The findings indicated that *the professor's reputation* ( $M = 4.03$ ;  $SD = 0.71$ ), *scholarships* ( $M = 3.99$ ;  $SD = 1.20$ ) and *the program's reputation* ( $M = 3.85$ ;  $SD = 0.86$ ) were perceived as the most influential factors impacting the program choice of East Asian international music students, while *in order to acquire improved English skills* ( $M=2.47$ ;  $SD = 1.21$ ), *in order to live in the United States* ( $M=2.29$ ;  $SD = 1.08$ ), and *the*



*easy admission policy* (M = 2.21; SD = 1.20) were perceived as the least influential factors impacting the program choice of East Asian international music students.

Table 1

Program choice of East Asian international music students

Factors	Mean	SD
The professor's reputation	4.03	0.71
Scholarships	3.99	1.20
The program's reputation	3.85	0.86
The school's reputation	3.69	0.81
The academic accreditation	3.61	0.77
A degree from a U.S. institution	3.59	1.14
The teaching assistantship position	3.38	1.42
My teacher's recommendation	3.20	1.04
The location of the school	2.97	1.13
The inexpensive tuition	2.85	1.14
My friends' recommendation	2.76	1.12
Little opportunity to study in my homeland	2.66	1.14
The short time required to complete the program	2.60	1.21
My parent's recommendation	2.51	1.12
The speed of acceptance into the program	2.48	1.20
In order to acquire improved English skills	2.47	1.21
In order to live in the United States	2.29	1.08
The easy admission policy	2.21	1.20

## Findings for Research Question II

Table 2 reports the means and standard deviations for the ratings of the factors perceived to influence the academic success of East Asian international music students in U.S. higher education institutions (Research Question II). The range of the means was from 2.99 to 4.46.

Table 2

### Academic success of East Asian international music students

Factors	Mean	SD
Good relationship with professors	4.46	0.78
Good feedback from professors	4.41	0.70
My Emotional stability	4.19	0.81
Conversational English skills, in general	3.96	1.00
My own conversational English skills	3.63	0.92
Asian cultural background	3.95	0.86
Good relationship with American friends	3.85	0.88
Familiarity with the American school system	3.80	0.75
Written English skills, in general	3.80	0.86
My own written English skills	2.96	0.97
Presentational English skills, in general	3.77	0.88
My own presentational English skills	3.23	0.97
Good feedback from American friends	3.69	0.85
Social support network in the U.S.	3.69	0.93
Asian learning style	3.66	1.02
Support of the student-writing lab	3.33	0.84
Support of international office	3.16	0.75
Support of the student-counseling center	2.99	0.75

The findings indicated that a *good relationship with professors* (M = 4.46; SD = 0.78), *good feedback from professors* (M = 4.41; SD = 0.70), and *my emotional stability* (M = 4.19; SD = 0.81) were perceived as the most influential factors impacting the academic success of East Asian music international students in U.S. higher education institutions, while the *support of the student-writing lab* (M = 3.33; SD = 0.84), the *support of the international office* (M = 3.16; SD = 0.75), and the *support of the student-counseling center* (M = 2.99; SD = 0.75) were perceived as the least influential factors impacting the academic success of East Asian international music students. In addition, the findings indicated that the ratings of the conversational English skills (M = 3.96; SD = 1.00), the written English skills (M = 3.80; SD = 0.86), and the presentational English skills (M = 3.77; SD = 0.88) were higher than the ratings of my conversational English skills (M = 3.63; SD = 0.92), my written English skills (M = 2.96; SD = 0.97), and my presentational skills (M = 3.23; SD = 0.97).

### Findings for Research Question III

Table 3 reports the means and standard deviations for the ratings of the perceived satisfaction levels of East Asian international music students in U.S. higher education institutions (Research Question III). The range for the means was from 2.24 to 4.51.

The findings indicated that the *professor's teaching* (M = 4.51; SD = 0.60), the *professor's expertise* (M = 4.47; SD = 0.72), and *the improvement of musical skills* (M = 4.21; SD = 0.67) were perceived as the highest rated factors for the perceived program satisfaction level of East Asian international music students in U.S. higher education institutions, while the *food* (M = 2.99; SD = 1.05), the *service of the international office* (M = 2.97; SD = 0.82) and the *practice rooms* (M = 2.24; SD = 1.01) were perceived as

the lowest rated factors for the perceived program satisfaction level of East Asian international music students in U.S. higher education institutions.

Table 3

Perceived satisfaction level of East Asian international music students

Factors	Mean	SD
Professor's teaching	4.51	0.60
Professor's expertise	4.47	0.72
Improvement of musical skills	4.21	0.67
Program content to be a professional musician	4.07	0.49
Performance opportunity	3.90	0.82
Preparation for future career	3.89	0.61
Improvement of academic skills	3.87	0.58
Effectiveness of each class	3.84	0.65
Reputation of the school	3.80	0.92
Possibility for me to be great musician/scholar	3.71	0.65
Possibility for other students to be great musician/scholar for other students	3.63	0.74
Library	3.58	1.07
Improvement of English skills	3.54	0.86
Financial aid	3.42	1.12
Music concert hall	3.39	1.23
Teaching opportunity	3.17	0.98
Classroom space	3.03	0.97
Food	2.99	1.05
Service of the international office	2.97	0.82
Practice rooms	2.24	1.01

## Findings for Research Question IV

Regarding the perceived challenges encountered by East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions and possible solutions to the challenges (Research Question IV), respondents indicated that the language barrier (n = 50) and the cultural differences (n = 32) between their host and own countries were the most problematic issues in their lives in the United States. Concerning the language barrier, several respondents presented specific examples of their difficulties: (1) writing academic papers in English (n = 9), (2) speaking English (n = 4), (3) possessing effective presentation skills in English (n = 3), and (4) possessing good research skills in English (n = 2).

For the solutions to the problems, East Asian international music students presented several suggestions: (1) international students should try to get acclimated to the host culture through making American friends (n = 29), joining social activities (n = 5), and listening to the radio and TV (n = 1). A student stated, “Make American friends who are also musician and have them to borrow their notes and to revise your papers.” Another student stated, “Make some time for social meeting between Asian students and American students.”; (2) international students need to practice English with patience because it takes time to learn (n = 11). A student stated, “Time will solve many problems.” The students also presented several suggestions concerning how to practice English effectively, such as writing in English every day (n = 8), and reading as many English books as possible (n = 7). A student stated, “Language barrier can be overcome by reading more material in every field.” Another student stated, “Write diary everyday.”; (3) international students need to be more aggressive in class, as well as in

their social lives and with a positive attitude (n = 8), such as trying to understand American ways (n = 2) and accepting all cultural differences (n = 1); (4) international students need to prepare for class in advance (n = 3); and (5) international students need to not be afraid of failing (n = 1).

In addition, many (n = 35) of the East Asian international music students in this study noted financial difficulties. They were concerned about increasing tuition and living expenses. Specifically, two respondents reported that they were concerned about expensive medical expenses. For the solutions to this problem, they emphasized that the schools should offer more job opportunities in the schools (n = 11), scholarships (n = 7), and inexpensive medical services (n = 2) in that international students cannot work outside of school.

Respondents (n = 13) also indicated that they were experiencing difficulties in maintaining good relationships with others, such as professors (n = 5), Americans (n = 4), and people in their own culture (n = 4). For the solutions to this problem, they stated that professors and Americans need to be more open-minded to the international students (n = 4). Also, ignoring this problem and focusing on studying were other options (n = 2) in that the students could not deal with this problem. Maintaining emotional stability was another important difficulty noted by the respondents (n = 9); they expressed loneliness (n = 5) or homesickness (n = 4). For the solution to this problem, a respondent stated, “I need a mentor without any fee, who help me both mentally and physically once a week (n = 1).”

Lastly, there were other individual issues stated by a small number of respondents, highlighting their perceived difficulties and possible solutions to the

problems: (1) Two students were experiencing difficulties using school facilities, such as practice rooms. They wanted to have more practice rooms with more space in each practice room. Also, they wanted school administrators to open practice buildings 24 hours a day, even on holidays. (2) Two students were concerned about their international student status. However, they did not present any solutions to the problem. (3) Another student was concerned about his “uncertain future after graduation.” (4) A different student was concerned about his “English opera audition” and stated, “American must have open mind for international students. We could learn their opera and participate even though we speak slowly. We can be good friends.” Additionally, five respondents stated that they did not have any problems.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The following chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations for the current study. The first section is the summary of the study that includes the purpose of this study, and the data collection procedures, followed by the results of the study, and the conclusions and recommendations for future research.

#### Summary

The purpose of this study was to describe the attitudes of East Asian (Korea, China, Taiwan, and Japan) international music students in U.S. higher education institutions toward U.S. higher education issues. Survey research methodologies were used to identify the status of the international music students from East Asia in U.S. higher education institutions and to determine their attitudes toward the curriculum of their schools. There were four major research questions for this study: (1) What were the perceived factors that influenced the program choice of East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions?; (2) What were the perceived factors influencing academic success of East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions?; (3) What was the perceived program satisfaction level of East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions?; (4) What were the perceived solutions to problems encountered as East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions?

Nine universities in the United States were selected that had the greatest number of international students and that had an accredited music program through the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). The international office or the school of



music forwarded the participant invitation email to the East international music students in the 9 schools. The *QuestionPro* online survey tool was used for gathering survey research data. From this international music student population, 182 people accessed the *East Asian International Music Student Inventory (EAIMSI)*, 99 people started the *EAIMSI*, and 7 people did not complete the *EAIMSI*. As a result, 92 participants completed the *East Asian International Music Student Inventory (EAIMSI)*. The average time taken to complete the questionnaire was 12.96 minutes (SD = 4.38, ranging from 8.20 to 32.15), and the completion rate was 93%.

The findings for research question one indicated that *the professor's reputation*, *scholarships*, and *the program's reputation* were perceived as the most influential factors impacting the program choice of East Asian international music students, while *in order to acquire improved English skills*, *in order to live in the United States*, and *the easy admission policy* were perceived as the least influential factors impacting the program choice of East Asian international music students.

The findings for research question two indicated that a *good relationship with professors*, *good feedback from professors*, and *emotional stability* were perceived as the most influential factors impacting the academic success of East Asian music international students in U.S. higher education institutions, while the *support of the student-writing lab*, the *support of the international office*, and the *support of the student-counseling center* were perceived as the least influential factors impacting the academic success of East Asian international music students.

The findings for research question three indicated that *the professor's teaching*, the *professor's expertise*, and *the improvement of musical skills* were perceived as the

highest rated factors for the perceived program satisfaction level of East Asian international music students in U.S. higher education institutions, while the *food*, the *service of the international office*, and the *practice rooms* were perceived as the lowest rated factors for the perceived program satisfaction level of East Asian international music students in U.S. higher education institutions.

The findings for research question four addressed the perceived challenges encountered by East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions and the possible solutions to the challenges. Respondents indicated that the *language barrier* and the *cultural differences* between their host and own countries were the most problematic issues in their lives in the United States. For the solutions to the problems, the respondents suggested that international students should try to get acclimated to the host culture, such as making American friends and joining social activities and listening to the radio and TV. In addition, many of the East international music students in this study noted *financial difficulties*. For the solutions to this problem, the respondents emphasized that the schools should offer more job opportunities in the schools, scholarships, and inexpensive medical services.

## Conclusions

The findings from this current study may be valuable for both U.S. higher education institutions and international music students in their institutions in that the institutions can set strategies to attract more East Asian international music students to their institutions, understand their difficulties and help them to adjust their lives to the U.S. culture more smoothly; in addition, the students may be able to avoid pitfalls and increase their opportunities in U.S. higher education music institutions.

The findings of this study showed that *the professor's reputation*, *scholarships* and *the program's reputation* were the most important factors perceived to influence the program choice of East Asian international music students in U.S. higher education institutions. This result confirmed the findings of Chen (2006), Pooock and Love (2001), and Talbot, Maier, and Rushlau (1996) who found that the most important factors in attracting international students consisted of the reputation of the school, including faculty members and programs, and the cost, including tuition, financial aid, opportunities for assistantships and living expenses; it should be noted that the top choice of Pooock and Love's (2001) study was the location being close to home, while the top choice of Talbot, Maier, and Rushlau's (1996) study was philosophy of the program. Possible implications of this finding are that U.S. higher education music institutions should: (1) strive to attract and maintain the highest quality professors for promoting the reputation of the school, and (2) attempt to provide as many scholarships as possible in order to attract more East Asian international music students to their schools.

The least influential factors for the program choice of East Asian international music students in the current study were *in order to acquire improved English skills*, *in*

*order to live in the United States, and the easy admission policy.* This finding is contrary to the previous studies in that Chen's (2006) study found that the admission policy influenced the program choice of the East Asian International students, and Agarwal and Winkler (1985) indicated that international students from Korea often chose U.S. higher education institutions to obtain F-1 visa status as an immigration tool even though these factors were not perceived to be the most important factors in their studies. It is unclear why East Asian international music students in the current study chose *in order to acquire improved English skills, in order to live in the United States, and the easy admission policy* as the least influential factors perceived to influence program choice, even though other studies have indicated that these three factors were indeed perceived to influence international students' program choice. There may be a variety of reasons for the contradictory results; (1) there was a time gap between the study of Agarwal and Winkler (1985) and the current study; the current economic and social status in East Asia is very different from the conditions in 1985; (2) there was a sample difference between the current study and the past research, with this study focusing on music majors, and previous studies focusing on non-music majors.

Similar to previous studies, the findings of the current study indicated that a *good relationship with professors* (Woody, 2002) and *good feedback from professors* (Burt & Mills, 2006) were the most influential factors perceived to influence the academic success of East Asian international music students. In contrast, language factors including speaking, writing, and reading skills in English were perceived to be less important than the professor factors, while previous studies (Barratt & Huba, 1994; Perrucci & Hu, 1995; Solberg, Choi, Ritsman, & Jolly, 1994; Wan, Chapman, & Biggs,

1992; Yeh & Inose, 2003; Ying, 2003) have indicated that language was the most influential factor perceived to influence the academic success of international non-music students.

In terms of language, specifically, the current study's findings showed that conversational English skills were perceived to be more important than writing skills. This finding is contrary to the findings of Ying (2003) who found that English writing skills were the most important factor perceived to influence the academic success of East Asian international non-music students. Furthermore, there was a gap between the perceived importance of English skills in general and the perceived importance of the students' own English skills in that the ratings for conversational English skills, written English skills, and presentational English skills were higher than the ratings for the students' own conversational English skills, written English skills, presentational skills.

The reasons that professor factors were perceived to be more influential than language factors, and that conversational English was perceived to be more important than the English writing might be related to the fact that this study focused on the East Asian international "music" students. In previous studies, music majors placed emphasis on improved performance levels and the prioritization of private lessons (Kostaka, 2002; Teachout, 2001; Wolfgang, 1990), in addition to their relationship with professors (Woody, 2000) and the professors' feedback (Burt & Mills, 2006). Therefore, for music students in private lesson settings, conversational English skills might be more important than English writing skills. An implication of this finding is that music faculty at U.S. higher education institutions may wish to consider the best ways to build and maintain

good relationships with East Asian international music students at their schools, including appropriate feedback, so as to have the greatest possibility for student growth.

Another top factor influencing the academic success of East Asian international music students was emotional stability. This finding is supported extensively in the literature (Bradley, 2000; Bulthuis, 1986; Hong, Roy, & Dario, 2007; Kagan & Cohen, 1990; Oberg, 1960; Parr, 1992; Poyrazil, Kavanaugh, Baker, & Al-Timimi, 2004; Sakurako, 2000; Shin & Abell, 1999; Wan, Chapman, & Biggs, 1992; White, Brown, & Suddick, 1983; Williamon & Thompson, 2006) in that international students often experience emotional troubles due to socio-cultural differences. According to a study by Yeh and Inose (2003), East Asian international students were at high risk for alienation and their stress levels were prominently higher than those of international students with European backgrounds. Furthermore, this finding is in alignment with Wan, Chapman, and Biggs' (1992) study that found that cultural distance was the most influential factor related to academic stress in that the stress levels of the students with European cultural backgrounds tended to be less than those of East Asian international students because the American cultural traditions tend to be more similar to the European cultural background than the East Asian cultural background.

An implication of this finding is that faculty may benefit from gaining perspective on the emotional difficulties of East Asian international music students, so as to help them adjust their lives to the U.S. culture more smoothly and thereby maintain their emotional stability. In order to gain this information, faculty may wish to communicate with their students in every lesson about the student's sense of accomplishment, stability, and frustrations. In addition, it might be valuable for faculty to have private time with

their students, such as having lunch or tea times, in which to talk about informal issues. Also, East Asian international students should consider trying to build social support networks in the host culture for maintaining emotional stability. For, as has been documented in previous studies (Kagan & Cohen, 1990; Perrucci & Hu, 1995; Yeh & Inose, 2003), lack of a social support network may hinder international students in their adjustment to the U.S. culture and may cause emotional troubles.

On the other side of the results, East Asian international music students in this study indicated that *the support of the student-writing lab, the support of international office, and the support of the student-counseling center* were the least influential factors perceived to influence academic success. This finding coincides with Xie's (2007) study, in that most Chinese international students never took part in psychological counseling even though they were aware of the concept of psychological counseling; the participants reported that they doubted the effect of psychological counseling in that they were concerned about "stigma, confidentiality, and practical barriers (time, cost, convenience) to seek counseling" (Xie, 2007, V). Other studies (Yuen & Tinsley, 1981; Sue & Sue, 1977; Sohrab & Myrna, 1982) have found similar results in that Asian international students tended not to use counseling centers provided by their schools even though they were experiencing mental distress. While the past literature focused primarily on psychological services, the issue may be similar for writing lab and basic services in that students may not want to admit to having problems or may not have the time or resources to fix the problems.

Universities may want to determine the best ways to improve the quality of the student-support systems, and may wish to set strategies for attracting the East Asian

international music students to their student-support systems, especially the student-counseling center and the students-writing lab. For example, faculty could send their students who need to improve their English writing skills to the student-writing lab or faculty could encourage their students to visit the student-counseling center when they found out that their students were experiencing mental distress. This gentle guidance in the form of a directive from a valued authority figure may make the student services less of a choice to be ignored, and more of a curricular necessity for East Asian international music students.

Regarding satisfaction levels of East Asian international music students in U.S. higher education institutions, this study found that *the professor's teaching*, *the professor's expertise* and *the improvement of musical skills* were the highest rated factors for the perceived program satisfaction level of East Asian international music students. These results are related to the findings of previous studies in that the professor (Burt & Mills, 2006; Woody, 2000) and musical skills (Kostaka, 2002; Teachout, 2001; Wolfgang, 1990) were the most important variables in the lives of music students. Furthermore, the current study's finding documented the similarity between program choice and satisfaction levels for the East Asian international music students in terms of the variable "professor"; the professor was perceived to be an important factor in the program choice and satisfaction of East Asian international music students in the United States. An implication of this finding is that U.S. institutions may wish to consider sending more faculty members abroad for recruitment tours. The faculty could perform for prospective international students, and could have a time to meet with them



individually, thereby encouraging familiarity and comfort between the faculty members and the students.

On the other side of the results, *the food, the service of the international office,* and *the practice rooms* were the lowest rated factors for the perceived program satisfaction level of the students. This finding is similar to the finding that the support of the student-writing lab, the support of international office, and the support of the student-counseling center were the least influential factors perceived to influence academic success. Moreover, the service provided by the international office was perceived to be one of the lowest rated factors for both the academic success and satisfaction level of East Asian international music students, even though the international office specifically exists to help international students.

In addition, U.S. higher education music institutions may want to consider the finding that the *practice rooms* was the lowest rated factor for the program satisfaction level of East Asian international music students. Because the practice room space is an important place for music students to practice and increase their performance skills, many students spend extensive hours in practice rooms every day. In addition, practice room spaces can serve a social means of talking to other students outside the practice rooms during practice breaks. Many East Asian international music students in this study complained about the conditions of the practice rooms, in that the number of practice rooms was not sufficient and the space provided in the room was too small. It may be important, then, for U.S. higher education music institutions to consider improving the condition and availability of practice rooms as a top priority for attracting and retaining satisfied international music students.

Regarding the perceived challenges and possible solutions to the challenges encountered by East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions, the finding that the language barrier was the most often cited issue in adjusting their lives to the United States is supported in the literature (Kagon & Cohen, 1990; Stoyhoff, 1997; Wan, Chapman, & Biggs, 1992; Yeh & Inose, 2003). In this study, the finding that East Asian international music students found writing academic papers to be the most difficult skill in English confirms the result of Ying's (2003) study who found that writing in English was the most challenging skill for East Asian international students.

Moreover, the music students perceived that the level of their own written English skills were the lowest among those of other English skills. To solve this problem, East Asian international music students presented several suggestions such as writing in a diary in English everyday and practicing English with patience. U.S. higher education institutions may need to provide more opportunities to help improve the English writing skills of East Asian international music students. Specifically, it might be useful for international music students to be paired with an American music student as a lesson partner or academic partner, where the two students could work together to learn and discuss music improvement. This procedure could be mutually beneficial for both students' learning and growth about music and culture.

Another problematic issue perceived by the East Asian international music students was the cultural difference between their host and own countries. This finding is also supported in the literature (Barratt & Huba, 1994; Charles & Stewart, 1991; Parr, 1992; Pedersen, 1991; Shin & Abell, 1999; Surdam & Collins, 1984; Wan, Chapman, &

Biggs, 1992; Wilton & Constantine, 2003; Yeh & Inose, 2003) in that international students have been shown to experience culture shock. Respondents in this study presented several examples of their difficulties due to cultural differences, such as “misunderstanding of opposite way of manners,” different social system, different class environment, and food. In addition, the finding that East Asian international students complained about emotional stress due to the cultural differences between the host country and their own culture, such as homesickness and loneliness has also been found in the literature (Bradley, 2000; Hong, Roy, & Dario, 2007; Oberg, 1960; Poyrazil, Kavanaugh, Baker, & Al-Timimi, 2004).

In order to overcome this barrier, East Asian international music students suggested that the most effective solution is to make American friends and spend as much time as possible with them. Similar results were found in Kagan and Cohen’s (1990) study of 159 international and American students; they found that having both American and native friends was one of the most important factors influencing the academic achievement and the cultural adjustment of international students. Similarly, Perrucci and Hu (1995) reported a positive relationship between contact with U.S. students and social/educational satisfaction. An implication of this finding is that U.S. higher education music institutions may need to provide opportunities for their East Asian international music students to interact with American students, and East Asian international music students may need to try to make as many American friends as possible.

Another suggested solution was related to attitudes. East Asian international music students indicated that a positive attitude was very important to their adjustment to

U.S. cultural ways, such as trying to understand American customs, accepting all cultural differences, and not being afraid of failing. An implication of this finding is that East Asian international music students in U.S. higher education music institutions may need to maintain an open mind concerning U.S. culture and a positive attitude in order to make a successful adjustment in the United States.

The implication for the cultural findings in the current study may be even more challenging due to the contrast that international graduate students may experience between their Americanized school time and their primary-culture home time in their apartment, for example, where their wives/husbands and children are speaking their native tongue and eating their culture's own cuisine. This situation may be challenging for international students, in that they are trying to acculturate to a new school system, but their family does not have the same impetus to change, and in fact may be jealous of the time commitments and changes made by their family member. International music students should consider discussing these challenges with family members before they ever come to the U.S. so that the family has a unified support structure and understanding in place for the student member of the family.

Also in the current study, the findings aligned with results of previous studies (Chen, 2006; Pook & Love, 2001) that found financial matters to be one of top priorities in the lives of East Asian international music students. Approximately 40 % of East Asian international music students indicated that they were experiencing financial difficulties in relation to tuition and living expenses. The finding showed that the most common primary economic source was parents, followed by a TA/TF position, and scholarships. Because international students cannot work outside of schools, they want

their schools to provide more scholarships and job opportunities in the schools. An implication of this finding is that U.S. higher education music institutions may need to consider the financial difficulties of East Asian music students and provide them more opportunities for getting scholarships and job positions in their school. For example, it would be a possible strategy that the universities may wish to provide opportunities for East Asian international music students to give a concert in order to create a scholarship-fund. The concert may be valuable for both the East Asian international music students as an opportunity to give a performance and for the U.S. institutions to raise funds.

In conclusion, the findings of this current study could be beneficial for both U.S. higher education music institutions and international music students in their institutions in that the institutions could develop strategies to attract more East Asian international music students to their institutions and the students could avoid pitfalls and increase their opportunities in the music institutions. While the personnel-related costs and the financial costs to the universities that have been discussed in this section might seem ominous, the benefits of having satisfied, productive, highly skilled international music students seem to be worth the effort.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

The following recommendations for future study may help U.S. higher education institutions to improve their programs and set strategies to attract more East Asian international music students to their institutions. Based upon the findings of the current study, several recommendations may be drawn for future research.

First, this study focused on surveying nine universities in the United States that had the greatest number of international students and that had an accredited music

program through the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM); this was not a nationwide study. It would be valuable to replicate this study with nationwide institutions in the United States using simple random sampling procedures in order to increase the possible generalizability of the findings.

Second, this study focused on surveying the perceptions of only East Asian (Korea, China, Taiwan, Japan) international music students in order to describe their status in U.S. higher education institutions and to determine the students' attitudes toward the curriculum in their schools. It would be valuable to replicate this study with different international groups of music students from various countries in order to determine the students' attitudes toward the curriculum in their schools.

Third, this study is one of the first attempts to investigate the perceptions of East Asian (Korea, China, Taiwan, Japan) international music students to describe their status in U.S. higher education institutions and to determine the students' attitudes toward the curriculum in their schools including program choice, academic success, satisfaction levels, and their difficulties and solutions to the perceived difficulties. It would be valuable to replicate this study with American music students in order to determine the students' attitudes toward the curriculum in their schools and to note the similarities and differences between international and non-international music students.

In summary, the current study's results and conclusions may be used to further research in the area of international education, and specifically with the subgroup of international music students. Additionally the current study's results and conclusions may contribute to the improvement of U.S. higher education music institutions through: (1) the development of procedures to meet international music students' needs, and (2)

the adoption of appropriate strategies to attract more East Asian international music students to U.S. institutions.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF THE 9 UNIVERSITY NAMES



1. University of Southern California
2. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
3. University of Michigan – Ann Arbor
4. University of Texas at Austin
5. The Ohio States University – Main Campus
6. Arizona State University – Tempe Campus
7. Michigan State University
8. University of Florida
9. University of Wisconsin – Madison

APPENDIX B  
INFORMED CONSENT NOTICE (IRB)

UNT<sup>™</sup>  
UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTH \* TEXAS  
DISCOVER THE POWER OF IDEAS

---

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH  
Office of Research Services

June 30, 2008

Jin Ho Choi  
Department of Music Education  
University of North Texas

RE: Human Subjects Application No. 08-208

Dear Jin Ho Choi:

In accordance with 45 CFR Part 46 Section 46.101, your study titled "A Descriptive Study of International Music Students from East Asia" has been determined to qualify for an exemption from further review by the UNT Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Enclosed is the consent document with stamped IRB approval. Please copy and **use this form only** for your study subjects.

No changes may be made to your study's procedures or forms without prior written approval from the UNT IRB. Please contact Shelia Bourns, Research Compliance Administrator, ext. 3940, if you wish to make any such changes.

Sincerely,



Kenneth W. Sewell, Ph.D.  
Chair  
Institutional Review Board

KS:sb

CC: Dr. Debbie Rohwer

## University of North Texas Institutional Review Board

### Informed Consent Notice

Before agreeing to participate in this research study, it is important that you read and understand the following explanation of the purpose and benefits of the study and how it will be conducted.

**Title of Study:** A Descriptive Study of International Music Students from East Asia

**Principal Investigator:** Jin Ho Choi, a Ph. D Candidate in Music Education at the University of North Texas

**Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of this study was to describe and analyze the present status of East Asian (Korea, China, Taiwan, Japan) international students in a U.S. higher education institution and to determine the students' attitudes toward the curriculum in their schools.

**Study Procedures:** As an East Asian international music student in a U.S. higher education institution, you are being asked to complete the online East Asian International Student Inventory. Your voluntary participation will require approximately 15 minutes of your time. Completion of the questionnaire will be seen as evidence of your willingness to participate in this study and your consent to have the information used for the purpose of the study. To participate in the survey, please go to: [www.questionpro.com](http://www.questionpro.com)

While there will be no compensation for participation in this study, this research project could be beneficial for U.S. Institutions who have international music students from East Asia in providing information concerning what attracted this group of international students to U.S. institutions and what barriers the students encountered. Also, it could be beneficial for the international students to present possible solutions about their difficulties and strategies in adjusting their lives to the United States. There are no foreseeable risks in this study. In order to protect participants' confidentiality/anonymity, the confidentiality of your individual information will be maintained in any publications or presentations regarding this study.

If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Jin Ho Choi at telephone number 214-770-7376 or the faculty advisor, Dr. Debbie Rohwer, UNT Department of Music Education, at telephone number 940-369-7538.

**Review for the Protection of Participants:** This research study has been reviewed and approved by the UNT Institutional Review Board (IRB). The UNT IRB can be contacted at (940) 565-3940 with any questions regarding the rights of research subjects.


**Research Participants' Rights:** Your agreement below indicates that you have read all of the above and that you confirm all of the following:

- You understand the possible benefits and the potential risks and/or discomforts of the study.

- You understand that you do not have to take part in this study, and your refusal to participate or your decision to withdraw will involve no penalty or loss of rights or benefits.
- You understand why the study is being conducted and how it will be performed.
- You understand your rights as a research participant and you voluntarily consent to participate in this study.

I have read and I understand the information provided and agree to participate in the study.

APPROVED BY THE UNT IRB

DATE: 6/30/08  


UNT<sup>™</sup>  
UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTH TEXAS  
Discover the power of ideas.

---

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
November 13, 2008 Office of Research Services

Jin Ho Choi  
Department of Music Education  
University of North Texas

Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research (IRB)  
RE: Human Subject Application #08208

Dear Jin Ho Choi:

The UNT IRB has received your request to modify your study titled "A Descriptive Study of International Music Students from East Asia." As required by federal law and regulations governing the use of human subjects in research projects, the UNT IRB has examined the request to include other universities in the United States to this study. This approval stipulates that approval from each site is obtained before contact with human subjects at that site. The modification to this study is hereby approved for the use of human subjects.

Please contact Shelia Bourns, Research Compliance Administrator, at (940) 565-3940, or Boyd Herndon, Director of Research Compliance, at (940) 565-3941, if you wish to make changes or need additional information.

Sincerely,



Patricia L. Kaminski, Ph.D.  
Chair  
Institutional Review Board

PK/sb

CC: Dr. Debbie Rohwer

APPENDIX C

LETTER FOR INTERNATIONAL MUSIC STUDENTS

## Invitation Email for International Music Students

Dear East Asian Music Students,

I am asking for your assistance with my doctoral research project “A Descriptive Study of International Music Students from East Asia.” The goal of the East Asian International Student Inventory is to provide a portrait of East Asian international music students in U.S. higher education institutions.

This research project could be beneficial for U.S. Institutions who have international music students from East Asia in providing information concerning what attracted this group of international students to U.S. institutions and what barriers the students have encountered. Also, it could be beneficial for the international students to present possible solutions about their difficulties and strategies in adjusting their lives to the United States.

The survey takes approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. Your information is completely confidential and there is no information obtained in this study that can be identified with you. As an East Asian international music student in a U.S. higher education institution, you are being asked to complete the online East Asian International Student Inventory. Completion of the questionnaire will be seen as evidence of your willingness to participate in this study and your consent to have the information used for the purpose of the study. To participate in the survey, please go to:

<http://www.questionpro.com/akira/gateway/999470-23029796-0>

Your time and effort are much appreciated and your participation will make a significant contribution toward understanding East Asian international music students' lives.

If you should have any questions about the study, you may contact Jin Ho Choi at [www. hochoi68@hotmail.com](mailto:hochoi68@hotmail.com) or Dr. Debbie Rohwer at [www.drohwer@music.unt.edu](http://www.drohwer@music.unt.edu).

Best Regards

Jin Ho (Chris) Choi  
Ph. D Candidate in Music Education  
University of North Texas



APPENDIX D  
LETTER FOR 9 UNIVERSITIES

Dear Administrator,

My name is Jin Ho Choi, and I am a Ph. D. Candidate in Music Education at the University of North Texas, and an assistant professor of music at Hope International University, Fullerton CA. The reason I am emailing you is to ask for your assistance with my doctoral research project “A Descriptive Study of International Music Students from East Asia.”

This research project could be beneficial for U.S. Institutions who have international music students from East Asia in providing information concerning what attracted this group of international students to U.S. institutions and what barriers the students have encountered. Also, it would be beneficial for the international students to present possible solutions about their difficulties and strategies in adjusting their lives to the United States.

Due to privacy issues, I understand that you cannot release personal information. Would you consider forwarding my email (including a weblink for the East International Music Student Questionnaire) to your international music students from East Asia? If it is difficult to sort out international music students from East Asia, you can forward my email to every international student in your institution, and I will indicate that the questionnaire is designed for international music students from East Asia only.

Your time and effort are much appreciated and your assistance will make a significant contribution toward understanding East Asian international music students' lives. If you should have any questions about the study, you may contact Jin Ho Choi at [www.hochoi68@hotmail.com](mailto:www.hochoi68@hotmail.com) or Dr. Debbie Rohwer at [www.drohwer@music.unt.edu](mailto:www.drohwer@music.unt.edu).

Best Regards

Jin Ho (Chris) Choi  
Ph. D Candidate in Music Education  
University of North Texas  
[hochoi68@hotmail.com](mailto:hochoi68@hotmail.com)  
(214) 770-7376

APPENDIX E

LETTER FOR CONTENT VALIDITY CHECK

May 27, 2008

Dear Dr.,

My name is Jin Ho Choi, and I am a Ph. D. Candidate in Music Education at the University of North Texas, and an assistant professor of music at Hope International University, Fullerton CA. The reason I am emailing you is to ask for your assistance with my doctoral research project “Descriptive Study of International Music Students from East Asia (Korea, China, Taiwan and Japan) in U.S. Higher Education Institutions.”

This research project could be beneficial for U.S. Institutions who have international music students from East Asia in providing information concerning what attracted this group of international students to U.S. institutions and what barriers the students have encountered. Also, it could be beneficial for the international students to present possible solutions about their difficulties and strategies in adjusting their lives to the United States.

For my research study, I need to check the content validity of my questionnaire. I would greatly appreciate your help as a content expert for my study. I have provided a set of content validity questions. Please answer the content validity questions and make suggestions to improve this study. I look forward to your ideas.

Thank you for your support and help.

Best Regards

Jin Ho (Chris) Choi  
Ph. D Candidate in Music Education  
University of North Texas  
[hochoi68@hotmail.com](mailto:hochoi68@hotmail.com)  
(214) 770-7376

APPENDIX F  
APPROVAL LETTERS FROM 9 UNIVERSITIES

**MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

FAX COVER SHEET

To: Jim Ho Choi Fax: 972 385 7388  
 From: David Rayl Pages to follow: 1  
 Re: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
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COLLEGE OF  
MUSIC

**COLLEGE OF MUSIC**

Michigan State University  
 102 Music Building  
 East Lansing, MI  
 48824-1043  
 Phone: 517/353-5340  
 FAX: 517/432-2880

[www.music.msu.edu](http://www.music.msu.edu)

Music Events Line  
 517/355-3345

RE: IRB No. 08208

Dear Jin Ho Choi:

We have reviewed your research project entitled, "A Descriptive Study of International music students from East Asia." We understand the purpose of the study and the procedures to be followed. Possible benefits of the study have been described.

We have agreed to allow this research project to be conducted in our school.

10/13/08  
Date:

Signed:  
Administrator

*David C Ray*  
*Assoc Dean for Graduate Studies*  
*Michigan State University*



SCHOOL OF MUSIC  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

Office of the Director • 1 University Station E3100 • Austin, TX 78712-0435  
(512) 471-7764 • FAX (512) 471-2333

### FAX TRANSMITTAL COVER SHEET

PLEASE DELIVER TO Jim Ho Choi

FROM B. Glenn Chandler, Director

WE ARE SENDING 2 PAGES INCLUDING THIS COVER SHEET.

IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE ALL OF THESE PAGES OR IF THEY ARE ILLEGIBLE, PLEASE EITHER CALL US AT 512/471-7764, OR SEND A RETURN FAX MESSAGE TO US AT 512/471-2333.

<p>10/14/08</p> <p>Agreement Letter</p>	<p>MESSAGE</p>
---	----------------





SCHOOL OF MUSIC  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

Office of the Director • 1 University Station E3100 • Austin, TX 78712-0435  
(512) 471-7764 • FAX (512) 471-2333  
www.music.utexas.edu

October 14, 2008

RE: IRB No. 08208

Dear Jin Ho Choi:

We have reviewed your research project entitled, "A Descriptive Study of International music students from East Asia." We understand the purpose of the study and the procedures to be followed. Possible benefits of the study have been described.

We have agreed to allow this research project to be conducted in our school.

Date:

10/14/08

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Glenn Chandler".

B. Glenn Chandler, Director,  
Butler School of Music and  
Florence Thelma Hall Centennial  
Chair in Music

Administrator

BGC/jkc



THE UNIVERSITY  
of  
**WISCONSIN**  
MADISON

Please acknowledge receipt of fax.

Date 10/21/08

To Jinho (Chris) Choi

Fax Number (972) 385-7388

Department/Company ISS

From ISS, UW-Madison Number of Pages including cover 2

Additional Message \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Best o' luck  
Laurie  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**International Student Services**

217 Red Gym 716 Langdon Street  
Madison, WI 53706 USA

Telephone: 608-262-2044 FAX: 608-262-2838



October 21, 2008

RE: IRB No. 08208

Dear Jin Ho Choi:

We have reviewed your research project entitled, "Attitudes of international music students from East Asia toward U.S. higher education institutions." We understand the purpose of the study and the procedures to be followed. Possible benefits of the study have been described.

We have agreed to allow this research project to be conducted in our schools.

Date: Signed:   
 Laurie Cox, Director, International Student Services

Date: Signed: Administrator

10/24/2008

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

School of Music  
2136 Music Building  
1114 West Nevada Street  
Urbana, IL 61801



RE: IRB No. 08208

Dear Jin Ho Choi:

We have reviewed your research project entitled, "A Descriptive Study of International music students from East Asia." We understand the purpose of the study and the procedures to be followed. Possible benefits of the study have been described.

We have agreed to allow this research project to be conducted in our school.

Date:

Signed:  Director  
Administrator



**FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION FORM**

**The University of Michigan**  
*School of Music, Theatre & Dance*  
*Office of the Dean*  
Christopher Kendall, Dean

**Phone: 734-764-0584**  
**Fax: 734-615-6616**

**DATE:** 10/28/08

**TO:** Jin Ho Choi

**ORGANIZATION:** University of North Texas

**FROM:** Dean Kendall

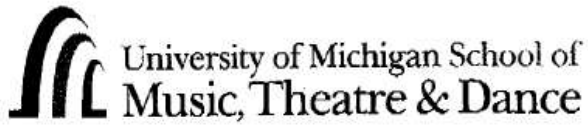
**FAX #** 972-385-7388

**NUMBER OF PAGES (including cover sheet):** 2

**MESSAGE (IF ANY):**

**Please coordinate your request with Dean Betty Anne Younker.**  
**Thanks.**

*If there are problems with this transmission or if you have questions, please call Tracy Goetz, Executive Secretary at 734-764-0584.*



CHRISTOPHER KENDALL  
*Dean*

RE: IRB No. 08208

Dear Jin Ho Choi:

We have reviewed your research project entitled, "A Descriptive Study of International music students from East Asia." We understand the purpose of the study and the procedures to be followed. Possible benefits of the study have been described.

We have agreed to allow this research project to be conducted in our school.

Date: 10/27/08      Signed:   
Administrator



College of Fine Arts  
School of Music

PO Box 117900  
Gainesville, FL 32611  
Telephone: (352) 392-0223  
Fax: (352) 392-0461

RE: IRB No. 08208

Dear Jin Ho Choi:

We have reviewed your research project entitled, "A Descriptive Study of International music students from East Asia." We understand the purpose of the study and the procedures to be followed. Possible benefits of the study have been described.

We have agreed to allow this research project to be conducted in our school.

Date: 10-30-08

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John A. Duff".

Dr. John A. Duff, Director, School of Music



## FAX COVER SHEET

Thornton School of  
Music

**Date:** October 30, 2008  
**To:** Jin Ho Choi  
**Fax #:** 972-385-7388  
**From:** Dr. Debora Huffman  
Associate Dean for Doctoral Programs and Alumni Relations  
Phone: 213/740-2774; Fax: 213/740-2714  
Email: dhuffman@thornton.usc.edu  
**Re:** Authorization  
  
Number of pages (including cover page): 2

University of  
Southern California  
840 West 34<sup>th</sup> Street  
Los Angeles, California  
90089-0851  
Tel. 213 740 5389  
Fax 213 740 3217

*This message is intended only for the use of the individual entity to which it is addressed. It may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure by applicable law. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient or the employee or agent responsible for delivering the message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by telephone, and return the original message to us via the U.S. postal service.*





RE: IRB No. 08208

Dear Jin Ho Choi:

Flora L. Thornton  
School of Music

We have reviewed your research project entitled, "A Descriptive Study of International music students from East Asia." We understand the purpose of the study and the procedures to be followed. Possible benefits of the study have been described.

We have agreed to allow this research project to be conducted in our school.

Date:

Signed:

10.30.08 Administrator



**Dr. Debora L. Huffman**  
Associate Dean  
Doctoral Programs and Alumni Relations

**Flora L. Thornton School of Music**  
University of Southern California  
840 West 34th Street  
MUS 415  
Los Angeles, California 90089-0851  
Tel: 213 740 2774 Fax: 213 740 2714  
e-mail: dhuffman@thornton.usc.edu

University of  
Southern California  
Los Angeles,  
California 90089-0851  
Tel: 213 740 6935  
Fax: 213 740 3217  
e-mail:  
uscmusic@usc.edu



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**School of Music**

Graduate Studies  
310 Weigel Hall  
1866 College Road  
Columbus, OH 43210-1170

Phone (614) 292-6389

October 29, 2008

RE: IRB No. 08208

Dear Jin Ho Choi:

We have reviewed your research project entitled, "A Descriptive Study of International music students from East Asia." We understand the purpose of the study and the procedures to be followed. Possible benefits of the study have been described.

We agree to allow this research project to be conducted following OSU research protocol.

C. Patrick Woliver  
Chair, Graduate Studies in Music

NOV. 5. 2008 5:02PM

NO. 353 P. 1



RE: IRB No. 08208

Dear Jin Ho Choi:

We have reviewed your research project entitled, "A Descriptive Study of International music students from East Asia." We understand the purpose of the study and the procedures to be followed. Possible benefits of the study have been described.

We have agreed to allow this research project to be conducted in our school.

Date: 11/5/08 Signed: *Kenneth King*

Administrator

Herberger College of the Arts  
School of Music  
PO Box 870405 Tempe, AZ 85287-0405  
(480) 965-3371 Fax: (480) 965-2659 herberger.asu.edu

APPENDIX G  
QUESTIONS FOR CONTENT VALIDITY CHECK

## Questions for Content Validity Check

1. From the list of items influencing program choice of East Asian international students (Questions 1 through 17), which items are not represented, that should be represented?
2. From the list of items influencing the academic success of East Asian international students (Questions 18 through 32), which items are not represented, that should be represented?
3. From the list of items influencing the program satisfaction of East Asian international students (Questions 33 through 52), which items are not represented, that should be represented?
4. From your definition of program choice, which of the questions for program satisfaction (Questions 1 through 17), do not fit that definition? Please explain.

5. From your definition of academic success, which of the questions for program satisfaction (Questions 18 through 32), do not fit that definition? Please explain.
  
6. From your definition of program satisfaction, which of the questions for program satisfaction (Questions 33 through 52), do not fit that definition? Please explain.
  
7. Is there a better order for the three sections: program choice (Questions 1 through 17), academic success (Questions 18 through 32), and program satisfaction (Questions 32 through 52), than the current order of sections?
  
8. From questions 1 through 52 on the questionnaire, which questions are not clear?

9. Is the Likert scale format (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) appropriate to measure program choice, academic success, and program satisfaction level? If not, please indicate a more appropriate scale format.

10. Do you think the length of the questionnaire is appropriate (Questions 1 through 52)?

10-a. Is the number of questions enough to identify appropriately the factors of program choice (1 through 17), academic success (18 through 32), and program satisfaction (33 through 52)?

10-b. If there are too many questions, which questions could be removed?

11. How could the open-ended questions (Questions 53 and 54) be more clearly stated so as to measure East Asian international music students' most difficult problems and perceived solutions? If not, please indicate how this question can be improved.
12. From the demographic questions, are there questions that could be added to obtain more detailed and representative information for identifying the status and characteristics of East Asian music students?
13. Are any of the demographic questions superfluous?
14. Are any of the demographic questions unclear?



15. Would there be a way to improve the layout of the demographic questions?

16. Would there be a better order for the demographic questions?

17. Is there a way to improve the test layout for the respondents?

18. Are the test instructions clear for respondents?

19. Is there any notable bias in the questions?

If so, please explain.

20. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the questionnaire?  
If so, please suggest.

APPENDIX H  
SURVEY INSTRUMENT

## East Asian International Music Students Inventory

This inventory investigates the perceived factors influencing the program choice, academic success, and perceived program satisfaction level of East Asian international music students attending U.S. higher education institutions.

Please read each sentence and respond by circling one answer for each question.

	Strongly Disagree SD	Disagree D	Neutral N	Agree A	Strongly Agree SA
1. I chose this school because of the school's reputation.	SD	D	N	A	SA
2. I chose this school because of the professors' reputations at the school.	SD	D	N	A	SA
3. I chose this school because of the program's reputation.	SD	D	N	A	SA
4. I chose this school because of the academic accreditations.	SD	D	N	A	SA
5. I chose this school because of the inexpensive tuition.	SD	D	N	A	SA
6. I chose this school because of the scholarship that was given to me.	SD	D	N	A	SA
7. I chose this school because of the teaching assistantship position that was given to me.	SD	D	N	A	SA
8. I chose this school because of the location of the school.	SD	D	N	A	SA
9. I chose this school based on my teacher's recommendation.	SD	D	N	A	SA
10. I chose this school based on my parents' recommendation.	SD	D	N	A	SA
11. I chose this school based on my friends' recommendation.	SD	D	N	A	SA
12. I chose this school because of the short time required to complete the program.	SD	D	N	A	SA
13. I chose this school because of the easy admission policy.	SD	D	N	A	SA

14. I chose this school because of the speed of acceptance into the program.	SD	D	N	A	SA
15. I chose this school because I wanted a degree from a U.S. institution.	SD	D	N	A	SA
16. I chose this school in order to acquire improved English skills.	SD	D	N	A	SA
17. I chose this school because there was little opportunity to study in my homeland.	SD	D	N	A	SA
18. I chose this school in order to live in the United States.	SD	D	N	A	SA
19. Written English skills have positively influenced my academic success.	SD	D	N	A	SA
19-a. I have strong written English skills	SD	D	N	A	SA
20. Conversational English skills have positively influenced my academic success.	SD	D	N	A	SA
20-a. I have strong conversational English skills	SD	D	N	A	SA
21. Presentational English skills have positively influenced my academic success.	SD	D	N	A	SA
21-a. I have strong presentational English skills	SD	D	N	A	SA
22. Social support network in the United States has positively influenced my academic success.	SD	D	N	A	SA
23. The support of the student-writing lab at my school has positively influenced my academic success.	SD	D	N	A	SA
24. The support of the student-counseling center at my school has positively influenced my academic success.	SD	D	N	A	SA
25. The support of the international office at my school has positively influenced my academic success.	SD	D	N	A	SA
26. Familiarity with the American school system has positively influenced my academic success.	SD	D	N	A	SA
27. Good relationships I have with my American friends at school have positively influenced my academic success.	SD	D	N	A	SA

28. Good relationships I have with my professors have positively influenced my academic success.	SD	D	N	A	SA
29. Good feedback about my academic works from professors has positively influenced my academic success.	SD	D	N	A	SA
30. Good feedback about my academic work from American friends has positively influenced my academic success.	SD	D	N	A	SA
31. My Asian learning style has positively influenced my academic success.	SD	D	N	A	SA
32. My Asian cultural background has positively influenced my academic success.	SD	D	N	A	SA
33. My emotional stability has positively influenced my academic success.	SD	D	N	A	SA
34. I am satisfied with the reputation of my school.	SD	D	N	A	SA
35. I am satisfied with my program because it provides sufficient financial aid.	SD	D	N	A	SA
36. I am satisfied with my program because it provides sufficient teaching opportunities.	SD	D	N	A	SA
37. I am satisfied with my program because it provides sufficient performance opportunities.	SD	D	N	A	SA
38. I am satisfied with my program because it provides sufficient content in order for me to develop into a professional musician.	SD	D	N	A	SA
39. I am satisfied with my program because I will be a great musician/scholar after graduation.	SD	D	N	A	SA
40. I am satisfied with my program because other students in my program will be great musicians/scholars after graduation.	SD	D	N	A	SA
41. I am satisfied with my program because each class is helpful to my future career.	SD	D	N	A	SA
42. I am satisfied with my program because my future career will be bright with a degree from this program.	SD	D	N	A	SA

- |   |    |   |   |   |    |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 43. I am satisfied with my program because I have learned a great deal from my professors.                        | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 44. I am satisfied with my program because the professors at my school are experts in their field.                | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 45. I am satisfied with the music concert hall at my school.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 46. I am satisfied with the classroom space at my school.   | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 47. I am satisfied with the food at my school.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 48. I am satisfied with the practice rooms at my school.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 49. I am satisfied with my program because the service of the international office at my school.                  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 50. I am satisfied with my program because I can get any resources that I need from my school's library.          | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 51. I am satisfied with my program because my English skills have greatly improved since I started this program.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 52. I am satisfied with my program because my academic skills have greatly improved since I started this program. | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 53. I am satisfied with my program because my musical skills have greatly improved since I started this program.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |

**DIRECTIONS:** Please read this sentence and write your answer.

International students in U.S. higher education institutions often face many challenges in adjusting their lives to the United States. List the three most difficult problems you have encountered as an East Asian international music student attending a U.S. higher education institution, and give at least one possible solution for each listed problem.

54. Label the three most difficult problems.

55. Give at least one possible solution for the three most difficult problems listed above.

## Demographic Information

Please answer each question.

1. What is your age?
2. What is your gender?  
Female ( )  
Male ( )
3. Which country did you come from?
4. How long have you lived in the United States?
5. Are you married?  
Yes ( ) No ( )
6. Do you have children?  
Yes ( ) No ( )
7. What is the name of the school in which you are currently enrolled as a student?
8. What is your current music major field?
9. Which is your current degree level?  
Undergraduate ( )  
Graduate ( )  
Doctorate ( )
10. What are your primary economic funding sources while you are enrolled in school?  
Personal ( )  
Parents ( )  
Scholarship ( )  
TA/TF Position ( )  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

### 11. Language Proficiency

How did you document your English proficiency?

- I took ESL courses ( )  
I submitted a TOEFL score ( )  
No English proficiency was required ( )  
Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_



12. Does your program require submission of GRE scores?  
Yes ( ) No ( )

13. Where do you currently live?  
Dormitory ( )  
Apartment on campus ( )  
Apartment off campus ( )  
Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

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