“Step Back and Level the Playing Field”: Exploring Power Differentials and Cultural Humility as Experienced by Undergraduate Students in Cross-National Group Work

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
BY

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Christopher Johnstone, Advisor

August 2018

Acknowledgements

I want to first say thank you to my advisor, Dr. Christopher Johnstone, and my committee members, Dr. Barbara Kappler, Dr. Michael Stebleton, and Dr. Alexandre Ardichvili. I am honored to have had the chance to learn from each of you, and I look forward to continuing to learn from your work in the future. To Dr. Johnstone specifically, thank you for guiding me through the dissertation process with your compelling demonstration of encouragement and support.

I am also grateful to my colleagues at the Minnesota English Language Program, Dr. Robert Stine, Dr. Mike Anderson, and all of the faculty and staff at MELP. The dedication and compassion that each of you demonstrates in your work with international students continually serves as an inspiration for me.

I am also super thankful to have been in an amazing cohort of hard-working and dedicated colleagues. Cheers to the many LIIE professors and cohort members who were an integral source of support in this journey, particularly Mary Yeboah, Jennifer Fricas, Seun Bello Olamosu, and Mina Mizumatsu. I also want to recognize the other amazing colleagues in my academic career who have had an impact in shaping me as a teacher, researcher, and mentor, including Jolene Erlacher, Xi Yu, Lynne Ackerberg, Greg Leeper, Nicole Palser, and many others.

I would definitely be remiss if I did not make mention of the many international and domestic students I have interacted with throughout the various twists and turns my career has taken: thank you for all of the opportunities to partner with you, enjoy your

company, and learn from you. To my dearest local friends and family, thank you for supporting my aspirations for doctoral level work in some way or another: Craig & Kathy Peters, Peter & Amy Hansen, Megan Rodriguez, Max & Elizabeth Shvedenko, Nicole Palser, Taylor & Danette Anderson, Kim Bass, to name a few. And to my Illinois family whom I love so dearly, you are all always very close to my heart. Certainly, I would never have made it this far without the encouragement and example from my mom and dad. I learned hard work, resilience, and intellectual curiosity from both of you. Particularly to my mom, thank you for demonstrating an exemplary form of humility to me, through your ongoing love, support, and prayer.

And finally to my sweet baby boy, Nathanael, you have brought me so much happiness and peaceful strength this year, and to my energetic Micah man, you bring me joy daily with your creativity and inquisitiveness. And to Ryan, thank you for all of your encouragement, both directly and indirectly, your quiet calm, and your steadfast support. In the words of Micah, “these are great adventures with you.”

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of undergraduate students who are engaged in cross-national group work and to identify strategies that undergraduates perceive as most effective in addressing the challenges identified by the literature in this field. My research questions focused on students' experiences of power within groups, and explored ways in which cultural humility may mediate power imbalances. A thematic analysis of the literature included a review of the internationalization of higher education, recent research on cross-national interactions, and an examination of Allport's (1954) intergroup contact theory, the conceptual framework of cultural humility (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998), and Johnson and Johnson's (1987) model of cooperative learning.

I utilized a qualitative case study design in which I conducted multiple observations of three cross-national groups in a Food Science course within the context of a large, public research university in the Midwest, over a 15-week semester. I facilitated 15 semi-structured interviews with student and instructor participants, and also analyzed course documents and multiple reflection responses from 18 students enrolled in the course.

My findings indicate that both U.S. and international students reported to experience varying degrees of communicative discomfort in cross-national interactions and group work. Students perceived power within groups to be shaped by a variety of factors, but most highly regarded was the ability to express strong levels of verbal

competence, which created some barriers for students from different educational backgrounds. Students demonstrated some capacity to recognize and utilize cultural humility to equalize power imbalances at the level of interpersonal dynamics. Cultural humility, however, was not applied to deconstruct the traditional norms and practices of group work, although the use of some communication methods were utilized to encourage more inclusive interactions for cross-national groups.

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CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

The population of international students has been consistently growing over a number of years on college and university campuses in the U.S. According to the Institute of International Education's (IIE) Open Doors report on Enrollment Trends (2017), international student enrollments have increased in higher education settings from over 560,000 in 2001-02 to more than 900,000 in 2016-17. This research project takes place within this increased context of diversity occurring because of internationalization, and is situated within an emergent field of study of international student support and development in higher education institutions. In this study I seek to understand the subjective experience of undergraduate students who are engaged in cross-national group work.

This increased diversity in U.S. higher education holds potential benefits for students, staff, and faculty to experience intercultural learning. Several authors have described the positive influence that international students can have on domestic students. Interactions with international students are reported to help domestic peers to improve their critical thinking skills (Loes, Pascarella, & Umbach, 2012), and increase intercultural competence levels (Soria & Trioisi, 2014). However, the influx of international students, while offering many benefits, also poses unique challenges to U.S. higher education institutions. During the process of acclimating to U.S. academic culture, international students may face difficulties in adapting to new teaching and learning expectations, in building a social network, and overcoming language barriers

(Andrade, 2006). Andrade (2010) showed how faculty and staff may experience challenges to effectively teach and serve an increasingly diverse group of students with unique cultural and linguistic needs. Geelhoed, Abe, and Tablot (2003) demonstrated that in many cases, local students may not always be adequately prepared to form successful intercultural friendships and help international students integrate effectively into campus life. Furthermore, international students may at times face outright discrimination on U.S. campuses (Lee & Rice, 2007).

Leask (2009) acknowledged these challenges, pointing out that it is unlikely for students to have purposeful interactions without support from institutional leaders and a campus culture that is committed to implementing intentional practices of internationalization. Leask advocated for educators to focus internationalization efforts on optimizing interactions between international and domestic students both in and out of the classroom. Encouraging cross-national interactions is a key component of internationalizing the campus for many reasons. For example, positive cross-national interactions can result in a more successful adaptation experience for international students (Campbell, 2012), foster an environment conducive to mutual intercultural learning (Yefanova, Baird, Montgomery, Woodruff, Kappler, & Johnstone, 2015), and offer an opportunity for domestic students to gain greater intercultural sensitivity while in their home countries (Jon, 2013).

International education experts recommend strategic integration of curricular and co-curricular programming efforts to strengthen these cross-national peer interactions (Bartell, 2003; Leask, 2009; Raby, 2007). Although this comprehensive approach has

clear merits, it is also important to recognize the potential impact of an internationalized curriculum, particularly when faculty design thoughtfully inclusive practices within the classroom environment. As Leask (2009) reported, “what students do in class is central to improving the interactions between international and home students” (p. 211). Sharing what she calls best teaching and learning practices, Leask stressed the importance of making explicit curricular goals related to internationalization, creating an intentionally safe and structured space for dialogue to occur, and providing support for faculty to become successful managers of classroom diversity. Leask also claimed that the design of classroom activities is critically important, and in particular, she suggested that all students should experience small group work in which they are empowered to engage in an authentic process of intercultural learning.

Because the nature of group work introduces interactive and collaborative processes into the curriculum, several other educators have affirmed the important role that group work can play in fostering meaningful interactions between international and domestic students (de Figueiredo & Mauri, 2012; Dunne, 2009; Krajewski, 2011; Peacock & Harrison, 2009; Spencer-Oatey & Dauber, 2016). Spencer-Oatey and Dauber (2016) delineated the global outcomes of multinational group work, and assert that “a key aspiration … for arranging mixed national group work is the promotion of the integration of home and international students and the development of intercultural skills within everyone” (p. 3). Arkoudis, Watty, Baik, Yu, Borland, Chang, and Pearce (2013) and Yefanova et al. (2015) claimed that group work is often the primary avenue by which domestic and international students interact in the classroom and therefore represents a

critical collaborative opportunity. Providing more evidence to strengthen this case, numerous authors have documented specific benefits that cross-national group work offers (Denson & Zhang, 2010; Popov, Brinkman, Biemans, Mulder, Kuznetsov, & Noroozi, 2012; Schullery & Schullery, 2006; Sweeney, Weaven, & Herington, 2008; Woods, Barker, & Hibbins, 2011). For example, Sweeney et al. (2008) demonstrated how students are able to expand their intercultural understanding and diversify their experiences by working in cross-national groups. De Vita (2001) referenced previous research that shows how the diverse players involved can help the group to avoid the pitfalls associated with groupthink, and thus approach a topic, issue, or problem from multiple perspectives for more creative results.

In other studies, Hanneman and Gardner (2010) and Hart (2006) found educators and employers perceive group work as valuable because it affords students the chance to gain experience in diverse teams similar to the environments they will likely encounter in workplaces around the world. Denson and Zhang (2010) further reported on how student experiences with diversity can have a positive impact on graduates' abilities to problem-solve, show respect for others, and engage in effective teamwork. Woods et al. (2011) provided students' accounts of cross-national group work experiences, and highlighted the following key themes as positive learning aspects: learning to respond to cultural differences with respect and empathy; refining important skills such as patience; empathetic listening, open-mindedness, and flexibility; and learning about important cultural values from other group members. Finally, Watson and Kumar (1993) demonstrated how over time and with support, the difficulties experienced in culturally

diverse teams can be mitigated. In fact, Watson and Kumar's (1993) research confirmed that if the unique contributions of team members can be maximized, heterogeneous groups may result in higher performance than the performance of a homogeneous group; they reported that when able to overcome their difficulties, " ... culturally diverse groups have the potential to generate a greater variety of ideas and other resources than culturally homogeneous groups ..." (p. 61).

Increasing international enrollments on U.S. campuses is an important step to internationalize higher education and help all students develop greater capacity to succeed in a globalized society. However, if peers do not experience authentic and meaningful cross-national interactions during their time at college, their ability to practice and eventually acquire intercultural competencies will likely be significantly limited. And, while a range of co-curricular programming and curricular methods play a role in internationalization efforts, small group work arguably represents one of the most high-yielding opportunities to maximize the potential benefits of cross-national interactions (Arkoudis et al., 2013; Spencer-Oatey & Dauber, 2016; Popov et al., 2012; Yefanova et al., 2015).

Statement of the Problem

Because there are such valuable potential benefits for students to gain, educators often choose to utilize group work as a tool to help accomplish intercultural learning outcomes. De Vita (2001) confirmed that group work is a popular pedagogical tool, is often used to help students improve communication, leadership, and problem-solving

skills, and in many cases instructors may assign or encourage students to work in diverse groups to provide a richer context for intercultural learning (Volet & Ang, 1998). However, despite these potential learning outcomes associated with group work, studies conducted by Kimmel and Volet (2012), Strauss and Young (2011), and Turner (2009) have demonstrated that the complexities and demands associated with homogenous group work are often intensified for heterogeneous groups. In fact, Kimmel and Volet (2012) reported that "there is converging evidence that completion of collaborative learning activities in culturally diverse small groups is a highly complex, socially and emotionally demanding experience" (p. 159). Confirming these complexities, Popov et al. (2012) documented a range of challenges that students experience within cross-national group work, including negative attitudes, communication challenges, stereotypes and tension between international and domestic students, lack of guidance from instructors, unequal task distribution, and confusing grading and assessment procedures, among other things.

Popov et al. (2012) further differentiated two primary layers of cross-national group work challenges: challenges related to the diversity of individual group members (attitudes, skills, previous experiences, and motivations), and challenges associated with the group process (leadership and role conflicts, communication, and group management problems). Popov et al. then grouped the types of problems students experience into five major categories: (1) individual group member characteristics; (2) communication challenges; (3) issues with problem solving and making decisions; (4) ineffective conflict management processes; and (5) leadership challenges. Spencer-Oatey and Dauber (2016) also summarized key studies and categorized the challenges into five similar

groupings, including (1) language and communication barriers; (2) attitudes and engagement challenges; (3) various differences in the composition of group members; (4) difficulties with group management; and (5) conflict management problems. Within these broader categories, several authors addressed the following challenges as critical issues in the literature: attitudes and anxieties (De Vita, 2002; Kimmel & Volet, 2010, 2012; Strauss & Young, 2011; Sweeney et al., 2008), cultural differences (Melles, 2004; Popov et al., 2012), language barriers (Ippolito, 2007; Leki, 2001; Melles, 2004; Popov et al., 2012; Spencer-Oatey & Dauber, 2016; Strauss, 2001), and power imbalances (Cotton, George, & Joyner, 2013; Ippolito, 2007; Turner, 2009).

Attitudes and Anxieties

One prominent theme discussed in the literature by Popov et al. (2012) and other scholars is students' negative attitudes and the effect these attitudes can have on hindering intercultural group work effectiveness. According to a study conducted by Sweeney et al. (2008) regarding student perceptions of group work, both international and domestic students described negative attitudes towards group work based on previous experiences they had with challenging group work circumstances, such as language barriers and unfair grading procedures. Gao and Gudykunst (1990) pointed to two types of anxiety students can exhibit when there are uncertain dynamics in cross-national interactions: 1) 'affective anxiety' – for example, emotional discomfort about group interactions that may occur between dissimilar group mates; and 2) 'cognitive anxiety' – which may result in intellectual discomfort about working with group members who may

not share the same values. Other studies connect students' anxiety about multicultural group work to their concerns about how working with students from different backgrounds could impair their academic performance as a group, and more specifically how that may be detrimental to the instructor's overall assessment of their individual performance (De Vita, 2002).

Cultural Differences

In addition to linguistic challenges, many studies have found that students cite cultural differences to be a key source of difficulty (De Vita, 2001; Popov et al., 2012; Turner, 2009). For example, De Vita (2001) provided a succinct explanation for how cultural differences may interfere with communication in a diverse group:

Culturally diverse groups … have to confront differences in beliefs and expectations about group behavior, differences on how decisions are reached and on how to structure the task. Unlike mono-cultural groups, where the cultural assumptions shared by group members shape the norms of the group and enable the group to function, in multicultural groups, failure to address these cultural differences is bound to make effective group work at best difficult. Moreover, if such differences are ignored, they cannot be valued or used synergistically to form a group culture that builds upon them (p. 32).

Popov et al. (2012) asserted that problems with intercultural communication can negatively impact the group climate. For example, Popov et al. (2012) applied Hofstede's (2003) cultural dimensions of collectivism-individualism as a lens for which

to examine intercultural group work dynamics, defining members of collectivistic cultures as those that tend to value harmony in the group, indirect communication, and avoidance of conflict; on the other hand, people from individualistic cultures are more likely to value independent work, direct communication, and constructive confrontation. Interestingly, Popov et al. (2012) found that students from collectivist cultures are more bothered by communication issues resulting from cultural differences than are students from individualistic cultures. Students from individualistic cultures tend to be more concerned with group problems that threaten their individual progress, such as behaviors involving free-riding, lack of motivation, or passive participation by group members (Popov et al., 2012). Further studies reported the complex role that cultural differences can play in expectations, communication styles, and in team performance (Melles, 2004; Watson and Kumar, 1993).

Language Barriers

Additionally, several authors have cited linguistic barriers as a main source of communication difficulty experienced by students in multicultural groups (Popov et al., 2012; Turner, 2009). Findings from Popov et al.'s (2012) study indicated that native speakers of English may perceive non-native speakers of English to be lacking in motivation or academic competence. Similar linguistic challenges are described in the intercultural group work documented in other studies (Ippolito, 2007; Kimmel & Volet, 2012; Strauss & Young, 2011; Turner, 2009; Woods et al., 2011). In many of these studies, native speakers of English complained that the language challenges faced by the

international students in their groups hindered communication, contributed significantly to misunderstandings, frequently resulted in unequal task completion, and negatively affected the group's productivity overall.

Power Imbalances

Introducing further complications, a few studies have illustrated group work challenges related to power imbalances. For example, Ippolito's (2007) study demonstrated how more power and status were assigned to students who had higher competency in English and students who were perceived to possess "privileged" knowledge about academic expectations (p. 760). In Ippolito's study, two specific types of knowledge often helped to provide local students with more status, and contributed to tension within groups: knowledge about correct academic practices (teacher expectations, classroom norms, etc.) and discipline-specific related knowledge. Students who were viewed as experts regarding these types of 'privileged' knowledge often assumed leadership roles and fostered greater levels of influence within the group. In addition, Ippolito (2007) shared how native speakers of English in her study frequently placed judgments on non-native speakers of English, placing them at an intellectual and academic disadvantage, and contributing to "power imbalance and inequality [serving] to stifle intercultural communication" (p. 758). Other authors have documented similar problems with power differentials in their studies (Cotton et al., 2013; Turner, 2009).

Out of the four prominent group work challenges discussed above, cultural differences and language barriers have been studied fairly extensively; however, power

differentials have only been minimally addressed in the research on cross-national group work. Yet as indicated by the findings from Ippolito's (2007) study, when power imbalances exist between group members, this has the potential to reinforce negative attitudes between students, and to hinder effective communication processes. In fact, Jon (2013) and other researchers (Chen, Geluykens, & Choi, 2006; Henderson, 2005) have discussed how variations in language proficiency and different national backgrounds can influence how power is perceived and enacted within groups. Therefore, in seeking to understand the challenges students experience in cross-national groups, my research will place a stronger focus on understanding how students perceive power differences in their group work interactions, in order to help address this significant gap in the literature.

Student Support Needs

As demonstrated by these studies, the challenges that students may experience in cross-national group work are complex and multi-faceted, and yet the literature lacks a strong focus on the types of support that will help students overcome these challenges. Popov et al. (2012) pointed out that there is a need for greater understanding of the challenges that occur within multicultural student group work (MSCG), particularly how cultural differences influence the group work process, and the authors also acknowledged that more research needs to be done to identify strategies to mitigate the challenges, claiming that,

> … further investigation of the most challenging aspects in multicultural student group work are required to determine if and how these challenges can be tackled.

> What strategies can be used by both teachers and students when facing these challenges in MCSG? (p. 312).

Similarly, Spencer-Oatey and Dauber (2016) also advocated for students to receive greater support in order to have more meaningful experiences with cross-national group work. These authors reported that several of the students in their study discussed language barriers as a key challenge, but that students sometimes recognized potential benefits associated with the communication problems they were experiencing, leading them to hypothesize that if faculty were able to identify more support strategies for students, the intercultural learning gains could be much greater. Similar to Popov et al. (2012), Spencer-Oatey and Dauber (2016) recommended that additional research should be done to address this gap in the literature, so that ultimately students can "receive support in understanding the potential benefits of such challenges and help in developing effective strategies for handling or overcoming them" (p. 16).

Faculty Support Needs

In their study investigating the educational impact of internationalization at the University of Minnesota, Yefanova et al. (2015) articulated the critical role that faculty play in encouraging cross-national interactions: "Structured and intentional cross-national interactions can help facilitate student learning and development (what students learned). Faculty facilitation and support is an essential condition for maximizing cross-national interactions in the classroom (under what conditions students learned best)" (p. 13). Similarly, Leask (2009) commented, "they [the faculty] must understand the importance

of structuring teaching and learning and assessment activities within the formal curriculum to improve the quality of interaction between home and international students" (p. 212). Because of the central role faculty play as architects of the learning space, they have the opportunity to introduce activities that require, encourage, or incentivize interaction, and furthermore, they can engineer group learning assessments that promote inclusivity and intercultural learning.

However, as pointed out by Lee, Poch, Shaw, and Williams (2012), Popov et al. (2012), Spencer-Oatey and Dauber (2016), and other scholars (Ippolito, 2007; Turner, 2009; Yefanova et al., 2015), teaching staff need greater support in facilitating meaningful interactions between diverse students in their classrooms. In their extensive work outlining best practices for engaging diversity in the classroom, Lee et al. (2012) reinforced the need for further research to equip faculty in engaging diversity, stating that "we found it challenging to locate scholarship that focused on diversity or intercultural competence within the context of higher education classrooms and with the aim of directly supporting practice or teaching" (p. 16). Furthermore, a number of authors have documented specific pedagogic challenges that faculty face in facilitating cross-national group work. For example, Leki (2001) shared how instructors may be unaware of the challenges that students are experiencing, and particularly unaware of the linguistic, cultural, and social integration challenges that nonnative speakers of English encounter in a group work process. Strauss (2001) also found that there are many difficulties with the ways in which faculty assess group work, and that these problems are amplified for heterogeneous group members who encounter limitations in communicating culturally

different expectations. And providing additional evidence of the need to research the challenge of power imbalances, Ippolito (2007) and Turner (2009) purported that power differentials created the most intense barriers for students engaged in cross-national group work. Both authors explained how they felt helpless to empower students to overcome inequalities shaped by power differences within their groups.

Based on the growing demand for globally competent graduates and the various benefits that can be achieved through cross-national interactions, there are compelling reasons to integrate cross-national group work into the curriculum. However, if the benefits of the heterogeneous group work process are to be realized, helpful sources of support and effective interventions need to be identified and made accessible to both students and faculty. Furthermore, educators need greater awareness about the ways in which power imbalances may limit domestic and international students from experiencing effective interactions. De Vita (2001) argued that:

> … far too often, in fact, group work is being used as a 'quick-and- easy' assessment tool, with little or no attention devoted to equipping students and staff with the skills necessary to deal with the inherent difficulties of co-operative learning. This approach has resulted in many dysfunctional group work experiences … and in an increasing sense of frustration and disenchantment (p. 26).

If the challenges associated with cross-national group work are not addressed, a valuable intercultural learning opportunity could be jeopardized, faculty may continue to struggle without adequate support to promote effective forms of group work, and furthermore,

students may actually become resentful instead of motivated to pursue intercultural interactions on campus.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of the proposed study is to understand the subjective experience of undergraduate students who are engaged in cross-national group work and to identify strategies that undergraduates perceive as most effective in addressing the challenges identified by the literature in this field. In order to accomplish the purpose of this study, the following three research questions will guide my inquiry:

1. What is the experience of undergraduate students working in cross-national groups?
2. In what ways do students conceptualize power differences in cross-national group work (if at all)?
3. What is the role of cultural humility in mediating power differences in cross-national group work (if at all)?

Although some of the key terms in my research questions are defined in more detail in the next sections, by cross-national interactions I mean the conversations and other non-verbal engagements that take place between international and domestic students. Power differences refers to any difference in influence or status that may impact how students perceive one another or interact. Cultural humility is a framework of intercultural development proposed by Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) that emphasizes three components: critical self-reflection, a commitment to mitigate power imbalances, and dedication to institutional accountability.

Significance of the Study

This study provides an important contribution to the "internationalization at home" literature (Wächter, 2003) by identifying pedagogical methods and student strategies that influence the integration of domestic and international students in the classroom. While there are a significant number of studies that elaborate on students' attitudes, experiences, and challenges in cross-national group work, there is considerably less research that provides explicit support for structuring group work or student capabilities to optimize the learning experience and mitigate the challenges (Strauss, 2001; Spencer-Oatey & Dauber, 2016). Furthermore, my study will specifically assess the role of power in group member interactions, which is an important aspect of cross-national group dynamics that has been understudied in the past. Also noteworthy, most studies on cross-national group work have used business courses as the academic context (De Vita, 2001; Popov et al., 2012). This creates an information gap for faculty members who are interested in learning best practices to conduct effective cross-national group work within academic disciplines other than business. Therefore, results from this study may be transferable for faculty who facilitate cross-national group work in higher education classrooms across the curriculum.

Definition of Key Terms

The following definitions are provided to clarify key terms that are used throughout this dissertation.

Cooperative learning: Cooperative learning, as defined by Johnson, Johnson, and Smith (2014), is the "instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning" (p. 87).

Cross-national interactions: Building from Arkoudis et al.'s (2013) discussion of "interaction between students with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds," this term describes the communication, dialogue, and other types of structured and unstructured interactions that occur between international and domestic students. International and domestic students indeed represent diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and in the context of a U.S. based, English-speaking university campus, they also possess varying degrees of cultural, social, and academic capital based on their status as either "international" or "domestic." Other authors use a range of terms to indicate similar types of interactions, most commonly including "cross-cultural" or "intercultural interactions" (Leask, 2009) and "intercultural contact" (Campbell, 2012; Dunne, 2009; Halualani, 2008). In this study, the use of the term "cross-national interactions" is also used to provide consistency with the same term used in the recent large-scale study investigating the educational impact of internationalization efforts, which was conducted at the University of Minnesota by Yefanova et al. (2015).

Cross-national group work: In their study investigating the challenges involved with multicultural student group work (MCSG), Popov et al. (2012) defined multicultural student group work as "a collaboration of two or more individuals from different (national) cultural backgrounds, who have been assigned interdependent tasks and are jointly responsible for the final results, who see themselves and are seen by others as a

collective unit embedded in an academic environment and who manage their relationships within a certain educational institution" (Bailey & Cohen, 1997; Marquardt & Horvath, 2001 cited in Popov et al., 2012, p. 303). For the purposes of this study, cross-national group work is defined similarly to Popov's definition of MCSG, with a few key adaptations: a cooperative learning group in which three or more individuals from different national backgrounds work together collaboratively to accomplish shared learning goals with the guidance and support of a faculty member in a specific academic institution.

Culture: Northouse (2013) explained culture as "the learned beliefs, values, rules, norms, symbols, and traditions that are common to a group of people" … and he further explains that "it is these shared qualities of a group that make them unique" (p. 384).

Cultural humility: Cultural humility is a framework of intercultural development proposed by Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) that emphasizes three components: critical self-reflection, a commitment to mitigate power imbalances, and dedication to institutional accountability. Specifically within their context of health care education, they noted that "cultural humility incorporates a lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and critique, to redressing the power imbalances in the physician- patient dynamic, and to developing mutually beneficial and non-paternalistic partnerships with communities on behalf of individuals and defined populations" (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998, p. 123).

Cultural intelligence: Earley and Ang (2003) explained this as the capacity an individual has to effectively meet the demands of situations that are characterized by cultural diversity.

Domestic students: In the context of a U.S. university, these students may often be referred to as "local" or "host" students (Campbell, 2012; Dunne, 2009), but are technically defined by their U.S. citizenship or their status as permanent residents. In this paper, I will use the terms local, host, and domestic interchangeably.

Intercultural competence: In an ambitious study, Deardorff (2006) gathered input from various scholars regarding the definition and measurement of intercultural competence, and articulated the resulting definition as "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p. 247).

Intercultural learning: Bennett (2009) described intercultural learning as the process of "acquiring increased awareness of subjective cultural context (world view), including one's own, and developing greater ability to interact sensitively and competently across cultural contexts as both an immediate and long-term effect of exchange" (p. 2).

Intercultural sensitivity: As represented by the six levels of the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennett, 1986), which range from ethnocentricity to ethnorelativism, Hammer, Bennett, and Wiseman (2003) conceptualized intercultural sensitivity to be related to increasing levels of cultural awareness and relational effectiveness: "as one's experience of cultural difference becomes more complex and sophisticated, one's potential competence in intercultural relations increases" (p. 423).

Intergroup contact: Allport (1954) and Pettigrew (1998, 2008) articulated a theoretical basis for the process by which increased contact between different national groups can reduce prejudice towards an outgroup. Allport (1954) asserted that the following factors are necessary to help eliminate prejudice: equal status between group members, a cooperative approach in which group members have shared goals, and support from a higher authority.

International students: A population of students from different national backgrounds who possess an F-1 visa, which is a nonimmigrant visa granted to students who are traveling to the U.S. for education. In some cases, some international students may also be on a J-1 visa, which is a nonimmigrant visa for exchange visitors.

Internationalization: Within the context of higher education, Knight (2003) defined this as "a process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education" (p. 2).

Positionality and Value Premises

According to Creswell (2014) it is essential to uphold the highest ethical standards when conducting research, and this includes acknowledging the factors that may influence the researcher's objectivity. To ensure that all participants were treated respectfully and in accordance with research guidelines set by the University, I took every recommended precaution to ensure that study participants were not pressured to participate, but chose to do so of their own accord, and that they were fully informed

about the study purpose, research design, and their rights as participants in the study (Creswell, 2014).

I also recognize some key values that play a role in informing my perceptions about the study. As an English as a Second Language (ESL) instructor, I have been educated in the principles of student-centered learning, a pedagogical philosophy in which students are empowered to take ownership in the learning process and to actively co-construct meaning with faculty and peers. I am aware that some international students may have previously been schooled in a teacher-centered education system and that their educational background may influence their approach to group work. Additionally, because of my role as a language educator, I am mindful of the role that language proficiency can play in cross-national interactions -- for example, how it might affect confidence levels in international students, influence perceptions domestic students hold about international students, and contribute to misunderstanding in communication. Finally, because I have worked extensively with international students and am aware of the common struggles they face in U.S. classrooms, I am concerned about the possibility that international students may be more likely to be marginalized within a group process. I was motivated to explore this research topic because I want both international and domestic students to realize the benefits of intercultural interactions, but in my experiences as an educator, I have become aware that various challenges (many mentioned previously) may jeopardize students' intercultural learning benefits. And while considerable research addresses these difficulties, there is little discussion in the literature about strategies that may mitigate the challenges that students experience.

Limitations of the Study

It is also important to recognize the potential limitations associated with this study. First, it is important to note that the results will be most relevant to the University, but may be transferable to other institutions. Further, as mentioned previously, my current professional role may also contribute to the study limitations. As an English as a Second Language (ESL) instructor, my support of communicative, student-centered learning techniques and inclusive teaching practices may have some influence on how I conduct the study and interpret the results. The transferability of findings may be increased based on the design – which is steeped in a robust literature on cross-national group work from around the world. This literature base, along with literature from other fields that inform this study, are outlined in Chapter 2.

CHAPTER TWO: Review Of The Literature

In this literature review, I will summarize four complementary bodies of literature that inform the specific focus of my study and provide valuable context for understanding the challenges of cross-national group work. In the first section of the literature review, I will examine the internationalization of higher education, addressing the specific challenges related to internationalizing the curriculum, engaging faculty in internationalization efforts, and internationalizing the student experience. In the second section of the literature review, I will explain how two key theories related to intercultural interactions will help to support my research, including Allport's (1954) intergroup contact theory and the conceptual framework of cultural humility.

In the third section of the literature, I will examine Johnson and Johnson's (1987) cooperative learning theory, the research supporting it, and explain how it can be implemented in a classroom environment. I will also discuss some challenges international students may have in successfully adapting to the use of cooperative learning techniques in a U.S. classroom. Finally, in the fourth body of literature, I will provide an in-depth analysis of the types of interactions domestic and international students are having on campuses across the world, with specific mention of the challenges that domestic students, international students, and faculty have reported in various studies with cross-national group work in a U.S. classroom. These four bodies of literature are organized from a macro- to micro-level perspective to provide layers of context and perspectives from various angles.

The Internationalization of Higher Education

In the past several decades, internationalization of higher education has become a major priority for institutions across the U.S. Colleges and universities have focused greater efforts on recruiting international students (Urban & Bierlein Palmer, 2013), and as a result, international student enrollments are increasing each year, with just over 900,000 international students enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities in 2016-17, according to the Institute of International Education's (2017) Open Door's report. In addition to international recruitment, institutions are pursuing various other initiatives, including study abroad opportunities, co-curricular programming on campus, and an internationalized curriculum (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Because the success of these internationalization efforts likely has an impact on the abilities of college graduates to navigate a multicultural world (Deardorff, 2006), internationalization is considered by many to represent a compelling driver for change to reimagine a more modern, globally adept university (Bartell, 2003; Taylor, 2004). In the next section, I will review some common conceptualizations of, motivations for, and approaches to internationalization (Bartell, 2003; Chan & Dimmock, 2008; Knight, 1994, 2004), and discuss some key challenges with implementing internationalization efforts (Childress, 2009a; Green, 2002; Mestenhauser, 2003; Olson, 2005; Svensson & Wihlborg, 2010).

Definitions of Internationalization

Although there are a range of definitions, my study utilizes Knight's (1994) definition of internationalization, which emphasizes the importance of

understanding internationalization as a process. Most recently, Knight (2003) described internationalization as "the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education" (p. 2). Knight's (1994) definition is differentiated from other approaches, which conceptualize internationalization more in terms of rationales, activities, or outcomes. The process definition is advantageous because it is broad, flexible, and allows for customization based on a university's culture and purpose (Knight, 1994). Knight claimed that in the context of a supportive campus culture, internationalization should progress as a continuous cycle that includes the following six steps: developing awareness, establishing commitment, engaging in planning, operationalizing, reviewing, and reinforcing. This cyclical, process-orientation acknowledges that to be successful, internationalization must transform core aspects of a university's organizational culture, and it is this transformation and the ongoing steps in the process that will provide the critical support to stimulate innovation, engage stakeholders, and sustain new initiatives (Knight, 1994; Olson, 2005). Figure 1 below provides a visualization of the steps in the cycle proposed by Knight (1994).

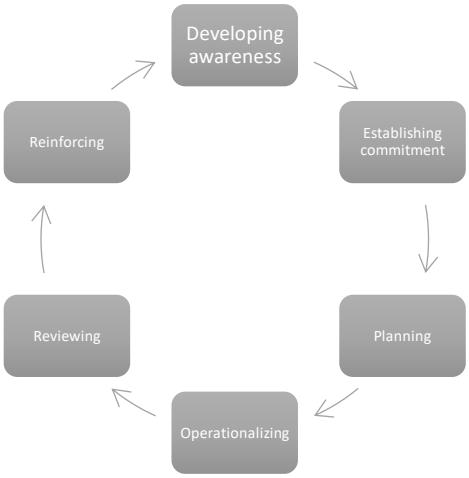

Figure 1. A process-approach to internationalization (based on Knight, 1994).

Addressing similar themes, Olson (2005) discussed "comprehensive internationalization" as a transformational change effort that should translate into sustained impacts in classrooms, departments, and offices, resulting in internationalized values, traditions, policies, and practices across the university. Ellingboe (1998) provided concrete examples of the types of evidence that will indicate that internationalization has become embedded into the institutional culture, including: 1) institutional leadership is supportive of internationalization efforts; 2) faculty are engaged in international activities; 3) the internationalization of the curriculum is a clear priority; 4) study abroad programming is available for students; 5) international students are successfully integrated into campus life; and 6) international dimensions are incorporated into co-curricular programming.

In summary, rather than approaching internationalization as a series of activities or programs to administer, Ellingboe (1998), Knight (1994), and Olson (2005) promote

the view of internationalization as a comprehensive process that continually shapes the key values, policies, and practices within an institution.

Rationales Supporting Internationalization

There is considerable consensus among scholars that one of the main priorities for internationalizing higher education is to prepare students to interact competently in a multicultural world and a diverse workplace (Deardorff, 2006; Galinova, 2015). For example, reflecting on what will be required of students after graduation, Galinova (2015) reported that "In light of the profound transformations of today's social reality, one of the key messages global educators convey to students is that learning to think and act as citizens of the world … is a necessity and a moral imperative" (p. 17). As the landscape of life, study, and work is continuously responding to the pressures of globalization, it is argued by many that graduates will be ill equipped if they do not develop abilities to engage with diversity on an interpersonal level, as well as critically analyze and respond to situations of cultural complexity at home and abroad (Green, 2002; Mestenhauser, 2003; Olson, 2005).

While fostering students' intercultural effectiveness may represent one of the most compelling justifications for internationalizing, Knight (2004) delineated numerous other national and institutional-level rationales, and categorized them into four major types: 1) social/cultural rationales aimed at developing citizens and communities to have greater intercultural understanding; 2) political rationales that are related to various foreign policy, national security, or national identity factors; 3) economic rationales

related to financial incentives and economic growth; and 4) academic rationales that focus more specifically on education-related issues and initiatives. Providing more concrete explanation of what the academic rationales entail, Knight (2004) reported that the following objectives are emerging as priorities at the institutional and academic levels: the quality of education, the international reputation of the institution, the development of intercultural competencies in staff and students, the potential for increased income related to internationalization endeavors, the establishment of strategic partnerships across institutions, and "international and interdisciplinary collaboration" (p. 28) in research. While stakeholders in the internationalization process will have varied levels of interest in these rationales depending on their position and relationship to the institution (Olson, 2005), the academic and cultural rationales that Knight (2004) described are particularly important for my study and its focus on understanding how students interact in cross-national groups, and how faculty help students develop key intercultural competencies in the process of group work.

Increasing Internationalization at Home

In recent years "internationalization at home" (Wächter, 2003) initiatives have been increasingly recognized as critical components of the comprehensive process of internationalization encouraged by Olson (2005) and Knight (1994, 2004). Wächter, (2000) defined "internationalisation at home" (IaH) as "any internationally related activity with the exception of outbound student and staff mobility" (p. 6), which therefore includes many of the elements that Ellingboe (1998) described, such as co-curricular

programming, internationalization of the curriculum, and integration of international students and scholars into the campus community.

Paige (2003) confirmed the importance of IaH, citing low numbers of study abroad participants in both Europe and the U.S., and noting that "it is obvious … that study abroad cannot serve as the only institutional vehicle for internationalization, but that it must partner with other activities" (p. 53). Mestenhauser (2003) also affirmed the strategic potential of IaH, encouraging educators to see beyond study abroad trips as the primary means to internationalize, and claiming that "IaH makes it possible to educate internationally a much higher percentage of students. In addition, it is also capable of creating a different learning environment that will produce more of the desired learning" (p. 8). Mestenhauser explained that "desired learning" as the opportunity for students to experience learning through dynamic relationships in laboratory settings such as the community, and to be supported in transferring this learning to other contexts.

Furthermore, Soria and Triosi (2014) demonstrated that internationalization initiatives at home can be as effective, if not more effective, at helping to develop students' global, international, and intercultural (GII) competencies. Their study, which involved examining Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) data from over 200,000 students enrolled at nine public universities in the U.S., revealed that students' reported experiencing an increase in GII competencies when participating in internationally themed courses and intercultural events on campus, as well as when interacting with international students. Considering that classroom and campus-based programming is likely to be more accessible to a larger number of students, and that these

efforts have been proven to be effective for supporting students' intercultural learning, it is important that institutions include IaH priorities as part of their comprehensive internationalization process. Because my dissertation is focused on understanding and enhancing the cross-national group work experiences students have within a classroom environment in the U.S., one of the important outcomes of my study will be to contribute new insights about ways in which educators can maximize internationalization efforts at home.

Challenges in Implementing Internationalization

Although many educational leaders have aspirations to internationalize, their ideals are often not converted into actionable strategies to transform campus culture (Green, 2002; Olson, 2005). Several scholars, including Bartell (2003), Childress (2009a), and Chan and Dimmock (2008), described ways in which the complex nature of university culture can complicate the prospects of internationalization. For example, Bartell's (2003) case study of two U.S. universities demonstrated that an institution's structure, culture, and goals will influence how internationalization is implemented. Specific factors, such as conflicting or unclear goals, clashes between administration and faculty, multiple stakeholders, and the diversity of university departments and their various management philosophies can make it difficult to create a culture that supports the innovative aims of internationalization. Bartell (2003) concluded that there is high variation between universities, or even sometimes between departments of the same university, regarding how internationalization is operationalized:

> It is proposed here that internationalization may be viewed as occurring on a continuum. At one end, internationalization is limited and essentially symbolic, for example, internationalization may be reflected, in this case, by a relative handful of students from several distant countries having a presence on a campus. At the other end of the continuum, the process of internationalization is conceptualized as a synergistic, transformative process, involving the curriculum and the research programs, that influences the role and activities of all stakeholders including faculty, students, administrators, and the community-at-large (pp. 51-52).

Furthermore, Schoorman (1999) also described a wide range of interpretations and approaches that members of one campus community possessed about internationalization, illustrating that the diversity of campus units and academic disciplines can make it problematic to create a shared internationalized experience for students and faculty across the same institution.

To address these and other complications that institutions encounter when attempting to successfully internationalize campus culture, Childress (2009a) discussed the importance of establishing an institutional internationalization plan, claiming that a carefully crafted plan can provide future direction for internationalization initiatives, increase engagement, help communicate the rationales and intentions of internationalization, establish avenues for cross-disciplinary collaboration, and serve as a source of fund-raising. Prior to Childress' work, other authors (Bartell, 2003; Knight, 2004; Olson, 2005) also recommended that various strategic planning efforts, including

clearly delineated objectives and corresponding assessment measures, are essential to identify and overcome the barriers in establishing a process of comprehensive internationalization.

Related to this, recent data published in the Center for Internationalization and Global Engagement's (CIGE) Mapping Internationalization on U.S. Campuses report indicated that close to half of the institutions surveyed in the 2017 study are prioritizing internationalization goals in their mission statements or strategic plans, and around 27% are establishing specific internationalization plans (Helms, Brajkovic, & Struthers, 2017). While this finding is promising, the CIGE report also emphasized a few key areas of concern directly related to engaging faculty in internationalizing the curriculum and internationalizing the student experience (Helms et al., 2017). Addressing these two gap areas provide important context for my study, specifically in terms of assessing the abilities of faculty to structure effective cross-national group work, and understanding the nature and types of interactions that students have within this group work.

Challenges in Engaging Faculty to Internationalize the Curriculum. Leask (2009) defined internationalization of the curriculum as "the incorporation of an international and intercultural dimension into the content of the curriculum as well as the teaching and learning arrangements and support services of a program of study" (p. 209). Operationalizing a comprehensive strategy to internationalize the curriculum is a complex undertaking, and one that requires new levels of engagement from all institutional leaders, but particularly from faculty members (Childress, 2009b; Crose, 2011; Dewey & Duff, 2009; Schoorman, 1999). In the recent CIGE report on U.S.

campus internationalization, Helms et al. (2017) argued that even though more institutions are offering faculty development opportunities related to international education, faculty engagement with internationalization remains a concern overall; specifically, the authors identified "a gap between institutional measures to recruit international students and efforts to ensure that faculty are well prepared to support those students once they arrive on campus" (p. 23).

Finding effective strategies to internationalize the curriculum and engage faculty in doing so has been identified as an area of key challenge by several other international education scholars. For example, Svensson and Wihlborg (2010) raised concerns that internationalization is often discussed more in terms of political or economic outcomes, and thus too often the important educational aims are underplayed or neglected. After conducting an eight-year investigation examining how Swedish nursing students conceptualized the role of internationalization in their nursing curriculum, Svensson and Wihlborg concluded that the learning activities did not embody clearly articulated outcomes in terms of internationalization, and also did not demonstrate that internationalized values were part of the teaching and learning culture. In their findings, Svensson and Wihlborg demonstrated how any aspect of the Swedish nursing curriculum that addressed intercultural knowledge or skills seemed to be fairly vague and abstract, and seemed also to be included only because of an arbitrary choice of the instructor, rather than the result of an intentional planning process.

Leask (2013) concurred that there is no consensus on the best methods to use in internationalizing the curriculum, nor agreement regarding how to develop and measure

intercultural learning across various academic disciplines. Leask outlined key factors that pose barriers to engaging faculty in internationalization of the curriculum, including: 1) a vague or ambiguous understanding of the institutional purpose of internationalization; 2) various contextual factors that isolate discipline communities from engaging in internationalization; and 3) the lack of time that faculty have to collaborate around internationalizing the curriculum. Similarly, Niehaus and Williams (2016) claimed that lack of faculty engagement is a key obstacle to internationalizing the curriculum, stating that "despite faculty members' importance in curriculum transformation in general and international curriculum transformation in specific, there are several barriers that prevent faculty members from engaging in international curriculum transformation" (p. 61). They listed similar barriers described by Leask (2013), but added that financial restraints, limitations posed by departmental policies, and a lack of interest may also play a role in discouraging faculty from engaging with curriculum internationalization efforts. Furthermore, after working to support internationalization efforts in two U.S. universities, Childress (2010) suggested that the following are additional hindrances to engaging faculty: a lack of incentives related to internationalization within faculty promotion policies, the perception that internationalization initiatives are not relevant to all disciplines, and the reality that some faculty may not possess the cognitive capacity or necessary skills to competently support internationalization of the curriculum.

The list of challenges for faculty is long, especially considering the centrality of the role of faculty members to the successful realization of internationalization goals. Summarizing many of the aforementioned challenges by sharing his own experiences as a

faculty member who has been involved with internationalization efforts at multiple institutions, Stohl (2007) claimed that "the chief challenge for developing and sustaining internationalization is the engagement of the faculty … if we want to internationalize the university, we have to internationalize the faculty" (pp. 360, 367). This perspective acknowledges the great influence that faculty have in shaping students' experiences, and reiterates how vital it is to find strategies to leverage faculty influence to support the goals of internationalization.

Challenges to Internationalizing the Student Experience. Another significant challenge related to internationalizing the curriculum is ensuring there is a high quality learning experience for both international students and their domestic peers. Peterson and Helms (2013) identified an ongoing concern that institutional leaders may often prioritize increasing international student enrollment numbers while neglecting to support international students once they are recruited. Marginson (2012) addressed this concern as well by pointing out that while many developed nations are competing for higher numbers of international students to increase their globalized status, educators need to recognize that international students are a vulnerable population due to their noncitizen status. Marginson contended that although international students make important economic contributions and other investments into their host institutions and countries, treatment of these students is dependent on the extent to which governmental and institutional programs and policies are structured to be inclusive and supportive of their rights and needs. Unfortunately, Marginson (2012) claimed that many institutions are

either unaware of international student needs or unwilling to make the needed adjustments to enhance international student support:

> Cross-border migration, whether permanent, or temporary for work or study, is challenging for those that undertake it. Global mobility demands adjustment by mobile persons. On the face of it, global mobility also demands adjustments by the institutions and systems that mobile persons encounter. But institutions and systems in the country of education rarely adjust much to the 'strangers'. They would be more willing to adjust if international students were no longer defined as 'strangers' (p. 510).

Several authors have suggested various adjustments by the institution are needed to enhance the support provided to international students. For example, upon arrival to the host institution, international students may not find optimal support to help them acclimate to a new culture and a different academic climate (Andrade, 2006). Furthermore, Kingston and Forland's (2008) study demonstrated that international students are likely to encounter significant linguistic challenges and academic problems such as difficulties adapting to faculty expectations for study and research skills. Kingston and Forland (2008) expressed concern that "if such negative effects are left unresolved, then they are likely to have an impact on the evolution of internationalisation" (p. 210), and therefore advocated for faculty to foster an atmosphere of "cultural synergy" (p. 212) in the classroom, which they described as an educational climate in which students from all cultures can benefit equally from the teaching and learning environment. Similar to Kingston and Forland (2008), Crose (2011) claimed

that faculty need to be prepared to make adjustments to provide international students with a more supportive learning environment. Crose suggested that faculty should consider implementing various methods to support international students, methods that will help them feel included in the classroom, enhance their abilities to participate in an active learning environment, support them in comprehending content more effectively, assess their work fairly while considering their unique challenges, and encourage them to interact with peers successfully.

Many international education scholars also raise the concern that institutions do not have adequate plans in place to maximize opportunities for meaningful interactions and mutual learning between domestic and international students. Leask (2009) discussed this and the importance of addressing aspects of both the formal (classroom learning) and informal (co-curricular learning) curriculum as vital to improving interactions between local and international students. As Soria and Triosi (2014) demonstrated, curricular and co-curricular experiences that capitalize on international learning can contribute to an increase in intercultural competencies; however, as pointed out by Arkoudis et al. (2013), Crose (2011), Otten (2003), and Yefanova et al. (2015), this is likely to only happen with the design of a structured environment to provide appropriate support for students from diverse backgrounds to engage with each other.

Unfortunately, there is significant doubt expressed by many scholars that faculty and other campus leaders are implementing this type of supportive environment to facilitate engaging interaction between home and local students (Teekens, 2003; Urban & Bierlein Palmer, 2013). Urban and Bierlein Palmer (2013) investigated the extent to

which universities engage international students in the process of internationalizing, and found that the international students in their study felt underutilized, wanted to be more engaged in internationalization efforts, and specifically expressed a desire to be "engaged as cultural resources through interpersonal relationships" (p. 319). Emphasizing the value of interpersonal exchanges in the process of intercultural learning, Urban and Bierlein Palmer (2013) recommended that "higher education institutions should seek multiple ways of facilitating meaningful interactions among domestic and international students" (p. 321). Although ideal, this represents a highly complex task. Even if institutions offer a range of intercultural and interactive opportunities for students, it still may be challenging to get students from diverse backgrounds to engage with each other. For example, highlighting the main rationale supporting their study on cross-national interactions in the classroom environment, Yefanova et al. (2015) reported that "While the University of Minnesota offers several programs to connect domestic and international peers, recent institutional research suggests that many students still remain largely segmented into their own cultural groups and may not actively participate in cross-national interactions on campus" (p. 2).

Although internationalization may offer a compelling opportunity to equip students with important intercultural experiences, literature on internationalization demonstrates the complexities involved with implementing an internationalization framework and engaging faculty and students in the process. My study will address these aspects of the literature by assessing the challenges that local and international students experience in group work interactions.

The Role of Intercultural Theory in Explaining Dynamics of Cross-National Interactions in Students

Although various studies, reviewed in the previous section, indicate that interactions between domestic and international students on college and university campuses may be fairly infrequent (Teekens, 2003; Urban & Bierlein Palmer, 2013; Yefanova et al., 2015), once engaged in cross-national interactions in classrooms, students may experience significant challenges to manage their differences effectively (Popov et al, 2012; Spencer-Oatey & Dauber, 2016). While many important theories have emerged in recent years to support the development of intercultural skills within groups and individuals, two theories explicitly address the role of power in cross-national interactions and are particularly useful for my study. Allport's (1954) intergroup contact theory provides a foundational framework for understanding the group conditions necessary to work and learn effectively across difference. However, since Allport's theory addresses the dynamics of cross-national interactions primarily at a group level, I will also utilize the conceptual framework of cultural humility to help assess the attitudes and behaviors of individual students as they encounter and respond to cross-national interactions within group work. Contact theory and concepts of cultural humility do not preclude other intercultural theories as possible explanations for the dynamics of international group work in U.S. higher education institutions, but will be reported in this section because of their specific focus on power as an element of intercultural communication.

Allport's Intergroup Contact Theory

When considering the aforementioned interactional challenges between international and domestic students, Allport's (1954) model of intergroup contact may prove to be a useful foundation, as it offers a theoretical basis to understand how group members respond to difference and the conditions which may help to facilitate cross-group understanding. Although Allport is credited with establishing the theory, many early scholars also played a role in shaping its development. After World War II, scientists within the emerging field of social psychology became concerned with how individuals from diverse backgrounds relate to one another, and the barriers that they may face in doing so (Pettigrew, 1998). Interest in intergroup contact theory also increased in response to observing racial conflict in a variety of contexts such as schools, neighborhoods, and housing units in the U.S. In 1947, Robin Williams, a sociologist at Cornell, suggested that a large range of factors are influential in determining how contact can reduce prejudice between groups (Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, & Christ, 2011).

Following this proclamation, Gordon Allport (1954) published a work known as "The Nature of Prejudice," which elaborated his hypothesis of intergroup contact. In this foundational text, Allport asserted that in order for ingroup members to improve attitudes towards outgroup members, they must experience positive contact with one another. Allport established that four factors are necessary to create these positive interactions and reduce prejudice. First, group members need to have equal status in the contact situation, which means that members of both groups "have the opportunity, ability, and power to

shape the rules of interaction" (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011, p. 62). In fact, in later additions to the theory, Pettigrew and Tropp posited that even if group members have different status coming into a group, they can still experience prejudice reduction if they are assigned equal status once working in a group together. A second condition in Allport's (1954) contact theory established that group members should be working towards common goals, which is presumed to typically result in heightened support within the group. In addition to having shared goals, group members need to work together in a cooperative climate, which is believed to help improve attitudes across racial divides (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011). Finally, Allport (1954) conceptualized the fourth condition as the need for the group to have supportive leadership, or more specifically that authority figures show value for positive intergroup relationships (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011).

In recent decades, Allport's (1954) original hypothesis of intergroup contact has received significant attention, and the hypothesis has developed into a reputable theory, with application to a wide range of contexts (Pettigrew, 2008). Pettigrew (1998, 2008) has contributed significantly to the continued development of intergroup contact as a theory. For example, through extensive meta-analyses, Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) confirmed that when the conditions of contact are established, group members experience a decrease in racial prejudice. Furthermore, the authors asserted that contact theory, while originally construed for racial or ethnic situations, can be applied to many other types of diverse groups as well. Pettigrew and Tropp's meta-analysis also demonstrated that although Allport's four factors are not necessary for prejudice reduction, the presence of

these factors will likely create optimal conditions for it to occur. Furthermore, Pettigrew and Tropp determined that Allport's factors predict reduced prejudice more consistently when the factors are viewed to be interrelated rather than when the conditions are applied independently.

Pettigrew (1998, 2008) also contributed to the theory's development by establishing the importance of four mediating factors in affecting positive attitudinal changes regarding members of the outgroup, including: learning information about the outgroup, changing behaviors towards the outgroup, holding positive emotions towards the outgroup, and reexamining the perspectives of members of the outgroup. Additionally, Pettigrew (1998) proposed that establishing friendships between ingroup and outgroup members is a powerful factor to help decrease prejudice.

A significant amount of research has validated that friendship-oriented interactions are typically associated with a significant decrease in prejudice and strongly positive intergroup attitudes (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011). In a meta-analytic review of cross-group friendships and intergroup attitudes, Davies, Tropp, Aron, Pettigrew, and Wright (2011) demonstrated that although all types of friendship measures were related to positive intergroup attitudes, behavioral indicators such as the amount of time invested in the friendship, and self-disclosing to an outgroup friend, were most strongly associated with positive shifts in intergroup attitudes. Notably, this connection between friendships and improved intergroup attitudes may have important implications for enhancing interactions between domestic and international students engaged in group work experiences.

It is also noteworthy to mention research that has examined factors that may increase negative attitudes in intergroup relationships. Pettigrew and Tropp (2011) investigated variables that may result in increased prejudice and determined that three key factors can heighten negative intergroup attitudes: when contact is involuntary or superficial, and when contact happens between group members of unequal status. Similarly, based on the Integrated Threat Theory (ITT), Stephan and Stephan's (1985) research determined that four factors may be perceived as threats by the ingroup and thus have the potential to strengthen negative attitudes towards outgroup members. The potential threats include: 1) realistic threats, which are perceived threats to the wellbeing of the ingroup; 2) symbolic threats, which potentially jeopardize the norms and values of the ingroup; 3) negative stereotypes, which is when ingroup members have negative expectations about outgroup members; and 4) interactional anxiety (IA), which refers to the apprehensive and anxious feelings that ingroup members may experience when anticipating interactions with outgroup members. Pettigrew (2008) also discussed the importance of interactional anxiety (IA) as a mediating factor and its potential negative impacts on intergroup contact.

Intergroup Contact Theory Applied to Cross-National Interactions. Allport's intergroup contact theory has been acclaimed for its applicability to a wide number of disciplines and the implications it has for creating policies that will advance a more inclusive and culturally competent society (Dixon, Levine, Reicher, & Durrheim, 2012). For example, Pettigrew et al. (2011) asserted that application of the theory can enhance relationships by fostering greater trust and forgiveness amongst groups, and even more,

claimed that it may inspire social change between group members who possess higher societal status, thereby improving the likelihood of implementing long-term systemic change. When applied to higher education settings, Allport's (1954) intergroup contact theory has important contributions to make towards helping to internationalize the student experience. From analyzing the principles of intergroup contact theory, educators can gain insight into the specific factors that contribute to positive, and negative, interactions between ingroup and outgroup members.

Using Allport's contact theory as a guiding framework, scholars have conducted studies to investigate aspects of contact and intergroup attitudes between international and domestic student groups on campus. For example, Ward and Masgoret (2004) reported that when international students had increased levels of contact with local New Zealand students, they experienced several positive effects, such as a decrease in discrimination, greater feelings of belonging in the classroom, and higher satisfaction with life overall. Additionally, Mak, Brown, and Wadey (2014) investigated the link between intercultural contact and the attitudes that local Australian students held towards international students, accounting for the quantity and quality of intercultural contact, as well as the role of intergroup anxiety (IA) and intercultural communications emotions (ICE), both of which are considered potential threats that can negatively impact intergroup attitudes.

In the studies described above, Mak et al. determined that the quality of intercultural contact had a stronger influence on the formation of positive intergroup attitudes than the quantity of intercultural contact, and that both IA and ICE mediated the

relationship between contact and prejudice. A unique conclusion from this study was that linguistic and cultural differences between international and domestic students may contribute to communication anxieties and therefore heighten the perceived threats posed by IA and ICE: "Our findings highlight the usefulness of affective threats, in particular threats associated with communication, in explaining negative attitudes toward outgroups who are linguistically and culturally different, like international students" (Mak et al., 2014, p. 501). Related to international students in the U.S., most of the historical research on intercultural contact has focused on ingroup and outgroup members who are culturally different but share the same native language. However, as Mak et al. (2014) noted, "a unique and often overlooked aspect of intercultural contact is that it frequently involves interactions between groups who do not share the same primary language" (p. 493). Similarly, Harwood (2010) asserted that contact theory has neglected to account for the influence that language and communication can have on the intergroup dynamics that occur within the "contact space" (p. 148). Harwood (2010) and Mak et al. (2014) concurred that further research is warranted to examine the unique and complex dynamics that minority and majority group members encounter when there are linguistic barriers at play.

In contact theory research, Tropp and Pettigrew (2005) acknowledged that a substantial amount of studies have been conducted from the perspective of majority group members. Such a perspective limits the information scholars and practitioners have about how minority group members experience situations of cross-group contact. This gap in the research has more serious implications since Tropp and Pettigrew (2005)

established that contact effects are typically weaker for members of minority groups than for members of majority groups, thereby acknowledging that "contact can often produce different outcomes for members of minority and majority status groups" (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011, p. 143). Several factors may account for the different experience that minority group members have with intergroup contact. For example, it is possible that minority group members are more mindful of their lower status in the group, or that they may be more aware of the potential to be negatively stereotyped by majority group members. Such dynamics are one rationale for this study, which aims to understand both the ingroup and outgroup member perspectives (domestic and international student perspectives, respectively), and how both groups perceive the role of power and status in their group work interactions. My study will therefore offer an important contribution to the literature by examining the perspectives that international students have about their interactions with domestic students in group work.

Cultural Humility

Allport's (1954) contact theory provides one important framework to analyze how interactions take place within cross-national groups, but its use will be complemented in my study by also exploring the extent to which individual students demonstrate cultural awareness and sensitivity. For this analysis on the individual level, I will integrate the conceptual framework of cultural humility, which includes group members' self-assessment of the role of power differentials within interactions. Although I am choosing to utilize cultural humility, I recognize the validity of many other theories and

their contributions to understanding the process of intercultural development. For example, Bennett (1986, 2004) developed a model of intercultural sensitivity that provides an understanding for how people view and respond to cultural differences across a continuum ranging from ethnocentric to ethnorelative attitudes. Deardorff (2009) has also established a reputable model for understanding intercultural competence as a dynamic process involving an individual's attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors. According to Deardorff's conceptualization, as an individual's attitude shifts to become more open and curious, he or she will gain more cultural knowledge and flexibility, which may, with adequate support, translate into culturally appropriate behaviors and communication styles. Cultural intelligence (CQ) is a third intercultural development model proposed by Earley and Ang (2003) that is defined as an individual's capacity to effectively meet the demands presented in culturally diverse situations, and is comprised of four sub-dimensions of intelligence: megacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral CQ.

Although the intercultural frameworks set forth by Bennett (1986), Deardorff, (2009), and Earley and Ang (2003) have received wide supported in the international education literature, cultural humility has recently begun to emerge as an alternative conceptual model to encourage intercultural development within the fields of health care (Foronda, Baptiste, Reinholdt, & Ousman, 2016; Isaacson, 2014; Nazar, Kendall, Day, & Nazar, 2015), social work (Fisher-Borne, Cain, & Martin, 2015), and psychology (Hook & Watkins, 2015). Cultural humility places strong emphasis on developing critical self-awareness, addressing power imbalances, and establishing a life-long commitment to

growth and discovery (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). In their seminal article, Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) defined cultural humility as follows: “Cultural humility incorporates a lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and critique, to redressing the power imbalances in the physician-patient dynamic, and to developing mutually beneficial and non-paternalistic partnerships with communities on behalf of individuals and defined populations" (p. 118). Although cultural humility has received less attention in higher education than other cultural models (Hockett, Samek, & Headley, 2014; Lund & Lee, 2015), there continues to be growing interest in its application in the fields of healthcare, social work, and psychology. Because of its emphasis on critical self-awareness and redressing power imbalances, I propose that it may lead to new insights when assessing the complex dynamics of cross-national interactions. In this section I will address some of the criticisms against cultural competence, explain the key components of cultural humility, and discuss some empirical studies that validate the effectiveness of its use. I will also propose ways in which the application of cultural humility may benefit students who are engaged in cross-national group work.

Cultural Humility as an Alternative to Cultural Competence. Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) were among the first to argue that cultural competency is an elusive concept, alleging that mastery is unattainable when applied to something as complex as culture. Dean (2001) explained how culture has historically been viewed as a static construct, and therefore the cultural competence approach to diversity training has largely focused on understanding fixed bodies of knowledge about different cultures. However, Dean posited that emerging understandings portray culture as fluid, dynamic,

and largely dependent on individual and social constructs. When conceptualizing culture in this manner, Dean and others (Fisher-Borne et al., 2015; Isaacson, 2014; Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998) have pointed out that having a mindset focused on cultural competence may encourage an unattainable end-goal, since it is difficult, if not impossible, to achieve competence about something that is constantly evolving. Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) also suggested that cultural competence training that focuses on knowledge attainment may inhibit curiosity about individual differences, create a false sense of security, and reinforce inaccurate stereotypes.

Advocating for an alternative approach rooted in cultural humility, Dean (2001) suggested that as a starting point, individuals should recognize their lack of competence in order to engage in a continuous process of intercultural learning and interpersonal growth: “Our goal is not so much to achieve competence but to participate in the ongoing processes of seeking understanding and building relationships” (p. 628). Yeager and Bauer-Wu (2013) reinforced this viewpoint by explaining that "Cultural humility does not focus on competence or confidence and recognizes that the more you are exposed to cultures different from your own, you often realize how much you don’t know about others” (p. 252). Dean (2001) stressed that it is this acceptance of “not knowing” (p. 628) that provides opportunity for learning through interpersonal interactions, thereby promoting the development of mutual respect in relationships and fostering understanding across cultural differences.

Another primary critique of cultural competence models is that they do not adequately account for the power differentials that exist in patient-provider relationships

(Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998), in therapist-client relationships (Hook, Davis, Owen, & Worthington, 2013), in social work (Fisher-Borne et al., 2015), or in a teaching and learning environment (Hockett et al., 2014; Lund & Lee, 2015). Dean (2001) asserted that what is missing from many conversations about cultural competence is an important sociocultural perspective that can enhance understanding about why certain cultural groups are treated or viewed differently: "Limiting our focus to studying the beliefs, customs, and historical traditions of individual groups can obscure the oppressive relations between groups" (p. 626). Furthermore, Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) posited that cultural competency frameworks do not place enough emphasis on the critical self-reflection that is needed to recognize personal biases and understand the barriers that specific groups and individuals face due to power differentials. Extending Tervalon and Murray-Garcia's work to apply in therapist-client relationships within psychology, Fisher-Borne et al. (2015) pointed out that a lack of awareness of and attention to power imbalances has led to a subsequent lack of action to redress inequalities.

In their initial development of cultural humility as an alternative to cultural competency, Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) emphasized the importance of both recognizing and challenging power imbalances. Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) pointed out that physicians need to be aware of the diverse range of characteristics that may make patients vulnerable to marginalization, including "race, ethnicity, class, linguistic capability, and sexual orientation" (p. 120), and advocated for providers to utilize specific patient care methods that can help remedy inequalities that exist in

patient-provider interactions. For example, Tervalon and Murray-Garcia recommended patient-focused interviewing as a strategy that would help physicians to learn about patient needs, demonstrate value of the patient's input, and humbly assume the role of a student rather than an expert. Fisher-Borne et al. (2015) developed a list of explicit questions that would support practitioners in addressing power imbalances for use in the field of social work. Example questions include "How do my practice behaviors actively challenge power imbalances and involve marginalized communities?" and "What are the organizational structures we have that encourage action to address inequalities?" (Fisher-Borne et al., 2015, p. 176).

Proponents of cultural humility assert that it is by engaging in critical self-reflection that individuals develop greater awareness of the role of power dynamics. Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) described cultural humility as the process of individuals continually engaging in "self-reflection and self-critique as lifelong learners and reflective practitioners" (p. 118). Confronting personal biases is deemed to be an essential part of the act of self-reflection; as Yeager and Bauer-Wu (2013) explained, "… personal values, beliefs, and biases that are derived from your own culture must be examined" (p. 252). Hook & Watkins (2015) pointed out the importance of increasing both intrapersonal and interpersonal awareness; on an intrapersonal level, cultural humility encourages "having an awareness of personal limitations in understanding the cultural background and viewpoints of others" (p. 661), and on an interpersonal level, culturally humble individuals will express openness, curiosity, and respect while withholding assumptions about others. Similarly, Fisher-Borne et al. (2015) emphasized

that self-reflection is necessary to assume accountability for leveraging power in directions that support mutual respect and collaborative partnership between individuals and groups.

Expanding the understanding of cultural humility further, Foronda, et al. (2016) conducted a concept analysis in which the authors reviewed 62 articles to identify the essential attributes, antecedents, and consequences of cultural humility. Their resulting definition provides an overview of the salient features of cultural humility and highlights key outcomes of embodying cultural humility:

> In a multicultural world where power imbalances exist, cultural humility is a process of openness, self-awareness, being egoless, and incorporating self-reflection and critique after willingly interacting with diverse individuals. The results of achieving cultural humility are mutual empowerment, respect, partnerships, optimal care, and lifelong learning (Foronda et al., 2016, p. 213).

Foronda et al. (2016) concluded that engaging with cultural humility necessitates transformational learning, a subsequent shift in perspectives, and "a way of being" (p. 213) that is forever changed.

Empirical Evidence to Support Cultural Humility. A range of studies demonstrate that there is empirical support for the use of cultural humility as a training framework and as an educational tool. Various researchers in health care, social work, and psychology have assessed the use of cultural humility in training curriculum, and have noted positive outcomes for training participants (Juarez, Marvel, Brezinski, Glazner, Towbin, & Lawton, 2006; Nazar et al., 2015). For example, Juarez et al. (2006)

examined the effects of a diversity curriculum focused on cultural humility for two groups of family medicine residents. After the yearlong curriculum was administered, Juarez et al. found that residents were engaging with patients more frequently during interactions, they were more conscious of their patient's context and viewpoints, and further, that the residents were satisfied with the types of learning activities they experienced in the curriculum. Furthermore, Nazar et al. (2015) conducted a qualitative investigation to learn whether training concepts from cultural competency or cultural humility were preferred by medical students at the University of Southampton. Nazar et al. found that while students did not always observe cultural humility in action in their clinical training, they placed the highest value on learning and applying the cultural humility approach within their developing practice.

In the context of nursing education, Ferranto (2015) used qualitative research methods to determine how a group of U.S. nursing students experienced cultural growth during an eight-day study abroad trip to Tanzania. In addition to experiencing culture shock, developing greater empathy, and increasing their leadership skills, Ferranto observed that the nursing students also began to develop cultural humility. Ferranto (2015) pointed to their increased self-awareness and heightened awareness of power differentials as evidence of the emergence of cultural humility, stating that "the participants began to identify their own biases and their personal responsibility in dealing with issues of racism and prejudice" (p. 98). Similarly, Isaacson (2014) utilized mixed methods to investigate the cultural perspectives of 11 U.S. nursing students directly before and after they engaged in a two-week practicum working with American Indian

patients. Isaacson reported that although the nurses in her study initially considered themselves to be culturally competent, their reflective journals collected during the period of the investigation revealed that they possessed many negative stereotypes regarding the American Indian population. Isaacson (2014) noted that as nursing students interacted with American Indians, these "cultural immersions challenged the students to reconsider their preconceived notions..." (p. 255) which then facilitated the development of cultural humility.

Within the context of a community development graduate program for preservice medical professionals, Ross (2010) implemented two courses designed to help foster students' cultural humility. Upon the completion of his study, Ross observed that students had developed some of the specific characteristics indicating the formation of cultural humility, such as a shift in their attitudes and enhanced intercultural communication skills. He concluded that certain elements of the course provided support for students to develop cultural humility, but recommended the following to enhance the curriculum for future use: 1) students need to discuss concepts of privilege and power before their field experience; 2) students need continuous opportunities for self-reflection; and 3) students and faculty could benefit from utilizing a scale to measure the development of cultural humility. Related to the importance of reflection, a few years after Ross' study, Schuessler, Wilder, and Byrd (2012) examined the role of reflective journaling and its impact on the development of cultural humility in pre-service educators. Schuessler et al. determined that for the students in their study, journaling supported the development of critical thinking abilities, self-reflection skills, as well as

the growth of cultural humility. Because it provides a context by which students can confront their biases and consider implications of their practical experiences, reflective journaling is a strategic opportunity to help students accelerate the development of cultural humility.

In the context of counseling psychology, Hook, Davis, Owen, Worthington, and Utsey (2013) conducted a series of studies to a) determine if cultural humility is an important criterion for prospective therapists to possess, according to the client perspective; b) explore the relationship between a therapist's cultural humility and the strength of their working relationship with the client; and c) design a brief scale of cultural humility for client use. Results from their study indicated that the therapist's level of humility is indeed important to the client, and that when clients perceive their therapists to be culturally humble, there is a greater chance for a stronger working alliance. Hook et al. (2013) also succeeded in developing a "brief client-rated measure of a therapist's cultural humility and provided evidence for the reliability and validity of this measure" (p. 361).

Finally, Lund and Lee (2015) conducted a qualitative study to learn about the experiences of pre-service teachers who were engaged with a community service-learning project that focused on serving immigrant youth. Qualitative themes from the results indicated that the pre-service teachers grew in their self-awareness and had an overall increased sense of cultural humility. Lund and Lee (2015) concluded that the design of the curriculum provided a helpful combination of practice opportunities, exploration of social justice theories, and a strong focus on reflection, all of which supported the pre-

service teachers in “making connections between theory and practical experiences, engaging in self-critique, negotiating their position, power, privileges, and assumptions, and investing in the bi-directional process of building relationships with children and youth of immigrant families” (p. 23).

The empirical evidence from these studies representing various disciplines and contexts demonstrates that cultural humility is a viable construct, and one that can contribute to the development of self-awareness, critical reflection, life-long learning, interpersonal growth, and collaborative cross-national interactions that provide individuals with opportunities to redress power imbalances. However, at the same time it is noteworthy that almost all of the studies reviewed here focus on the potential outcomes of cultural humility for the more powerful individual or group. Similar to Tropp and Pettigrew’s (2005) point that current understandings of intergroup contact theory may be limited by a lack of empirical data illuminating the perspectives of outgroup members, the research on cultural humility reviewed here also lacks a balance in perspectives.

Cultural Humility and Cross-National Interactions. Because cultural humility has received little attention from international education leaders in higher education, my study helped to address an important gap by examining the ways in which students enact cultural humility in cross-national interactions within group work in the context of higher education. The construct of cultural humility held specific relevance for my study because it includes an explicit focus on mitigating power imbalances at both an individual and institutional level (Fisher-Borne et al., 2015). Because power differentials between international and domestic students have been documented in the group work

literature as a significant barrier (Cotton et al., 2013; Ippolito, 2007; Turner, 2009), cultural humility was a useful lens by which to understand and analyze students' experiences with power differentials in cross-national group work.

Together, Allport's (1954) intergroup contact theory and the conceptual framework of cultural humility provided a set of useful tools for which to examine the nature and types of cross-national interactions that occur within group work in higher education settings. Specifically, intergroup contact theory offered insights into how students' attitudes may be influenced through their group work experiences, how group-level conditions such as equal or unequal status impact interactions, and a frame of reference to understand the types of interactions that students have with another. Furthermore, integrating the conceptual framework of cultural humility into my dissertation study offered a lens to consider the extent to which individuals involved in cross-national group work were demonstrating attitudes, skills, and behaviors that generate equity, respect, and understanding between international and domestic students.

Cooperative Learning Theory and its Application to Diverse Groups

According to Allport's (1954) theory of intergroup contact, creating a climate of cooperation in which group members share goals can help decrease prejudice and improve intergroup attitudes. When applying these conditions within a higher education context, cooperative learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1999a) provided an important pedagogical framework by which instructors can foster collaboration between students. When this cooperative interaction is facilitated within diverse groups of students,

instructors may make an important contribution to internationalizing the curriculum and supporting students in the development of important intercultural skills (Eisenchlas & Trevaskes, 2007; Leask, 2009). In this section, I will provide insight into the theoretical roots of cooperative learning, discuss the empirical research that demonstrates the outcomes of cooperative learning, and highlight some key principles for implementing cooperative learning. I will also address some challenges that international students may experience in adapting to cooperative learning methods, as well as discuss how linguistic and cultural diversity may influence how individuals interact within groups or teams.

Establishing a Theoretical and Empirical Basis for Cooperative Learning. Cooperative learning, as defined by Johnson et al. (2014), is the "instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning" (p. 87). This instructional framework has a strong theoretical base related to social interdependence. Discussions about social interdependence as a theory first emerged in the early 1900s, when psychologists Kurt Koffka and Kurt Lewin began to conceptualize groups as individuals working towards shared goals, with interdependence between group members forming a core component of interactions (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). In the late 1940s, Deutsch (1949) proposed a theory of cooperation and competition, and also theorized that three types of interdependence play a role in group interactions, including positive, negative, and no interdependence. Positive interdependence is explained as a cooperative state in which individual group members support goal attainment as a collaborative effort. In contrast, negative interdependence describes a situation in which the relationships between individuals are competitive - if

one individual achieves his or her goal, this is negatively correlated to other individuals being able to achieve their objectives. Finally, no interdependence exists when there is no relationship between the individuals in a specific situation and their goal achievement.

The fundamental assertion in social interdependence theory is that the amount of interdependence experienced between individuals is situation specific, and largely depends on how individuals interact together, which has a direct impact on the outcomes of interaction. Johnson et al. (2014) elaborated on how these various dynamics might occur:

> Positive interdependence tends to result in promotive interaction, where individuals promote each other's success; negative interdependence tends to result in oppositional or contrient interaction, where individuals block or obstruct each other's efforts to succeed; and no interdependence results in an absence of interaction (p. 92).

Since Deutsch (1949) established these and other specific tenets of the theory, there has been extensive research conducted regarding the theory, the development of other important theories have been influenced by social interdependence theory, and the theory has been applied to a variety of settings within both education and business (Johnson & Johnson, 2005).

In a meta-analysis documenting that a significant amount of empirical research validates the efficacy of social interdependence theory, Johnson et al. (2014) purported that "The investigation of the relative impact of competitive, individualistic, and cooperative efforts is perhaps the longest standing research tradition in social

psychology" (p. 95). While some of their research has been conducted in a K-12 setting, they summarized the work of over 300 studies that were conducted in a variety of disciplines to demonstrate three major types of outcomes that are associated with cooperative learning for students in a university setting. First, they documented the results of approximately 168 studies to confirm that cooperative learning resulted in higher levels of academic achievement than competitive or individualistic learning, with achievement being measured in terms of students' knowledge attainment, retention abilities, problem-solving skills, and aptitude for critical thinking. Further, Johnson et al. (2014) reported that when compared with competitive or individualistic learning, cooperative learning has also been proven to cultivate higher levels of "interpersonal attraction" between students, "even among university students from different ethnic, cultural, language, social class, ability, and gender groups" (p. 101). Finally, Johnson and Johnson reported that cooperative learning is also positively correlated with various aspects of psychological health. For example, studies reviewed in Johnson and Johnson's meta-analysis at the university-level indicated that cooperation can help to foster increases in self-esteem, and greater levels of social skills.

Implementing Cooperative Learning in a Classroom Setting. There is robust research to support the claims of cooperative learning; however, Johnson and Johnson (1999a) made an important distinction between true cooperative learning and other types of group work that do not meet the criteria for cooperative learning. For example, Johnson and Johnson explained that pseudo learning groups occur when students are assigned to work together but are not motivated to do so and therefore foster a culture of

distrust and dysfunction, and ultimately would be more productive if they were working independently. Johnson and Johnson also described the traditional classroom learning group as a group of students who accept that they must work together, but they do not provide active support to one another, and in some cases some students may become free-riders who rely on the work of the other group members. In contrast, in a true cooperative learning group, all group members will be held accountable to collaborate until all shared goals are achieved, resulting in each individual achieving higher levels of performance than if they had worked independently. Johnson and Johnson (2009) also explained how cooperative learning can be flexible and take the form of informal, temporary groupings of students throughout one class period, formal groups who have specific assignments to complete, or base groups that meet at the beginning and end of each class period to support each other in learning the course material.

In encouraging instructors to adopt cooperative learning, Johnson and Johnson (1993) acknowledged that each instructor faces unique circumstances based on the content in their discipline, possible contextual limitations in their institution, the composition of their students they teach, and a variety of other factors. However, Johnson and Johnson emphasized that instructors can be trained to engineer cooperative learning experiences as a regular part of their teaching practice with the integration of five conditions related to the theory of social interdependence. First, Johnson and Johnson (1999a) contended that positive interdependence between group members is an essential component of cooperation, and that positive interdependence produces a range of supportive behaviors between individuals within a group context. Johnson and

Johnson also claimed that besides positive interdependence, individual accountability is an important aspect of cooperative learning, and is necessary to ensure that group members are held responsible and assessed for the work that they contribute to the group. In addition, face-to-face promotive interaction describes the range of positive behaviors group members can express towards each other in a cooperative learning situation, including explaining and clarifying concepts, discussing various view points, and affirming one other's efforts. Johnson and Johnson also emphasized that group members must be taught how to develop important social skills in order to establish trust, effective communication, and healthy conflict resolution between group members.

Finally, group processing is explained as an important fifth element to cooperative learning, providing students with the time, space, and resources to assess their abilities to function effectively as a group. In fact, Yager, Johnson, Johnson, and Snider (1986) explained group processing as an essential, but often neglected aspect of cooperative learning, stating that, "theoretically, empirically, and practically, group processing has been ignored" (p. 395). However, Yager and colleagues documented the importance of group processing in a study that demonstrated that a student learning group that incorporated group processing experienced higher levels of achievement than a similarly structured group that did not participate in group processing. From these findings, Yager et al. (1986) speculated that when group members engage in processing, it is possible that the "members increase their productivity by gaining insight into how to behave more effectively and/or generating feedback that improves effectiveness and reinforces them for engaging in collaborative skills" (p. 395). To help groups engage in effective

processing, and to help them learn to self-assess their progress, Johnson and Johnson (1999b) suggested that students can take turns observing their group process in action and providing feedback about what they observe happening in the group and how the process might be improved.

Cooperative Learning with Diverse Groups. Johnson and Johnson (2014b) asserted that cooperative learning is particularly useful for maximizing the benefits of a diverse group of learners because its inclusive design is intended to engage every student in the learning process, and it has been demonstrated to promote positive attitudes, productive interpersonal relationships, and increased psychological health even between students who come from diverse backgrounds. Johnson and Johnson also argued that cooperative learning, when structured effectively, can provide an environment in which students can learn how to disagree in a constructive manner, and therefore supports the development of important skills such as interpersonal communication and conflict resolution. Further, Johnson and Johnson (2014b) claimed that "cooperative learning promotes the development of caring and committed relationships among students, including between majority and minority students" (p. 846), as well as students who are typically excluded from social networks formed by their classmates.

Several studies have demonstrated that cooperative learning techniques can help to improve the overall learning experience for specific populations of students who may face unique social or academic challenges. For example, Dudley, Johnson, and Johnson (1997) assessed the effects of a cooperative learning intervention with a group of freshman student athletes, who often struggle to make academic progress or integrate into

the campus community due to the intensity of their athletic commitments. Their findings indicated that after engaging in cooperative learning groups, the student athletes reported stronger levels of motivation and commitment to do their academic work and higher levels of academic self-esteem. Additionally, Putnam, Markovchick, Johnson, and Johnson (1996) investigated the cooperative learning experiences of special education students for children in grades 5-8, who have historically experienced marginalizing behaviors from their peers in mainstream classroom. From this study, Putnam et al. (1996) found that "regular-education students who worked in cooperative learning groups with special education students tended to perceive them as more desirable work partners" (p. 749) as they met together over a period of several months. It is important to note, however, that because Putnam et al.'s study was conducted in a K-12 setting, the findings may not be directly relevant to a higher education setting.

Studies like these may indicate that because cooperative learning emphasizes the importance of equal engagement from each group member, and stresses the important role that instructors play in fostering effective group work, meaningful opportunities are created for group members to experience the conditions set forth in Allport's (1954) intergroup contact theory. A few authors have explored the compatibility between Allport's contact theory and Johnson and Johnson's (1987) model of cooperative learning, and determined that diverse groups of students engaged in cooperative learning can experience improved intergroup attitudes and decreases in prejudice reduction (Cooper, 1999; Desforges, Lord, Ramsey, Mason, Van Leeuwen, & West, 1991; Stevens & Slavin, 1995). However, as mentioned in the previous section of the literature review,

there is a lack of research that utilizes contact theory to interpret the cross-national interactions of students engaged in cooperative group work in higher education.

Cooperative Learning Challenges for International Students. Although cooperative learning may hold benefits for diverse groups of students, and its positive effects may extend to minority or even marginalized groups of students in some cases, international students may still experience challenges adjusting to various active learning methods such as cooperative learning, particularly in their first year after arriving to the U.S. (Anderson, Isensee, Martin, Godfrey, & O'Brien, 2012). For example, Anderson et al. (2012) reported a variety of linguistic challenges students experienced when international students were asked to participate actively in a classroom setting, including challenges affecting students' comprehension skills when understanding lectures and discussions due to the speed of speech, colloquial expressions, and academic vocabulary. International students in Anderson et al.'s (2012) study also described challenges in explaining ideas or concepts in cooperative learning settings: "Many students had difficulties or lacked confidence in expressing themselves in front of groups, which impacted their participation in discussions …" (p. 12). Other educators have also confirmed that international students experience specific linguistic challenges that may affect their abilities to participate effectively in active learning environments (Campbell, Strawser, & George, 2016).

Furthermore, within the context of a U.S. university, most domestic students are likely to possess a significant degree of familiarity with cooperative learning techniques, but depending on their cultural and educational background, international students may

be inexperienced with the dynamics of collaboration in the classroom (Campbell et al., 2016; Sawir, 2005). Sawir (2005) reported how the prior language learning experiences of international students may overemphasize reading and grammar skills, and therefore lack sufficient focus on preparing students to communicate effectively in English, which can then impair students' ability to take an active role in a classroom environment that requires competence in spoken skills and participation. Furthermore, students in Anderson et al.'s (2012) report acknowledged that adapting to the teaching and learning environment in the U.S. was challenging for them, particularly in learning new expectations for classroom participation: "Respondents provided examples of how the U.S. educational system was unfamiliar in terms of class participation, presentations, group work, and how to engage in their college experience" (p. 13). Elaborating about the various cultural adjustments international students have to make to be successful in a U.S. classroom, Campbell et al. (2016) explained how a western-oriented pedagogy that places the learner in a central role may cause tension for international students if they are used to a more passive learning style in which they are not expected to express their opinions or challenge the viewpoints of others. While there is considerable empirical support to validate the efficacy of cooperative learning methods, it is important to acknowledge that cultural and linguistic variables are likely to influence the experience that international students have in cooperative learning groups. In the next section, these cultural and linguistic variables emerge as important considerations in the review of literature on cross-national interactions.

Research on Cross-National Interactions and Cross-National Groups

In an attempt to better understand students' cross-national experiences, recent studies have examined the extent to which international and domestic students are interacting on college campuses in the U.S. and around the world, the types of interactions students are having, and the factors that influence their interactions (Campbell, 2012; Dunne, 2009; Geelhoed et al., 2003; Halualani, Chitgopekar, Huynh, Morrison, & Dodge, 2004; Halualani, 2008; Jon, 2013; Lee & Rice, 2007; Peacock & Harrison, 2009). Relatedly, the literature on cross-national group work provides additional insights about students' experiences when they are required to work collaboratively across differences in a classroom environment (Ippolito, 2007; Melles, 2004; Popov et al., 2012; Turner, 2009). Several important themes emerge from this review of the literature, demonstrating how students: 1) can gain positive outcomes from cross-national interactions (which may be cross-national or intercultural within same nationality groups); 2) typically experience limited cross-national interactions on campus; 3) feel various levels of anxiety regarding cross-national interactions; 4) encounter communication challenges related to cultural and linguistic barriers; and 5) experience power imbalances that are often more pronounced when working in cross-national groups. In the next few sections, I will provide a detailed review of the relevant literature organized according to these themes.

Positive Outcomes from Cross-National Interactions

International students are generally characterized as being highly motivated to interact with host students, reportedly due to the range of benefits they experience as they learn to adjust to a new culture and a foreign campus. When interacting with domestic students, international students have described experiencing gains in their cultural awareness (de Figueiredo & Mauri, 2012); academic performance (Westwood & Barker, 1990); psychological adjustment (Searle & Ward, 1990); language skills (Brown, 2009); and overall satisfaction levels (Hendrickson, Rosen, & Aune, 2011). Although host students are characterized in some studies as indifferent towards interacting with international students (Brown, 2009; Dunne, 2009; Ryan, 2005; Ward, 2001), various scholars have demonstrated how interactions across difference can produce important gains in intercultural development for domestic students.

For example, as noted previously, Soria and Triosi (2014) found that interacting with an international student was reported to increase domestic students' global, intercultural, and international (GII) competencies. In the context of a Korean university, Jon (2013) reported similar findings; Korean domestic students who interacted with international students experienced positive gains in their intercultural competence. Campbell (2012) also explained various positive outcomes of an international buddy program, in which most of the host students reported to benefit by learning about themselves and their buddy's culture, increasing their intercultural communication competence, and experiencing a greater desire to connect with international students in

the future. Furthermore, Geelhoed et al. (2003) found that U.S. students in their study were incentivized to interact with international students in anticipation of experiencing a variety of benefits, including learning about cultural differences or a new language, identifying strategies for adjusting in a new culture, and gaining satisfaction from helping international students adapt to life in the U.S.

Limited Cross-National Interactions

Despite the benefits that students may experience when engaging in cross-national interactions, results from several studies demonstrate that international and domestic students are not likely to experience many cross-national interactions in their campus experiences (Brown, 2009; Dunne, 2009; Halualani et al., 2004; Halualani, 2010; Peacock & Harrison, 2009). This lack of interaction offers a stark contrast to the high expectations that international students often have for forming friendships with host students (Brown, 2009; Dunne, 2009). For example, Dunne (2009) reported "a worrying disparity between international students' expectations and lived experiences, indicating infrequent and superficial contact between international and host students" (p. 223). Rather than feeling welcomed and invited to participate in intercultural friendships, Brown's (2009) study revealed that international students often felt "a perceived host indifference and antipathy toward their presence" (p. 440).

Halualani et al. (2004) reported similar findings after conducting a comprehensive investigation of intercultural interactions between students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds at a multicultural university in the U.S. The authors' results indicated that

cross-national interactions between students was rare. Moreover, instead of engaging in cross-national interactions, Brown (2009) and Dunne (2009) found that, once enrolled in the host institution in their respective studies, international students strengthened friendships in their co-national groups, in order to experience emotional comfort, effortless communication, and a sense of unity and security in what is often perceived to be a hostile environment.

Anxieties Regarding Cross-National Interactions

One possible reason for the infrequency of cross-national interactions may be related to feelings of anxiety for both international and domestic students. Even though host students most often represent the majority group on their campuses, Dunne (2009) found that host students at an Irish university "associated intercultural contact with strong and persistent feelings of anxiety" (p. 232), including anxiety that they would unknowingly cause insult or be misunderstood by international students, or that they would be judged by peers from their culture. Actually, student in Dunne's study considered "intercultural contact to be less rewarding … yet more demanding, than intracultural contact, which reduced the likelihood of repeat behavior" (p. 233). Peacock and Harrison (2009) shared similar accounts of anxiety from host students in two English universities. Students in this study reported to be nervous about offending international students, and explained how they were "afraid of talking to international students from other cultures in case they said the 'wrong' thing" (Peacock & Harrison, 2009, p. 494). Participants described feeling pressured because of the need to choose one's language

thoughtfully, avoid stereotyping, and find ways to accommodate students who were unfamiliar with social and cultural norms. Because of this anticipated discomfort, Peacock and Harrison (2009) reported that "interactions between UK students and some sub-groups of international students are limited, problematic or non-existent" (p. 507).

International students have also reported considerable feelings of anxiety regarding interactions with their domestic peers (Liu & Jackson, 2008; Wang, Ahn, Kim, & Lin-Siegler, 2017; Wright & Schartner, 2013). In their study investigating the perspectives of over 35 international students at a U.S. college, Wang et al. (2017) highlighted the following to be key reasons for the communication anxieties that international students held about interacting with U.S. students: 41% of international student participants described fears about bias and discrimination, 39% felt apprehensive about language difficulties, and 20% reported anxiety because they had limited understanding and experience interacting with domestic students. Wright and Schartner (2013) reported that the international student participants in their study at a UK university often preferred to avoid intercultural contact, due to various communication challenges such as "difficulty in expressing ideas, nervousness in initiating topics, and high expectations of needing to speak fluently" (p. 121).

When reviewing the literature on cross-national group work, discussions about anxiety surface when students report their preferences for group member selection. Various scholars have found that students typically prefer to work in same culture groups because it is more comfortable and requires less effort (Strauss & Young, 2011; Summers & Volet, 2008; Volet & Ang, 1998). For example, Volet and Ang (1998) facilitated

interviews with students at an Australian university, and learned that students strongly preferred to do group work with peers from their culture because they shared a sense of emotional connection which made interaction easier and more comfortable. Strauss and Young (2011) also reported that a majority of students participating in their research study in a New Zealand university had a preference to self-select group members. Strauss and Young asserted that the self-selection process helps to control levels of anxiety, by providing students with more predictability regarding their expectations for group members. Kimmel and Volet (2012) also demonstrated how a sense of emotional and cultural connection with group members helps to alleviate anxieties, as students in their multisite case study most commonly felt that "(w)orking with friends and peers from a similar background was perceived as less stressful, more relaxing, and more fun" (p. 167).

Language Barriers within Cross-National Interactions

The amount of anxiety students possess about cross-national interactions seems closely related to the language barriers they may experience, and in some cases, language issues seem to inhibit relationship development (Dunne, 2009; Peacock & Harrison, 2009). For instance, the host students in Dunne's (2009) study cited language challenges as one reason they did not pursue friendships with international students, particularly because international students were unlikely to understand slang and cultural references, which they viewed as central components of friendship formation. Even when host students took intentional efforts to adapt their communication to be more comprehensible

for international students, they reported feeling dissatisfied with the interaction, and described feeling disingenuous during the exchange, because they felt they needed to compromise their identity to accommodate the needs of the international student. Similarly, Peacock and Harrison (2009) explained that host students felt that they needed to adjust several aspects of their language when engaging with international students, including sentence structure, word choice, and cultural examples. While the students described a willingness to simplify their communication, they also indicated that they perceived such communication to be strained and uncomfortable. Therefore, Peacock and Harrison (2009) reported that language barriers between host and international students is a critical factor that can negatively impact motivation to interact in several ways:

> International students with weaker language skills but who initiate conversations are seen as requiring attention, concentration and empathy to interact with successfully. UK students in this study consistently identified a clear 'out-group' within their international peers whose language abilities are poor and who do not seek to initiate interaction with them. They are typified as being distant, unfriendly, quiet, rude or arrogant. Some students express having no desire to interact with these students either socially or in the classroom and a minority even reveal a sense of anger at their self-exclusion and what are perceived to be excluding behaviours. (p. 490).

Language barriers are also cited throughout the literature on group work challenges as a frequent and frustrating obstacle for students to overcome. For example,

in her study assessing the challenges of mixed culture group work, Turner (2009) noted that "unequal language skills" (p. 248) was mentioned repeatedly by both international and local students. In a similar study, Ippolito (2007) stated that "language was perceived as a barrier that made communication slower and led to misunderstandings and inequality of contribution" (p. 758). In almost every study reviewed here, unequal language skills are mentioned as a primary source of difficulty, and in many cases, are described as intimately connected to other challenges, such as stereotyping, decisions about distribution of work, and power imbalances. For example, in Popov et al.'s (2012) study examining the biggest challenges in multicultural group work according to students attending a university in the Netherlands, students ranked linguistic challenges as one of the most difficult aspects of intercultural group work, and only listed "free-riding" as a slightly more frustrating aspect of dysfunctional group dynamics. The results from Popov et al.'s (2012) study indicated that often native speakers of English may perceive non-native speakers of English to be lacking in motivation or academic competence.

Providing further evidence of language barriers, Kimmel and Volet (2012) reported that one reason why students in their multi-site case study resisted joining mixed culture groups was due to language disparities. Study participants who were enrolled in a business class perceived language abilities to be directly connected to academic abilities or work ethic. In fact, the authors reported that "... both local and international students within business considered insufficient language proficiency as a critical issue for effective group work and tended to systematically link deficiencies in language and academic skills" (Kimmel & Volet, 2012, p. 169). Higgins and Li (2007) reported

similar types of language challenges after examining the experiences of 66 British and Chinese students engaged in an organizational management group task. One prominent finding from their study revealed that differences in language proficiency resulted in some of the non-native English speakers being less integrated. In fact, "One British student even distinguished members of his group in terms of their perceived English language competence with 'superior' members collectively acting to assist 'inferior' others" (Higgins & Li, 2007, p. 64), which is an example of how language barriers may lead to power imbalances within a group. The student groups accommodated the disparities in English language proficiency in a few different ways: some of the Chinese students worked very hard to improve their English so that they would be able to contribute an acceptable work product, while other Chinese students conceded to play a smaller role due to their perceived weakness in spoken English. While the Chinese students expressed appreciation for the accommodations that were made for them, the British students were resentful that they had to monitor the work of their non-native English speaking peers.

Similar themes emerged in Spencer-Oatey and Dauber's (2016) survey of approximately 2,000 respondents in a UK university. Spencer-Oatey and Dauber (2016) found that approximately 14% of the students in their study reported that language barriers posed the greatest challenges within mixed national group: "the overwhelming impression is that a high level of English language proficiency is critical for positive intercultural interaction to take place" (p. 13). Students in their study provided more insights about the nature of their linguistic challenges, explaining that it sometimes took

great effort to communicate ideas, international students often demonstrated lower levels of participation in group work, and members of similar cultures tended to segregate and create sub-groups within the larger group. Spencer-Oatey and Dauber concluded that it is imperative for educators to help students: 1) recognize the benefits to be gained from persisting through challenging communication in cross-national interactions; and 2) identify specific strategies to help students overcome communication barriers.

Cultural Barriers in Cross-National Interactions

Cultural differences may be another factor that increase the levels of anxiety described by both international and domestic students when considering cross-national interactions. For example, Dunne (2009) reported that a range of sociocultural factors limited the opportunities that host students had to interact with international students, including methods of forming friendships and preferred ways of participating in social activities and campus life. Students in Peacock and Harrison's (2009) study also identified differences in humor, use of cultural references in informal conversations, and preferred ways of spending time to be barriers that hindered intercultural engagement. Additionally, in Geelhoed et al.'s (2003) study of U.S. and international students participating in a peer program, some students reported to struggle to find connection points in conversation and do activities together that represented shared interest. However, Geelhoed et al. noted that domestic students who were willing to put forth effort to build relationships despite the discomfort they experienced reported to possess higher levels of confidence in subsequent intercultural interactions.

Not surprisingly, cultural differences have been found by many scholars to have a meaningful influence on how students approach group work, and in many cases, these cultural differences may result in misunderstandings or conflict (Melles, 2004; Nguyen, Terlouw, & Pilot, 2006; Popov et al., 2012; Wang, 2012). For example, Melles (2004) conducted focus groups with 19 students from Indonesia and China, and found that students were confused by the western-oriented group work processes their teacher encouraged, specifically that they should democratically consider divergent opinions but in the end they needed arrive at one solution, which seemed like a contradictory process to students who had not previously experienced active learning approaches. In a one-year study that also examined the role of cultural variables in mixed national group work, Wang (2012) found that cultural factors influenced Chinese students' communication styles in group work at a university in the UK. Wang's (2012) study reported that students were often quiet because of their belief that being assertive violated their cultural value of modesty. The Chinese students reported that they needed to think before speaking, used a more indirect communication style, and were hesitant to engage in constructive dialogue for fear of damaging relationships. Furthermore, because the Chinese students perceived that their English skills and knowledge was inferior, they preferred to defer power to the UK students:

> … interviewees considered other group members as superior in terms of English language and knowledge, and thus tended to respect and follow authority when they considered themselves to be in a weak power situation. Their sense of equality in expressing one's opinion was not strong (Wang, 2012, p. 528).

Nguyen et al. (2006) demonstrated that a range of cultural mismatches are possible when students from Confucian Heritage backgrounds experience group learning. To show the complex dynamics that can contribute to these cultural mismatches, Nguyen et al. utilized Hofstede's (2001) model of cultural dimensions, in which Hofstede conceptualized to represent differences in the core values that individuals from different cultures possess. For example, on Hofstede's (2001) power distance continuum, Nguyen et al. (2006) reported that students from Confucian Heritage cultures tend to prefer high power distance in relationships, which indicates they are more comfortable when there are unequal distributions of power and hierarchies of leadership within a group. This paradigm contrasts with the shared leadership model suggested by Johnson and Johnson (1998a), in which there is no formal leader and no system of hierarchy in place.

Regarding Hofstede (2003) individualism-collectivism dimension, Nguyen et al. (2006) reported that Confucian Heritage learners prefer to avoid conflict in any situation in which they might lose face, a factor which may make the cooperative paradigm of group work problematic for students who hold Confucian values. Uncertainty avoidance is another dimension outlined by Hofstede (2003) which provides a way of assessing the extent to which students are threatened by ambiguity. Results from Nguyen et al.'s (2006) study confirmed that students from Confucian Heritage backgrounds are more likely to exhibit strong uncertainty avoidance regarding group learning situations, specifically that they "… tend to be people who feel comfortable only with structured learning, precise objectives, detailed assignments and good instruction. They do not like predicting and guessing" (p. 10). This culturally-oriented desire for structure is unlikely

to be fulfilled in a Western learning environment when the group process is intended for students to learn to construct meaning together and collaboratively make decisions about the direction of their collective work product. While not all international students are from Confucian backgrounds, Nguyen et al.'s study is helpful to provide an example of the aspects of group work that may be complicated by cultural differences.

Power Imbalances in Cross-National Interactions

A few key studies address the role of power within cross-national interactions in higher education (Hsieh, 2007; Jon, 2013), and more specifically within mixed national group work (Ippolito, 2007; Turner, 2009). Tanaka (2002) discussed power as a key factor to consider in his intercultural theory of student development, advocating for educators to recognize that power imbalances exist and can have an important influence on cross-national interactions. Describing the case of one international student and the marginalizing experiences she encountered at a U.S. university, Hsieh (2007) also urged educators to realize the power differentials that exist between international and domestic students. Furthermore, after conducting in-depth interviews to learn about how Korean domestic students viewed power in intercultural relationships, Jon (2013) reported that various factors contributed to power imbalances between international and domestic students. Korean domestic students reported more favor towards students from economically and politically powerful countries, towards students whose culture was similar to Korea, and towards students who spoke Korean fluently. Furthermore, the

Korean students who spoke English fluently were perceived to be more privileged since they could interact easily with international students.

According to the accounts provided by Brown (2009) and Lee and Rice (2007), host students have been accused of not only showing more favor to specific groups of students as in the case of Jon's (2013) study, but also of using their power to discriminate against international students. For example, Brown (2009) investigated the experiences of a group of international graduate students over the period of one academic year at a university in England. International students in this study perceived that interaction with host national students offered the important benefits of cultural support and language improvement; however, they expressed extreme disappointment that their hopes for friendship were unattainable due to the disinterest from, and in several cases, racist attitudes and behaviors of host national students. Students felt threatened or vulnerable because of their appearance and their religious beliefs. Brown (2009) shared specific accounts of Islamophobia:

> Islamophobic abuse was also visited by members of the host community on Muslim international students: an Egyptian student was verbally and physically attacked in the street (her religious affiliation was revealed in the wearing of the hijab); a Jordanian student was told to go home; a Turkish student was assaulted in a nightclub. Students concluded that they were subject to harassment because of international tension over Islamic terrorism … (p. 448).

Lee and Rice (2007) reported similar accounts of host student discrimination towards international students in a U.S. university. The international students from non-

Western countries reported a range of different types of discrimination, and in various contexts, including having hostile exchanges with instructors and staff, being denied job opportunities, and feeling excluded by U.S. peers in the classroom and in social settings. These students claimed to experience hostility because of their cultural background and their status as non-native speakers of English.

Cross-national interactions within the context of group work have also often been reported to be characterized by an imbalance in power. Whether overtly or subtly, many of the other challenges described here as anxieties, cultural differences, and language barriers, may play a role in shaping these power differentials. For example, Singh (2007) explained that many student complaints during a group project at a South African University were related to both differences in language ability and power imbalances. Singh (2007) reported that:

> A common complaint among 78.5% of the students was that the first language speakers of English wanted to take on "major roles" in the presentation because they felt that they could earn their groups "better marks." They also tried to "dominate the discussions" during the preparation phase and "they always wanted to tell us what to do" (p. 298).

Several other scholars (Cotton et al., 2013; Ippolito, 2007; Leki, 2001; Singh, 2007; Turner, 2009; Wright & Lander, 2003) have shared concerning accounts of how power imbalances can emerge within cross-national groups. As a prominent example, Leki (2001) described the accounts of two non-native English speaking students and their experiences with group work in various classes. In both accounts, the non-native English

speaking students (Ling and Yang) were in some way demoted as a less-than-competent contributor to the goals of group work. In the first case, Ling felt that she wrongly was characterized as not having any input on the group assignment, and her attempts to override these assumptions were unsuccessful. In the second case, Yang's group members assigned her to make the introduction and display the visuals during the group presentation, a delegation decision that limited Yang's abilities to contribute to the group in more meaningful ways.

While Leki's (2001) case study provided rich qualitative insights regarding power imbalances, other authors (Wright & Lander, 2003; Cotton et al., 2013) have used quantitative research to highlight examples of power differentials within cross-national groups. Wright and Lander (2003) found that when mixed with Australian students, Southeast Asian students produced far less verbal output than when placed in monocultural groups. Wright and Lander speculated that Southeast Asian students may have perceived that Australian students held more authority in the group because of the Australian students' stronger English proficiency and greater comfortability with the academic and social expectations of group work. Cotton et al. (2013) conducted a study similar to Wright and Lander (2003) at a university in the U.K. in which they observed students' communicative interactions in multicultural groups, and provided insights about students' participation rates and influence levels within the groups. Regarding participation, Cotton et al. (2013) found that the U.K. students were observed to have higher levels of participation "in terms of numbers of utterance as well as time spent speaking" (p. 276) than did the international students within the same group (p. 276).

Cotton et al. speculated that the lower participation rates exhibited by international students were likely due to their low confidence, weaker language abilities, and cultural barriers, and that these factors may have resulted in the international students deferring to the local students when engaged in group interactions.

Turner (2009) also addressed power imbalances on a broader level as cultural and institutional factors that can create major impediments to successful cross-national group work. Turner's study was conducted within an 8-week international management course in the U.K., comprised of 66 students from 18 countries, with Chinese students representing the largest ethnic group. As the instructor of the course, Turner provided multiple avenues of support for students to experience effective group work, including encouraging group management practices and providing office hours of coaching or consulting regarding problems with group dynamics. At the completion of the course, Turner reviewed reflective journals and essays from 65 students, and found that most of the U.K. students depicted their Chinese group members using broad-sweeping negative judgments about their difficulties with English proficiency, academic expectations, and social norms. Similarly, most international students viewed the U.K. students as overly aggressive, intolerant, and unwilling to embrace new perspectives. In her reflections, Turner (2009) analyzed the role of power in shaping and reinforcing students' perceptions and behaviors in their group work:

> Local students showed themselves unwilling to move away from their home territory—whose status was privileged across the programme curriculum— and, supported by international students' views of local practices as somehow superior,

> cultural norming around local values became tighter and increasingly intolerant as the module progressed (p. 252).

Turner explained "cultural norming" as practices that provide a subtle advantage to domestic students in group work, including things such as the structure and design of academic programs, the unspoken values and common practices of professors, and the sociocultural climate within specific institutions.

Reviewed together, these studies provide important insights about the nature of the challenges that students experience within cross-national interactions and cross-national group work. In addition to typical problems that homogeneous groups experience, heterogeneous groups must grapple with difficulties related to anxieties, cultural differences, language barriers, and power imbalances, and there are clearly no easy solutions. And while faculty members may undoubtedly be a critical source of supportive influence for students navigating the challenges of cross-national group work, they also face significant challenges in facilitating cross-national group work, which are outlined in the next section.

Faculty Challenges in Facilitating Cross-National Group Work

Many of the studies discussed in this literature review also conclude that enhanced support from faculty is of paramount importance for cross-national groups to experience success. Scholars address the following key issues for faculty to consider when developing cross-national group assignments: 1) how group composition should be determined (Kelly, 2009; Volet & Ang, 1998); 2) how students should be assessed for

their work (Baker & Clark, 2009; Strauss, 2001; Strauss & U, 2007); and 3) how students can be optimally supported throughout the complex processes involved in cross-national group work (Baker & Clark, 2009; Campbell & Li, 2006; Kimmel & Volet, 2010; Woods et al., 2010).

Determining Group Composition. As demonstrated by Volet and Ang's (1998) study, when students are provided the opportunity to self-select their group members, their tendency is likely to form monocultural groups. However, since cross-national integration is a key strategy to help realize the goals of internationalization, allowing students to form monocultural groups is likely to interfere with efforts to internationalize the curriculum, and some students may feel anxiety about possible exclusion when they are allowed to self-select (Reid & Garson, 2017). Yet some studies have shown that students are more motivated to engage in group work when provided with the option to self-select (Chapman, Meuter, Toy, & Wright, 2006; Mason, 2006; Smith & Spindle, 2007), leading faculty to grapple with a perplexing dilemma regarding how to determine best methods for group composition. For educators who are hopeful to create optimal cross-national group work conditions, Rientes, Alcott, Jindal-Snape (2014) demonstrated evidence that random selection may help to push students to learn how to overcome communication barriers. The authors in this study commented that when "'forced' to work together in (multinational) groups for a substantial period of 14 weeks ... only students in the random condition seemed able to overcome some of the initial cultural barriers that prevented students to learn together in multinational groups" (Rientes et al., 2014, p. 78).

Additional research provides other considerations for group formation strategies. For example, in their study investigating how students' perceptions towards multicultural group work changed in response to various group work support strategies, Reid and Garson (2017) reported that students in their study appreciated group formation methods that integrated various forms of students' diversity (and was not solely focused on cultural diversity):

> Reflections revealed that asking students to consider what skills they could offer their group allowed them to self-reflect on what they were good at and what they could improve on. Moreover, once they were in their groups, they gained a heightened awareness that they were put together for a reason and that they could rely on each other's strengths (p. 204).

In his study on group work composition involving over 150 MBA students form 25 countries, Kelly (2009) acknowledged the advantages and disadvantages of various selection methods, and concluded that regardless of the method chosen, careful consideration of the learning outcomes and communicating a transparent process should take a high priority:

> The way students are allocated to groups is of significant importance due to its impact upon affective and performance outcomes and as a means to assure students develop multicultural group working transferable skills. Any allocation process should be fair, transparent and determined by the learning goals, i.e. group work is used in order to aid learning or develop business transferable skills (p. 98).

Designing Assessment Methods. A second, and equally complex, pedagogical issue facing instructors who wish to facilitate cross-national group work is how to assess students' work fairly while accounting for the various differences that exist between group members. For example, Strauss (2001) articulated how second language speakers may find themselves in group work situations where they over-rely on the performance of their native speaking peers and thus submit to a form of free-riding, or due to stereotyping from their native speaking peers, their attempted contributions to the group work may be dismissed. In a later study involving interviews with fourteen faculty members, Strauss and U (2007) reported that some of the most prominent challenges instructors encounter in multicultural group work involve grading group work fairly, assigning students to groups in an equitable way, and holding individual students accountable. Many of the faculty interviewed in Strauss and U's study had not received training for how to assess group work, and they raised concerns about the challenges of monitoring students who create inequities in group contributions. In conclusion, Strauss and U recommended that if instructors wish to implement fair assessment procedures, they need to also ensure that students are prepared and adequately supported to overcome the challenges that result from inequity in language skills, cultural understanding, and academic knowledge.

Similarly, in a longitudinal study conducted by Baker and Clark (2009) at a New Zealand university, instructors and students both reported assessment practices as a concern in their experiences with cross-national groups. Students reported a lack of understanding about what instructors expected of them: while Baker and Clark reported

that around 90% of instructors considered their method of assessment to be understandable and logical, only around 48% of students agreed. Furthermore, instructors explained that they had no systematic or clear way to determine if students contributed equally to the final group product, and similar to the instructors in Strauss and U's (2007) study, they were unsure of how to create grading systems that would account for the gaps in knowledge and abilities between international and domestic students. In actuality, student accounts from Baker and Clark's (2009) study revealed the group work is often divided in a very unequal manner: "the domestic students in this research project, with their superior language skills, were often given the major part of the assessment; both student and lecturer focus groups believed that this was unfair" (p. 7). Baker and Clark concluded that instructors do not appear to have received adequate training to develop equitable assessments that will provide all students with the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned.

Enhancing Support for Students. In addition to the complicated dilemmas associated with determining group formation methods and setting up fair grading practices, some scholars have also asserted that students need to receive enhanced support from faculty to overcome the challenges they will encounter in cross-national group work (Baker & Clark, 2009; Campbell & Li, 2006; Kimmel & Volet, 2010; Woods et al., 2010). In fact, Sweeney et al. (2008) provided empirical research to demonstrate the value of instructor support in cross-national group work. These researchers examined the connection between collaborative learning, student group performance, and students' abilities to transfer skills after participating in multicultural group work. Their results

suggested that the success of student learning was found to be contingent upon the extent to which faculty help to scaffold, consult with, and coach students throughout the group work process. Findings from Kimmel and Volet's (2010) multiple case study at an Australian university also confirmed the importance of instructor support in cross-national group work. Students in this study who received group work support from the instructors had more positive perceptions about the group project than did the class of students who received little to no instructional support for their group work.

Some studies document students' reported desire for greater communication support. For example, Campbell and Li (2006) examined Asian student perceptions of group work at a university in New Zealand, and found that students reported that they lacked the communication skills necessary for group work interactions such as conflict management, problem solving, and collective decision-making. Campbell and Li pointed out this may be because Asian students often do not have background knowledge or prior learning experiences with western styles of group work, and concluded that the instructors must have mistakenly assumed that the Asian students had adequate resources to participate effectively in the group process. Describing similar findings about communication challenges, Baker and Clark (2009) shared the results from a three-year study, in which they found that lecturers were not creating the conditions necessary for true cooperative learning to occur, according to the cooperative learning model suggested by Johnson and Johnson (1998). In particular, Baker and Clark (2009) found that fulfilling the conditions of face-to-face interaction and positive interdependence in Johnson and Johnson's (1998) was jeopardized by variance between international and

domestic students' language skills. And although around 50% of the students in Baker and Clark's (2009) study reported to have been provided with some instructional strategies for navigating challenges in group work, many of the students indicated that they were still thwarted by communication challenges, and that they needed "more feedback and assistance with group processes than they were getting from their lecturers in order to deal with these problems" (p. 4). Baker and Clark concluded by proposing a model for cooperative learning that involves training instructors and students in cooperative learning principles prior to establishing group projects, monitoring and assessing the group process, and providing opportunities for lecturers and students to debrief.

Ippolito (2007) and Turner (2009) also addressed faculty challenges by discussing how the contextual limitations of a particular school and the power differentials between students may inhibit faculty from designing an inclusive group work process. After completing an action research project in her group work intensive class and failing to see students achieve the intercultural learning outcomes, Turner (2009) reported that "the challenges inherent in developing a broadly inclusive approach to support intercultural integration seem considerable. Opportunities for lecturers … are limited by local context, professional and practice resources, and a basic openness to fundamental inclusivity" (p. 254). Turner (2009) reported that group inequities have a greater chance of resolution if mediated by instructors. As discussed earlier, Ippolito (2007) came to similar conclusions that addressing power differentials between her students was a difficult and perplexing

problem, one that was not easily solved despite the many opportunities for support she offered students.

Seeking insights from students to about how faculty can provide greater group work support, Woods et al. (2010) conducted focus groups with 62 students at an Australian university. Students in this study emphasized that having cultural empathy was very important in order for group members to treat peers from all cultural backgrounds equally. From the students' accounts, Woods et al. concluded that faculty can help to maximize the experience of multicultural group work by nurturing cultural awareness, respect, and empathy between students; encourage students to establish group processes; provide in-class time for students to work together; and structure assessment to account for the intercultural skills students are learning. The student participants also confirmed the usefulness of having effective processes in the group; however, because the students did not explain specific detail about what the best processes were, Woods et al. felt that this represents an area to explore in future research.

Expressing recommendations similar to those of Woods et al. (2010), De Vita (2001) proposed that faculty structure an environment in which all students can acknowledge, understand, and learn to appreciate their cultural differences rather than ignore them. To accomplish this, De Vita (2001) claimed that groups needs to establish "processes aimed at ensuring both the exploration of what each cultural perspective has to offer (de-centering) and the integration of the strengths of each (re-centering), so as to produce more effective outcomes through cultural synergy" (p. 32). This approach would imply that instructors need to provide space and guidelines for students to explore their

cultural differences, and recognize and leverage the strengths of their diversity. De Vita claimed that the role of the instructor is critical to provide tools to support a culturally synergistic climate in which students can engage in productive controversies while demonstrating respect. Yager et al.'s (1986) recommendation of creating time for group processing, in which group members collaboratively reflect on how to improve their group process, may also be a useful consideration. Yager et al. identified group processing as the most often overlooked component of cooperative learning, and yet it seems that it may hold potential to foster more effective group work practices for cross-national groups.

Summary

In summary, this literature review provides an overview of the goals of internationalization, an explanation of how key intercultural development theories and cooperative learning theories inform the study, a description of the current realities of cross-national interactions on campuses around the world, and accounts of challenging cross-national group work experiences from both educators and students. From this comprehensive review of the literature, it is evident that group work offers a structured learning environment to encourage meaningful interaction and to further the development of intercultural skills between international and domestic students. However, as also demonstrated in this summary of literature, complex challenges may jeopardize the experiences of students engaged in cross-national group work, thereby warranting the need for further research about what strategies may most effectively support students in

overcoming these challenges. This study will help to fill a gap in the literature by addressing how students conceptualize power differences in group work, an important issue that has received little attention in the literature, and by examining how cultural humility is enacted (if at all) within group work, a construct that has received very little attention in higher education literature.

CHAPTER THREE: Study Methodology

This study aimed to understand the subjective experience of undergraduate students who are engaged in cross-national group work. In order to accomplish the purpose of this study, the following three research questions guided my inquiry:

1. What is the experience of undergraduate students working in cross-national groups?
2. In what ways do students conceptualize power differences in cross-national group work (if at all)?
3. What is the role of cultural humility in mediating power differences in cross-national group work (if at all)?

This chapter contains descriptions of the study context, research methodology, including the research design and rationale, sampling strategies, data collection strategies, and data analysis procedures.

Context of the Study

The site for my research study is a large public research university in the Midwest. In 2016-2017, the University enrolled over 6,000 international students, representing approximately 12% of the overall University student population. There are reported to be over 2,700 undergraduate international students and these students come from around 130 locations, with the largest representation from China, India, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Vietnam. According to an official enrollment report for the 2016-2017 school year, the greatest number of international students were enrolled in the

following four colleges: the College of Science & Technology, the College of Liberal Studies, the College of Business, and the College of Food & Agriculture (pseudonyms used). Table 1 below shows enrollment numbers of international students in these four colleges in the school year 2015-2016.

Table 1: *2016-17 International Student Enrollment by College*

College	International Enrollment
College of Science & Technology	2,031
College of Liberal Studies	1,973
College of Business	685
College of Food & Agriculture	373

As a large public research institution, the University has a long history of and commitment to internationalization. This commitment is currently demonstrated in many ways, including the variety of intercultural programs that exist to serve domestic and international students, but also in the research and training initiatives sponsored by the Global Initiatives office. Administrators in the Global Initiatives office are taking an active role in shaping perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of students, staff, and faculty with the support of several international partnerships and teacher training programs. Furthermore, in collaboration with other units, the Global Initiatives office has developed a specific definition of global competency as a guiding framework for the entire campus. In addition, various studies have recently been conducted to investigate the quality of international student experiences, document best practices for encouraging

domestic and international student interactions, and explore the educational outcomes of hosting international students on campus. My study will extend the important research done by other scholars at the University, and will help to contribute to increasing knowledge of how students best learn to be effectively communicate interculturally.

Research Orientation

For this study on cross-national group work, my research orientation represents elements from both a constructivist paradigm and a pragmatic paradigm. I identify with a constructivist worldview because this paradigm places emphasis on understanding complexity the subjective perspectives of participants and the interactions between individuals, as described in Creswell (2014): "These meanings [subjectively derived from individual experiences] are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas" (p. 9). In carrying out research on the topic of cross-national group work, I am most interested in learning about the participants' experiences and interactions in group work, and understanding how their perceptions are shaped from their experiences. In addition, I also identify with a pragmatic worldview, which is centered around understanding the research problem (using whatever methods necessary), and identifying solutions to the problem (Creswell, 2014). This constructivist-pragmatic worldview provided support in helping me to more deeply understanding the problems presented by cross-national group work from the perspectives of the participants, and allowed me to consider solutions that can actively address the challenges of cross-national group work.

Research Design and Rationale

For this study of the challenges of cross-national group work, I utilized a qualitative case study approach with a single-case embedded design. Utilizing an embedded single-case study design provided an opportunity to analyze multiple units within the case (Yin, 2014), which in my research study allowed me to compare multiple student groups within one course. I chose a case study approach because of its emphasis on developing a deep understanding of a phenomenon within its natural context. As Yin (2014) explained, "A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon ('the case') in depth and within its real-life context…" (p. 16). In their research on multicultural student group work, Kimmel and Volet (2012) demonstrated that the processes and outcomes of group work depend on the values and motivations of individual group members, as well as the larger teaching & learning context, which includes elements such as instructor support, interactions with peers, discipline-specific learning outcomes, and the general classroom culture. Kimmel and Volet (2012) also asserted that group work involving students of mixed nationalities is "a highly complex, socially and emotionally demanding experience…" (p. 159). Therefore, applying a case study approach helped me to consider the variety and complexity of factors that impact students' experience of cross-national group work.

Although case study research can be conducted with the use of either qualitative or quantitative methods, I chose to investigate my research questions primarily using a qualitative approach. Maxwell (2013) explained that qualitative researchers are more

likely to approach their research by aligning with process theory, meaning that they attempt to understand the world around them in terms of the various ways in which people, contexts, activities, and processes are connected together. On the other hand, quantitative researchers tend to rely more on statistical findings to help explain the associations between variables, which is known as variance theory. Maxwell (2013) asserted that qualitative research can help the researcher to more deeply understand how participants make meaning, the influence of a context on the participants, the process by which events and interactions occur, and other unexpected factors that may impact the participants and processes involved in the study. Because cross-national group work is in itself made up of complex processes between the group members, activities of the group, and the surrounding context, it is beneficial to capture the rich dimensions of these processes with qualitative rather than quantitative methods. The qualitative methods of data collection that I used included observations of teaching, observations of cross-national group work, and in-depth interviews of both students and faculty.

Sampling Strategies: Case and Participation Selection

My case selection process involved seeking recommendations from campus partners of faculty members who were known to utilize group work in diverse classes. I also contacted a few faculty members that I knew fit this description from interactions I had previously with them related to my professional role at the University. One of the priorities in my selection process was to find a class with high enrollments of international students so that there would be a greater likelihood of international and

domestic student integration within groups. Furthermore, I prioritized choosing a class in which the group work extended over the length of an entire 15-week semester, based on Watson, BarNir, and Pavur's (2005) finding that heterogeneous group members who interact for a longer period of time may be able to overcome differences and increase productivity and overall performance. This also provided the advantage of observing how patterns of interaction and group management strategies developed over time. After making a few inquiries to potential faculty members, I identified Professor Ingham and Professor Burk (pseudonyms) as my faculty participants, who invited me into their Food Science course (FS 280), located in the College of Food & Agriculture, to conduct my research. More contextual information about this specific course and the faculty members who co-instructed it is provided in Chapter 4.

Once my case was selected, I began conducting observations of the class meetings. I began my class observations early in the semester, shortly after students had been assigned to their project groups. The instructors provided class time so that I could briefly explain my research project to recruit potential student participants. During the first in-class group meeting time, the instructors also gave me the opportunity to meet briefly with each group to determine the students' level of interest in allowing me to conduct observations of their group work. During this time of meeting with the project groups, I was able to explain details about my research objectives, explain the incentives (that students could receive a $25 gift card for participating in the group observations and a $25 gift card for participating in a 45-60 minute interview), and answer any questions students had. After meeting with each group, three out of the nine total groups in the

class matched the description of a cross-national group and indicated they would be willing to be observed. All group members from these three groups identified a way to reach consensus so that there was mutual agreement to be observed. More information about each of the groups that I observed is explained in Chapter 4.

When I initially explained my research project to the class, several students indicated an interest in being interviewed. To make the process more streamlined for all case study participants, I created an online Google Form and emailed this to students enrolled in the class using the course Moodle site (see Appendix A). The Google Form included demographic questions for students to complete, and also allowed me a way to ask for consent to read reflection assignments that my student participants submitted to their Moodle site throughout the semester. When students completed this form, I then made them aware of the consent information available on the course Moodle site (see Appendix B), and communicated with them via email to identify a time to meet for an interview. More information about my interview participants is explained in Chapter 4.

My participant selection can be categorized as purposeful selection that aligns with a number of the reasons that Maxwell (2013) outlined as appropriate rationale to use purposeful selection. Maxwell discussed the following as justifiable reasons for purposeful selection, in order to represent: 1) a "typical" range of individuals so that the study findings best represent the average members of the population; 2) the most diverse range of individuals so that the study results demonstrate the range of variation within the population; 3) specific cases to demonstrate or prove the relevance of the theories that frame a study; 4) participants that will allow for comparison of differences; and 5)

participants based on the researcher's ability to develop productive and informative relationships. Because several of my interview participants also participated in group observations, I was able to learn information-rich accounts of the challenges these experienced in their cross-national group work experiences. This strategic selection of interview participants is in accordance with Creswell's (2014) claim that in qualitative research it is important "to purposefully select participants or sites … that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question" (p. 189).

One challenge that I experienced in participant selection was recruiting international students in the case to participate in interviews. Only three of the eight international students enrolled in the course volunteered to be interviewed, and all three of these interviewees were from China. This concerned me because I recognized that international students at the University represent a very diverse group of students, and I wanted to learn from many different perspectives so that I could more accurately represent the diversity that is possible within the international student experience. The other obstacle that I experienced was recruiting group observation participants to participate in interviews. Although ten students total participated in interviews, only four of the 11 group observation participants volunteered to be interviewed. This was concerning because I had hoped to be able to talk to as many group observation participants as possible to better understand the experiences of each group member that I observed.

Students who did not participate in an interview seemed reluctant to commit the extra time outside of class required for an interview. When I offered to meet with

students after their coursework was complete at the end of the semester, this proved to only be slightly effective with one or two students, but otherwise, students were already engaged in other summer activities and simply did not respond to my recruitment efforts. On many occasions, I also found that using students' university email addresses was not an ideal way to communicate, since often students did not respond to emails. If I conduct a similar study in the future, I will adjust my approach and ask more questions about students' preferred communication methods for coordinating out-of-class meetings or interviews.

Data Collection Strategies

Table 2 below provides an overview of the data collection strategies and the data analysis procedures that I used to investigate each research question. Yin (2014) advised that six sources of evidence should be involved in case study research, and of these, I incorporated observations, interviews with faculty and students, and documentation as my primary data collection strategies. The following section provides more explanation of how each data collection method was employed to generate relevant and insightful findings for this study.

Table 2: *Overview of Data Collection and Data Analysis Methods*

Research Question	Data Collection	Data Analysis
1. What is the experience of undergraduate students working in cross-national groups?	• Observations • Interviews with faculty & students • Documentation	• Thematic coding with Quirkos

2. In what ways do students conceptualize power differences in cross-national group work (if at all)?	• Observations • Interviews with faculty & students • Documentation	• Thematic coding with Quirkos
3. What is the role of cultural humility in mediating power differences in cross-national group work (if at all)?	• Observations • Interviews with faculty & students • Documentation	• Thematic coding with Quirkos

Observations

Direct observations were a core component of the data collection strategies for this study. As Maxwell (2013) pointed out, "Observation provides a direct and powerful way of learning about people's behavior and the context in which this occurs" (p. 103). Observations of class time and group meetings provided me with opportunities to gain insight about the teaching and learning context in which group work occurs, as well as allow for discoveries about individual and group behaviors during group work times. To ensure the quality of the observation data collection procedures, I followed important guidelines suggested by Maxwell. For example, when I observed students in their groups, I reserved some time for small talk. I also attended every class lecture and looked for opportunities to get to know students in a more casual setting. These efforts match Maxwell's recommendation to develop trusting relationships with the study participants. When I conducted observations, I also worked to adhere to best practice in the following ways: I designed and used a protocol as a guide for note-taking (Creswell, 2014), I recorded rich descriptions in my note-taking in an effort to capture important details (Maxwell, 2013), and I practiced good listening skills during the observations to

catch inferences and underlying meanings (Yin, 2014). This sample of my note-taking demonstrates my attention to both the verbal and nonverbal communication that I observed between group members:

Aldi asks "who knows how to make a website?" Aldi shows an example of a website on his laptop while everyone leans in to listen. They discuss together who has website development skills. Eskinder is particularly effective when speaking with his eye contact. Kareem often speaks but does not necessarily engage in eye contact as readily. When Aldi talks he is often engaging with Eskinder. Xander is the quietest in this group today (and in this case he is a minority in terms of ethnicity). Xander does not seem disengaged but is just listening quietly as the others discuss their plans for moving forward with the project (Group 4, Meeting 1 Notes).

Considering the objectives of my case study, I also paid specific attention to patterns of behavior or communication specific to cross-national interactions, including: the type of support provided by faculty for group work, how students understood their group assignment, how they organized and communicated about their tasks, how they assumed and shifted roles within the group, how they responded to challenges -- particularly challenges related to power imbalances, and the extent to which they demonstrated cultural humility towards other group members.

Of the four different observer roles that Creswell (2014) explained, I assumed the role of a "complete observer," meaning that my observer role did not involve any participation in the class or group activities. Creswell (2014) claimed that this role can be advantageous when "exploring topics that may be uncomfortable for participants to

discuss" (p. 191). The complete observer role seems to be most supportive to my study purpose since it may be challenging for participants to verbally express any challenging group work experience they have had with someone else they view as an equal participant in their class. However, as Maxwell (2013) described, "reactivity" is an important factor for a complete observer to consider when planning for the observations. Maxwell (2013) defined reactivity as the "influence of the researcher on the setting or individuals studied" (p. 124). I was frequently reminded of how my presence as an observer in the FS 280 classroom could influence a teacher to act differently than normal, and similarly, how students who are being observed in their small group meetings may also adapt their behaviors while being observed.

Interviews

Yin (2014) claimed that interviews form a critical aspect of case study research and distinguished different types of case study interviews based on their length, ranging from "prolonged" interviews, shorter interviews, and survey interviews. Additionally, Maxwell (2013) described two main purposes for conducting interviews related to observations: 1) to corroborate observation findings or 2) to gain understanding about past activities or interactions that you were not able to observe directly. Yin (2014) also discussed a more open-ended approach to interviews in which the researcher asks questions to understand the perspectives of the participants and how they personally make sense of their experiences. Because I interviewed both students who were involved in the groups I observed, and students who did not participate in group

observations, a combination of Yin's suggested interview types was useful in my study. For all students who participated only as interviewees in my study, I conducted a semi-structured interview that focused on understanding students' perspectives about and experiences of cross-national group work. For those student interview participants who also participated in the group observations, I asked some follow-up questions related to behaviors I observed in their group meetings, which was similar to what Flick (2000) described as "episodic interviewing," in which the interviewer relies on the interviewee's memory to help construct an understanding of activities that happened in the past (cited in Maxwell, 2013, p. 103). During these segments of the interviews, I asked open-ended questions about the events or situations that I had observed unfolding in their group meetings.

To ensure the quality of the interview data collection procedures, I applied the following best practices into my interviewing process. I took a few minutes at the beginning of each interview to find ways to connect relationally and discuss common interests, in an effort to establish trust with my interview participants (Maxwell, 2013). I also carefully designed an interview protocol with open-ended questions designed to elicit information-rich insights from interviewees (see Appendix C for student interview protocol and Appendix D for faculty interview protocol), and after gaining the participant's permission, I audio-recorded each interview (Creswell, 2014). As I interviewed each participant, I took detailed notes and made specific notations about non-verbal cues, tone of voice, and hand gestures or movements that might provide more clues about the interviewee's intended meanings (Maxwell, 2013; Yin, 2014).

Documentation

Yin (2014) asserted that "documents play an explicit role in any data collection in doing case study research" (p. 107). Yin (2014) explained that one of the advantages of reviewing documents is that they may contain clues that can help create new lines of inquiry for the research study. The type of documentation varies greatly depending on the nature of the case study, and for my case study of cross-national group work, I collected the following: class handouts about the group project assignment, communication between faculty and classmates as documented on the course Moodle site, and student learning journals recorded throughout the group work experience. The group project handouts were useful in understanding the support that instructors provided to students, and having access to the student reflections proved to be a valuable data source, as students wrote about many topics related to my research questions in their reflection assignments. Throughout the duration of the semester-long group project, I also recorded memorandums to reflect on emerging themes and document insights that later helped to inform my data analysis.

Data Analysis Strategies

I took detailed notes during observations and interviews, and audio-recorded interviews after asking permission from each interview participant. Once the interviews were complete, I utilized the rev.com transcription service to have all of the interviews transcribed. After receiving the completed transcripts, I conducted a careful review of the audio files and revised the transcripts as needed to ensure accuracy. After checking

the accuracy of the transcripts, I then imported my observation notes, course documents, student reflections, and interview transcripts into Quirkos. Quirkos is a recently developed software program that allows researchers to categorize and analyze textual data. As I grouped selected passages and quotes into similar categories, I established specific colors to be assigned to major themes or "quirks" within Quirkos, and then over time created sub-themes that corresponded to each major theme. I maintained a codebook to document the evolving relationship between major themes and sub-themes (see Appendix E).

When conducting my analysis of the text in interview transcripts, observation notes, and student reflection assignments, I used an open coding process, which entailed first analyzing each sentence of the interview transcripts, and then choosing to assign a code to a segment that held meaning relevant to the research questions in my dissertation study (Maxwell, 2013). After analyzing the transcripts at the sentence level using this method, I then identified broader themes as suggested by the relationships that I recognized between codes or clusters of similar codes (Shank, 2006). In keeping with Yin's (2014) recommendations, I identified seven broader themes that corresponded to my research questions, and then narrowed these to three that aligned with my research questions more precisely: 1) students' cooperative learning experiences within cross-national groups (including attitudes, apprehensions, typical group work practices, how instructional support was experienced and perceived, and communication barriers described); 2) students' experiences of power differentials in cross-national groups (including perceptions of how group dynamics evolved and how delegation was

managed); and 3) how students perceived and experienced cultural humility (including approaches to engaging in critical self-reflection and strategies for mitigating power imbalances). In Chapter 4 I will provide a case study description to offer insight about important contextual information related to course objectives, case study participants, group characteristics, and group project goals.

Summary

This chapter has provided a detailed overview of the research design for my dissertation study, including the case and participation selection methods, and the data collection and data analysis strategies. Conducting this study within a group work intensive class at the University allowed me to explore important understandings about the challenges of cross-national group work in higher education. Utilizing the design of a single case study and employing the qualitative methods of observation, interviewing, and documentation provided me with an opportunity to learn about how the complex challenges of group work might be effectively mitigated so that students can experience a fuller range of learning outcomes.

CHAPTER FOUR: Case Study Description

In this chapter, I will describe my case site in detail. I will include relevant information about international students and programs at the University as well as contextual details about the specific college and Food Science course (FS 280) that served as the site for my case study. I will also describe specifics about the team project and a description of the case participants.

Institutional and Collegiate Context

As mentioned in chapter three, this study takes place within the broader context of a large public research institution in the Midwest. With over 6,000 international students from approximately 130 countries enrolled in undergraduate and graduate programs, key leaders and departments are committed to supporting and fostering internationalization. For example, one of the seven student learning outcomes defined by the Undergraduate Studies office states that upon degree completion, students should have a better understanding of diverse cultural views, and a complementary student development outcome claims that graduates should be able to show that they recognize the importance of interacting with people from many diverse backgrounds. Various programs and units exist to help students achieve these outcomes, including a learning abroad center, an international buddy program, diverse living and learning communities, conversational language exchanges, and numerous student groups that foster awareness of diversity and inclusion. In addition, beginning in 2015, a committee was delegated to award funding to units seeking to improve the academic experiences of international students. Since then,

several projects across campus have emerged to support international students by enhancing their opportunities for academic advising, English language support, peer mentorship, career planning, co-curricular engagement, intercultural training, course design, and faculty development. Ongoing research, program development, and curricular enhancements demonstrated by units on campus are evidence that there is a desire to support the needs of international students and foster intercultural learning and development for all students.

My research study took place within FS 280, a course offered within the College of Food & Agriculture. While several previous group work studies have been situated within a business or engineering program, there has not been a focus on exploring students' cross-national experiences within Food & Agriculture courses. The College of Food & Agriculture at the University is comprised of 12 academic departments and 10 research/outreach units. Within its 13 undergraduate and 13 graduate programs, the college places a strong emphasis on innovation, global opportunities, and experiential learning. The broader work of the college is described as identifying strategies to provide healthy, safe, and sustainable resources, and enhancing the quality of natural resources in ways that improve the lives and experiences of community members in various parts of the world. In the school year 2015-16, the college enrolled just under 3,000 undergraduate and graduate students, with approximately 387 international students. The college exhibits a commitment to diversity and internationalization through many different endeavors, including an Office of Global Programs that coordinates study

abroad opportunities, and a diversity plan that outlines a vision for embracing diversity and its role in shaping instructional practices and curricular transformation.

Course Overview

My research was conducted in the Spring 2017 semester by recruiting participants from the FS 280 course. Because the College of Food & Agriculture places significant value on experiential learning, students are required to complete one course or internship that simulates hands-on experience in the real world, and FS 280 is one course that students can take to complete their required experiential learning credits. This course is often part of the normal track for Food Systems majors, which includes an emphasis on learning about the various components of food systems, and the factors that help to inform change in those systems. The FS 280 course has a lecture component that is largely focused on a team project and a lab component that teaches students how to cook healthy, nutritious meals on a budget. The course description, as explained on the Spring 2017 syllabus, states that the course:

> will provide students with the knowledge, critical thinking and technical skills necessary to make food choices based on nutritional, environmental, and local and global societal issues. Students will be challenged to consider their food choices as both influencing and being influenced by larger food system dynamics and to view these issues from multiple perspectives (FS 280 Course Syllabus, 2017).

Specific course outcomes help students to become aware of the larger systemic influences on their personal food choices. Student learning outcomes are complemented by a practical focus on developing cooking skills to foster personal health and wellness.

Students in FS 280 met for the lecture component of the class every Monday from 9:35-11:30 a.m. and for a weekly cooking lab either on Monday from 3:00-6:00 p.m. or Friday from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Class time for lectures was often devoted to guest speakers, group project time, or discussions regarding course content. During the weekly cooking labs, the instructor facilitated a brief time of discussion, which was followed by pairs and groups making a recipe together. Class announcements, assignments, and grades for the lab and lecture were managed and maintained through the Moodle Learning Management System (LMS). Students' work was assessed in the following ways: participation points for attendance and other in-class activities, through regular online writing reflections, one final written "narrative" paper, and a group project that concluded with a presentation. In total, 35 students were enrolled in FS 280, and eight of those students self-identified as international students. Two instructors co-taught the course, and were assisted by three undergraduate Teaching Assistants. While Professor Ingham was responsible for planning and facilitating the lecture, Professor Burk primarily instructed students in the cooking labs. Although assuming these separate responsibilities, Professors Ingham and Burk demonstrated a close partnership in making important curricular decisions and sometimes co-facilitated parts of the lecture together. They often were both present before class began, and I frequently overheard them holding informal discussions about how the class was going. Both instructors have

taught the course multiple times, and reported that they had worked diligently to refine the curriculum.

My observations of the course took place during the lectures, since that part of the course was often devoted to group project time. Students met in a small, rectangular room for the lecture, which was across the hall from their cooking lab. The classroom had multiple whiteboards, and desks were arranged closely together in three long rows. The class had a capacity of approximately 30 students, and because students attended fairly regularly, it often felt crowded; on many occasions, almost every seat in the room was taken. One of the Teaching Assistants attended the Monday lecture to take attendance and be available for student questions.

Professor Ingham typically began class by pointing out the agenda for the class meeting, which she wrote on one of the white boards. Her teaching style was characterized by an enthusiastic and energetic communication style; for example, she would often begin class with a smile and a warm greeting, and then initiate some brief small talk about what everyone did over the weekend. Professor Ingham also demonstrated a strong passion for her work and a genuine desire for students to engage with the course content; she frequently shared details about her professional work and urged students to consider the larger implications of their academic and professional choices.

In our interview, Professor Ingham commented that she wanted students to focus on “what's the big societal thing you want to change, or what's your compassion or empathy in this space in the topic that you're working in” (Professor Ingham’s Interview

Transcript). In one of the first class sessions, Professor Ingham introduced a key framework as a foundational component of the course: the public narrative. She used the public narrative concept to encourage students to reflect on three parts of their story: the "story of self" – identifying defining experiences that shaped their core values; the "story of us" – being a part of a community with shared values; and the "story of now" – recognizing how communities work together to respond to relevant challenges and threats. Professor Ingham described these components of the public narrative on a worksheet and provided it to students (see Appendix F). Professor Ingham referred to this framework at different points throughout the course to encourage students to connect the course content on food systems and food justice with their own stories, experiences, and communities.

Description of Group Project

Because FS 280 qualifies students to meet the requirements for an experiential learning course, the course focuses heavily on an intensive group project which is completed collaboratively over the course of the 15-week semester with a project partner from a local community organization. The project was introduced in week 3 of the lecture, and from that point on was a major focus of class time. During class in week 3, the instructors gave an overview of nine project options, and the project partners presented more specific details about each project.

After the overview of project options in class, students were given the opportunity to rank their preferences through a Google survey facilitated by the instructors (see

Appendix G). In this survey, the instructors also asked students to report how strong their written and spoken communication skills were, if they had transportation to visit off-campus project sites, and if there was anything else instructors should know when assigning students to groups. Professor Ingham then used this information to match students together in groups, and students were notified of their group assignments the following week in class. The nine projects provided a myriad of different opportunities for students to advocate for community members impacted by hunger and food insecurity, and the final assigned groupings gave many students opportunities to work with others from diverse backgrounds. Out of the nine groups, six groups had at least one international student in the group, and were therefore classified as cross-national groups. Table 3 below provides an overview of the project goals and notes about each group's composition.

Table 3: *Description of FS 280 Groups*

Group	Group Topic	Participants (pseudonyms)	Project Goal	Group Type
Group 1	Hunger Advocacy	Margaret and Jamie	Plan hunger awareness day	Cross-national group: 25% international
Group 2	Market Dollars	n/a	Make recommendations to improve the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP)	Singular national group
Group 3	Food Shelves	Cal, Brent, and Li	Research story collection methods at local food shelves	Cross-national group: 33% international

Group	Group Topic	Participants (pseudonyms)	Project Goal	Group Type
Group 4	Cultural Outreach	Ebo, Ashwin, Andy, and Kadim	Create recommendations for Food HelpLine to improve outreach to culturally diverse groups	Cross-national group: 25% international
Group 5	SNAP Analysis	Mason, Aaron, Nelson, and Jie	Make recommendations for SNAP outreach in high need areas	Cross-national group: 25% international
Group 6	Food Justice	Maeve	Create educational materials to help students understand inequities in the U.S. food system	Singular national group
Group 7	Campus Awareness	n/a	Identify & promote hunger initiatives on campus, and identify gaps	Cross-national group: 25% international
Group 8	Food Day	Hui, Shan, and Kayla	Plan and promote Food Day events	Cross-national group: 75% international
Group 9	College Volunteers	Renae	Research opportunities for students to volunteer with local food shelves	Singular national group

Description of Participants

Students in FS 280 were invited to participate in two ways in my study: 1) to be observed in their group interactions, 2) to meet with me for a 45-60 minute interview. To participate in the group observation, all group members needed to consent to participation. The instructors provided time during one of the early class meetings for me

to meet with groups and gauge their interest in participating in the observations or interviews. Members from three out of the six cross-national groups agreed to be observed, and 15 class members volunteered to be interviewed. Table 4 below shows a summary of the group observation participants. All students have been given pseudonyms to keep their identities confidential.

Table 4: *Group Observation Participants And Characteristics*

Participants (pseudonyms)	Nationality	First Language	Class Status/Major	Interview Participant	Group Project
Aaron	U.S.	English	Senior, Political Science	No	5
Mason	U.S.	English	Senior, Applied Economics	Yes	5
Nelson	U.S.	English	Senior Applied Economics	Yes	5
Jie	China	Chinese	Senior, Agriculture & Food Business	No	5
Andy	U.S.	English	Sophomore, Food Systems	No	4
Ebo	U.S.	Amharic	Senior, Nutrition	No	4
Kadim	U.S.	Not disclosed	Senior, Nutrition	No	4
Ashwin	Indonesia	Indonesian	Junior, Agriculture & Food Business	No	4
Li	China	Chinese	Junior, Agriculture & Food Business	Yes	3

Participants (pseudonyms)	Nationality	First Language	Class Status/Major	Interview Participant	Group Project
Cal	U.S.	English	Senior, Agriculture & Food Business	Yes	3
Brent	U.S.	English	Senior, Agriculture & Food Business	No	3

Observation Participants

Observation Participants in Group 3. Group 3 was comprised of two U.S. male students, Cal and Brent (pseudonyms used), and one international female student from China, Li. All three students were majoring in Agriculture & Food Business Management. Cal and Brent were close friends, had been in several group projects together before, and had experience volunteering at food shelves. Li did not have as much knowledge about food shelves, and she did not know the two U.S. students prior to being assigned in this group. In addition to permitting me to observe their group interactions, Cal and Li also participated in interviews.

The goal of Group 3's project was to learn about how local food shelves approach "story collection," which is a technique used to understand the food stories of the community members who utilize food shelves. This group engaged in their own story collection by developing an interview protocol and interviewing several community members whose food security had increased as a result of their participation in a local

food shelf. The group received permission to videotape these interviews, and they then shared excerpts of the video interviews during the final presentation.

I observed this group three times during structured group work time in class. Cal emerged as an informal leader of the group (evidenced by accounts like those described below), Brent was often smiling and positive, and he supported Cal's leadership efforts by responding to questions and helping to make decisions for the group. Brent and Cal were the most talkative during the group meetings and at times they referenced interactions they had with each other in various settings such as sports, farming, and their living situation, indicating they shared a friendship outside of class. Although Li was very quiet during the group meetings, she always appeared engaged in the group task at hand. In their group meetings in class, all three students displayed a strong level of engagement in their project as they actively worked on tasks during meeting times. Cal assumed a leadership position by providing direction for the group, asking clarifying questions, helping to delegate, trying to get everyone involved, and setting goals. For example, in one of their meetings, I took notes as I observed Cal take initiative for the group:

> Cal says "So what is the MOU? I'm still confused." They discuss this for a little bit, and then Cal reaches out to another group to ask what they have done so far. Cal turns back to Group 3 and starts talking about other things they can ask their future contacts (demographic types of questions), as Brent takes notes. Li nods quietly as Brent types. Cal comments, "We can just start cranking away with some questions. All questions are good questions" (Group 3, Meeting 2 Notes).

In her interview, Li described Cal as the leader of their group and explained more specifically how he provided leadership:

> At first when we do the, our project plan, he-he, he gives us, gave us um a lot of ideas about the questions we-we need to, we plan to ask... and um, like the schedule, what we should do first, what we need to do next. And um, and he, I think he think ahead about, um what-like what equipment we should to take when we do the interview. And ah, and ah, he said he can, he can ask his friends to lend us the camera and microphone or something like that. For us to use when we do the interview. Hmm, I think, he thinks a lot before we do the next job, next step (Li's Interview Transcript).

This group frequently utilized Google Docs to make progress on their project in class. Their group meetings were thus characterized by more discussion in the beginning of the meeting, followed by periods of silence once a task had been identified and initiated.

Observation Participants in Group 4. Group 4 was comprised of three U.S. male students, Ebo, Andy, and Kadim, and one international male student from Indonesia, Ashwin. Of the three U.S. male students, Andy was born in the U.S., Ebo was born in Ethiopia, and Kadim's parents immigrated from Pakistan. Andy was a Food Systems major, Kadim and Ebo were both Nutrition majors, and Ashwin was majoring in Agriculture & Food Business Management. Although all group members consented to being observed during their group meetings, they each declined to participate in a follow-up interview.

The goal of Group 4's project was to help expand the outreach efforts of a local Food Helpline, which exists as a service for those who call in and report food needs. The project partner collaborating on this initiative wanted to improve outreach to culturally diverse groups, specifically in the Latino, Hmong, and Somali communities. Therefore, this group chose to develop culturally appropriate promotional materials to distribute in local businesses such as grocery stores within the targeted communities. Their final deliverable was a brochure that was translated into various languages.

I observed this group three times during structured group work in class. It became clear through my observations and student reflections that Ebo acted as an informal leader of the group. During group meetings in class, Ebo frequently helped to cast vision for the project by elaborating on the needs of the target population, suggesting possible options for enhanced outreach, and asking questions to include others in the group process. At one point, I noted that "Ebo demonstrates a vision for the project by reflecting on his own experience first coming to the U.S." (Group 4, Meeting 1 Notes). Kadim, Ashwin, and Andy appeared to demonstrate support of Ebo's leadership. For example, in a reflection assignment, Ashwin commented "One thing that worked between us was the leadership by Ebo. He was very responsible as a leader, and really helped his team members to stay on track with what they have to do" (Ashwin's Peer Evaluation). Ebo seemed to talk the most frequently, approximately twice the amount of the other students in the group. Compared to each other, Ashwin, Kadim, and Andy participated fairly equally, but their spoken contributions were often in response to Ebo's questions. An excerpt from my group observation notes demonstrates a typical interaction:

Ebo asks if Ashwin knows anyone who can help translate the Hmong section of the brochure. Ashwin seems uncertain, and dialogues more with Ebo about how this would work. Ebo talks quietly but with large gestures and includes everyone in his range of eye contact. Ebo talks about the tricky dynamics of communicating with contacts in the Somali culture. He says "Let's take it one step at a time. Let's make the brochure first." No one really responds. Ebo keeps talking "There's online options to chat – even senior citizens use this." Kadim responds and affirms this idea. Andy wants to know if they are going to put anything online to target people who are online. Kadim and Ebo confirm this is a good idea. They sit in silence for a little bit. Ebo says "Great progress, guys. Great progress." Ebo is leading this meeting, with lots of ideas and details to keep the group on track with their project (Group 4, Meeting 3 Notes).

This group did not frequently employ the use of Google Docs as a tool for collaborative productivity in class, but instead they often used their time to discuss the progress of their project, and group members would only sometimes use computers or notebooks to work quietly on their own.

Observation Participants in Group 5. Group 5 was comprised of three U.S. male students, Mason, Aaron, and Nelson, and one international male student from China, Jie. Although students' majors differed slightly, they all had interest in continuing their graduate studies in Applied Economics, which was reported by a few of the students to be an asset to help them build rapport within the group. In addition to agreeing for me to observe their group meetings, Mason and Nelson also participated in interviews.

The goal of the Group 5's project was to collect data regarding participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) at the statewide level, research outreach efforts, and provide suggestions for expanding outreach in areas with high food insecurity. As a final deliverable, this group produced a brochure that targeted senior citizens and provided information about SNAP and how to apply for assistance.

I observed this group three times during structured group work time in class. At different points in their meetings, Aaron and Nelson exhibited leadership by asking clarifying questions, delegating parts of the work, and making decisions about what to do next. Students' evaluations of each other and final reflections indicate that Aaron took on the primary leadership role when it came to getting things done online and via email. For instance, Mason described his perception of the group roles as follows: "I think Aaron did a good job of coordinating us as a group and seemed to naturally lead while at times others would take the leadership role as well" (Mason's Interview Transcript). This was demonstrated when there was discussion about a decision or data point, Aaron tended to set more direction or problem solve, but all group members contributed in response to his leadership. The following interaction demonstrates how Aaron assumes a slight leadership role but also shows that the others took turns engaging with the topic at hand:

> Aaron takes a break from his computer and explains he doesn't know what other data the group can access. It isn't clear what other sources they would be able to get data from. Mason responds to clarify, as does Nelson. Aaron suggests they look at two specific reports, one long one and one shorter one: "We can also dig into that, and see if there's anything there… (pause, looking at the reports) …

yeah it has SNAP data by county, and then a lot of other things." Nelson says: "this is on the Google Doc?" Aaron says "yeah," and proceeds to provide further direction about the specific location of the data he is referring to. They dialogue for a moment about where the data is in the Google doc. "So are we presenting on basically what we just found about SNAP efforts?" Mason asks. Nelson says "We have to give them a suggestion, right?" Jie agrees and says "Yes, I think that will be the key point" (Group 5, Meeting 3 Notes).

In many of my observations, group meetings were often characterized by long periods of silence. During these quiet times, students often appeared to be diligently working in either a shared Google Doc, or engaged in an individual task.

Interview Participants

Four of the 11 students who participated in the group observations also agreed to be interviewed. Six students who were not participating in the group observations volunteered to be interviewed, along with two Teaching Assistants (TAs), and the two professors for the course. In total, 15 students, TAs, and instructors signed up for a 45-60 minute interview. Table 5 below provides a summary of the interview participants, with an indication of which students also participated in the group observations.

Table 5: *Interview Participants and Characteristics*

Participant (pseudonyms)	Nationality	First Language	Class Status/Major	Group Project	Group Observation
Margaret	U.S.	English	Senior, Nutrition	1	No

Participant (pseudonyms)	Nationality	First Language	Class Status/Major	Group Project	Group Observation
Jamie	U.S.	English	Junior, Nutrition	1	No
Li	China	Chinese	Junior, Agriculture & Food Business Management	3	Yes
Cal	U.S.	English	Senior, Agriculture & Food Business Management	3	Yes
Nelson	U.S.	English	Senior, Applied Economics	5	Yes
Mason	U.S.	English	Senior, Applied Economics	5	Yes
Maeve	U.S.	English	Senior, Food Systems	6	No
Shan	China	Chinese	Senior, Applied Economics	8	No
Hui	China	Chinese	Senior, Applied Economics	8	No
Kayla	U.S.	English	Senior, Agriculture & Food Business Management	8	No
Renae	U.S.	English	Senior, Nutrition	9	No
Mia	U.S.	English	Lab TA	n/a	n/a
Cami	U.S.	English	Lab TA	n/a (TA)	n/a
Professor Ingham	U.S.	English	Lecture Instructor	n/a	n/a

Participant (pseudonyms)	Nationality	First Language	Class Status/Major	Group Project	Group Observation
Professor Burk	U.S.	English	Lab Instructor	n/a	n/a

Interview Participants from Group 1. About midway through the semester, I interviewed Jamie and Margaret, two U.S. female students from Group 1, the Hunger Advocacy group. Both were Nutrition majors, while Jamie was a junior and Margaret was a senior. In my interviews with them, both students described themselves as having more content knowledge about their project than their teammates, a U.S. male student, and an international male student from Mongolia. The goal of their group project was to plan a campus event promoting awareness of the needs of community members impacted by food insecurity. Although this group was technically a cross-national group, Margaret reported that she viewed the international student to be similar to an American student, because of his ease in speaking English and his apparent comfortability with American culture. She commented, “I think he's different ethnicity, but he's American, so it's easy to talk to him and he gets everything” (Margaret’s Interview Transcript). Similarly, Jamie made the following comment about the international student in her group: “He's like, even though he's from Mongolia, like, there's not really any sort of language barrier at all, since he's very outspoken ...” (Jamie’s Interview Transcript). Although neither Margaret nor Jamie perceived there to be anything particularly noteworthy about the cross-national interactions involved in their group project for FS 280, they both shared

perceptions and experiences related to working in cross-national groups in previous classes they had taken.

Interview Participant from Group 6. Group 6 was comprised of four American students, and from this group, one American female named Maeve volunteered for an interview. The specific project purpose for this group was to build students' understanding of the social, socioeconomic and cultural factors that have historically built the current U.S. food system. Students will then use this information to further develop the following skill sets: cultural humility, authentic engagement, critical thinking, understanding of equity and how it works, and story-based communication (Student Project Descriptions).

Although the peers in Maeve's group project were all U.S. students, Maeve had been informally assigned to a small group discussion with an international student during a FS 280 class activity. This experience was the source of several of her reflections in our interview. Additionally, because her group project was to research how college students studying food systems can develop cultural humility, she had interesting insights to share that related closely to my research questions. Although I was not able to directly observe Maeve or her group members, it became clear through my interview with her, her graded reflections, and instructor comments that she had assumed a leadership role in her group. In her peer evaluation, Maeve described how she reluctantly came to take greater responsibility for leading the group:

> I did feel there were multiple times I had to get the ball rolling with things and make sure people were on task. At the beginning, I felt slightly uncomfortable

with this, but once it started to get closer to the end I felt more confident in taking more charge and making sure everyone had what they need to complete the project (Maeve's Peer Evaluation).

Interview Participants from Group 8. Although the participants from Group 8 chose not to participate in the observation portion of my research, three of the four group members volunteered to be interviewed. Students in this group included three international female students from China, and one U.S. female student. Their group project involved researching, planning, and promoting "Food Day 2017," an event that facilitates annual awareness of issues related to hunger and food insecurity. This group was unique when compared to the other cross-national groups in FS 280 because the number of international students outnumbered the number of American students in the group. The three interview participants from this group included Hui and Shan, two of the Chinese students who were both seniors and Applied Econ majors, and Kayla, the U.S. student, who was also a senior and majoring in Agriculture and Food Business Management.

Interview Participant from Group 9. I interviewed one U.S. female student named Renae from Group 9, Campus Volunteers. Group 9 was assigned to research current student volunteer opportunities and attempt to create more partnerships with community organizations that could offer expanded volunteer work for interested students. Renae was a Senior majoring in Nutrition, and although her FS 280 group was comprised of all U.S. students, Renae had informally worked with international students in FS 280 discussion groups, and she had been assigned to work in cross-national groups

in past courses. In our interview, she shared how those experiences had shaped her perspectives about group work and cross-national interactions.

Instructor and TA Interview Participants. In addition to interviewing students, I also interviewed the two U.S. professors of the course, Professor Ingham and Professor Burk. Both instructors shared their reflections about the group projects, disclosed insights regarding specific students, and described strategies they felt were useful in supporting students' group work. Cami and Mia, two U.S. Teaching Assistants (TAs), also participated in interviews, and provided perspectives from their experience as TAs, in addition to describing their past experiences as students in cross-national groups.

Summary

With its emphasis on experiential and cooperative learning methods, FS 280 provided a strategic context to conduct my research. Sixteen of my study participants were assigned to work in cross-national groups, and I was able observe three cross-national groups in their in-class meetings throughout the semester. Additionally, 11 students, two Teaching Assistants, and two instructors of the course participated in the interview portion of my research. In the next chapter, I will articulate how my interviews, observations, and document analysis from the participants and materials of FS 280 provided me with insights about my research questions.

CHAPTER FIVE: Findings

In this chapter, I will explain the key themes and subthemes that emerged in response to my three research questions and in relation to contemporary literature. Although there are places where themes have overlapping relevance to more than one research question, I will address findings to my research questions in the following order:

1. Experience of undergraduate students working in cross-national groups.
2. Conceptualizations of power differences in cross-national group work.
3. The role of cultural humility in mediating power differences in cross-national group work.

Cross-National Interactions within the Context of Cooperative Learning Groups

Cooperative learning, defined by Johnson et al. (2014), is the "instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning" (p. 87). The authors posited that true cooperative learning groups would demonstrate evidence of the following: positive interdependence, individual accountability, face-to-face promotive interaction, social skills, and group processing. They also claimed that groups experiencing these five conditions would be more likely to be successful academically and have more effective interpersonal relationships (Johnson et al., 2014). Based on the converging data in the themes I will describe below, classroom data suggests that students received support from the instructors intended to fulfill all five of these conditions. Thus, students had opportunities to experience varying degrees of true cooperative learning, based on the extent to which they engaged with the

resources provided to them. In this section, I will describe student interactions and experiences as related to the five conditions of cooperative learning, with a specific focus on how students in my case study experienced cross-national interactions within their cooperative learning groups.

Positive Interdependence

Johnson and Johnson (2009) discussed positive interdependence as a cornerstone of cooperative learning because it should focus students to be dependent on one another to achieve a shared goal successfully. The project work for FS 280 was quite extensive, and in many cases the projects involved significant levels of analysis, field research, and event planning. The fact that the work was intensive and experiential in nature made it essential for students to rely on one another to accomplish the interrelated tasks for each project. Acknowledging this, Professor Ingham encouraged students to assign roles within their group and utilize their strengths strategically when dividing up the work, all of which helped to establish a sense of positive interdependence. Another primary way that FS 280 instructors supported the development of positive interdependence was to help students articulate their collective "similar self-interests" soon after being assigned to their groups. By finding out students' preferences for project work through an initial questionnaire, Professors Ingham and Burk made it a priority to group students based on their self-interests, with the broader goal of motivating students to be successful in their project goals.

In an early group meeting, students discussed their interests in doing their project work, and then in Reflection Assignment #2, instructors asked students to reflect on the extent to which their group members shared related interests in their projects. All of the student participants who submitted this assignment were able to identify and articulate connections of similar self-interest within their group. For example, Hui described how all of her group members were interested in the broader issue of finding solutions to end hunger: "All of us think hunger is not only existing in developing countries, it is also an urgent issue for developed countries … we all want to figure out why hunger still exists in today's world and how to solve it" (Hui's Reflection Assignment #2). Renae compared the self-interests in her group as follows:

> I have a couple team members with self-interest similar to mine in that they would like to help the underprivileged, especially in the student population, via volunteering. Another group member has similar self interest in how food shelves run based on her nutrition major, as well as learning the needs specifically of the students on our campus. Our similar ages and group-project methodology amplifies my excitement to start working on this important issue (Renae's Reflection Assignment #2).

Later in her reflection assignment, Renae also made an explicit statement about how these commonalities would positively impact their group process: "I believe that our group's passions are intertwined in such a way that will make us a productive group, capable of succeeding in the goals that are made in compilation with the stakeholders"

(Renae's Reflection Assignment #2). In one of his reflection assignments, Ashwin also made a similar statement that having similar self-interests would help the group to thrive:

> I think I am lucky to have the similar personal interest with my groupmates. We share the same values and goals, which is very crucial for us to achieve the best result. By having similarities in these aspects, we are really on the same page, which means we have the same way of thinking how important this project is. We will be putting our best effort for this project to be successful and make an important and significant change to the world. We, as a team, are committed to working together as one team to achieve the same goal of bettering the world (Ashwin's Reflection Assignment #2).

From the groups I observed, this strategy for creating a sense of communal motivation seemed to be particularly influential in Group 5. Students in this group experienced a sense of bonding because they all enjoyed data analysis. Mason explained that their common interests quickly helped them to build trust and appreciate each other's strengths: "We all kind of able to um, bond over the fact that we had such similar strengths … and can have like inside discussions about those things in like a class like that like the econometrics that we talked about …." (Mason's Interview Transcript). Jie, the international student in the group, seemed excited to have identified common interests with his U.S. classmates, and described how having similar professional goals created the ability for he and his groupmates to communicate easily with one another:

> The second secret is our good private relationships. We share the similar background, and we have similar interest in data analysis. That makes us have

> more topics in common. When talking to professional words, we are familiar with that, and that saves us a lot of time (Jie's Mid-Semester Reflection).

Individual Accountability

Johnson and Johnson (2009) indicated that a second key feature of true cooperative learning groups is the extent to which there is a method for ensuring that individuals are responsible for contributing to the group. The instructors had measures in place to assess individual contributions, such as the Mid-Semester Group Reflection, which allowed group members to reflect directly on the extent to which their contributions were equal to those of their group members. Furthermore, Professor Ingham created a cohesive team report with students' feedback about each other, which created an opportunity to share any concerns group members had about each other's contributions. Additionally, group members had the chance to evaluate their peers' total contributions through the Peer Evaluation assignment. In my analysis of students' interviews and reflections, a few sub-themes emerged that highlight possible instructional strategies that seemed to have encouraged greater individual accountability: "making it relevant" and "set ground rules for the group."

"Making it relevant." One key theme that emerged in my data analysis related to individual accountability was the emphasis that instructors placed on the relevance, or in their words, "urgency" of the project work. This was framed from the beginning of class as a way for students assess their own interest in engaging in critical issues related to food justice. As part of their weekly reflection assignments, students were asked to

reflect on the urgency of their project work. As a result, all of the student participants in my study wrote about their interest to engage in work that could positively impact their local communities. For some students the alignment of school work to community impact seemed to encourage a stronger sense of individual accountability by affecting their personal interests and motivations. For example, contrasting her own struggles with food insecurity to the challenges that others faced, Jamie stated:

> As a nutrition major I am aware of the ramifications of food insecurity, and while financially I still struggle to keep my head above water, I know there are countless others who have been, or are currently in, a situation far worse than I can possibly comprehend. Giving a voice to those unable to speak for themselves and advocating for solutions to hunger is important to me personally (Jamie's Reflection Assignment #2).

From Group 8, Hui articulated how the topic of hunger was an issue with global relevance, which made her feel connected to the urgent issues of real life: "I think this topic is pretty close to our real life. We can get some experiences and lessons from the real past experiences. Hunger problem is an urgent problem because it is a world issue now" (Hui's Reflection Assignment #2). From Group 5, Jie commented that it was beneficial to apply textbook knowledge to real world practice:

> The biggest attraction is the project itself. We will be accessible to some data that is not publicly published. The more important is, we have the real practice to do what we learned in econometrics. We have chance to apply regression and use

> formulas in real world example, and that is awesome (Jie's Reflection Assignment #3).

Helping students to see how their personal interests intersect with their projects may have been a strategic way for instructors to increase their levels of intrinsic motivation to do the work. Gagné and Deci (2005) articulated the important connection between personal interest and intrinsic motivation in their explanation of self-determination theory: "Intrinsic motivation involves people doing an activity because they find it interesting and derive spontaneous satisfaction from the activity itself" (p. 331). Increasing students' intrinsic motivation could be an important strategy to help them follow through on their individual responsibilities to the group, not because they feel obligated, but because they are more likely to be personally invested in the work.

"Set ground rules for the group." The instructors also required students to complete a memorandum of understanding (MOU) agreement, which contributed to the group's understanding of their larger purpose as well as what was expected for their individual accountability. The completed MOU needed to include a detailed description of the project, how the group members would make decisions, complete tasks, and track their progress. As previously mentioned, Professor Ingham also encouraged students to formally assign roles within their group work, and to support this, she gave them a list of possible roles that they could use, with the following written comments:

> You really need to define who will take the lead on different tasks. This will be very helpful in holding each other accountable. Think about how you plan to do the work and then break it down - for instance, for interviews - who will schedule

> the interview? Who will conduct the interview? Who will determine interview questions? Who will take notes and pull out important feedback? You could also break it down by group roles (who is a natural group leader? Who is good at taking detailed notes? Who is good at scheduling and keeping people in the loop and accountable?) (Project Outline & MOU Instructions).

Some students found the tools such as the MOU agreement and the designated role activity to be useful ways to create healthy systems for accountability. For example, two international students and four U.S. students discussed how assigning roles was a strategy that could help them stay individually accountable to the group. Renae commented, "I think determining roles is still helpful just 'cause it keeps us accountable even if all the roles aren't necessarily applicable" (Renae's Interview Transcript). In his final peer evaluation, Jie explained how having roles helped his group to be more productive and responsible:

> The group working goes on well, and as I mentioned earlier, everyone has made his own contribution. I believe one of the reasons is the effective way of job assignment. As we followed the instructions of MOU, we formed a table, which regulates the specific tasks for every member in our team. We also have our specific role when doing interview and working as a team (Jie's Reflection Assignment #3).

However, Maeve commented that the roles felt somewhat forced or unnecessary. She explained that her group members did not understand the reason for establishing roles:

> And like that was kind of an awkward experience for me, (laughs) like being in that and then ... 'cause everyone was kind of like, "Well, I don't know, like, why do we have to do that? Is that really important?" And like, um, and it is kinda 'cause it's like ... I don't ... you know, and it feels weird to be like, "Well, I want to be the person who's like facilitating conversation ... " (Maeve's Interview Transcript).

Although initially in my observations, several groups seemed uncertain about what an MOU was or how to complete it, one international student and three U.S. students claimed that it was a useful tool for accountability. Renae considered it to be:

> … a detailed assignment that helped pave the way of a timeline and of group expectations. I think starting a group project in this official manner really helped establish a level of respect and dedication needed to successfully complete this feat (Renae's Peer Evaluation).

Similarly, Mason described it as effective in helping him and his groupmates to recognize their responsibility to each other and to their project partners:

> Um, I think the memorandum of understanding, how we all had to sign it, is-is almost just like locks you into like a contract, which was nice, because it's um, I mean even if you want to like skip out on some of the work or whatever, it's like you still signed those things that you kind of have like an obligation to fulfill (Mason's Interview Transcript).

However, even with these measures in place to encourage accountability, a few students noted their frustrations related to equality of contributions:

> As the semester went, Kadim and Andy did not finish their tasks on time. Ebo and I did our part on time. Therefore, we had to wait for Kadim and Andy to finish before assembling the final project. There happened a time when Kadim asked Andy to do all their tasks (Ashwin's Peer Evaluation).
>
> …
>
> After the [final] class period and before we submitted our final project, I asked for help in finishing the brochure and creating an analysis to send to Hunger Solutions. I got absolutely no help. I outlined exactly what they could do to help and not a single member helped (Aaron's Peer Evaluation).
>
> …
>
> As the project progressed, the division of labor became much less equal, and very apparently so. I was the only member of the group able to attend [the hunger event] for the entire duration, and there were numerous occasions in which I had to remind Margaret of what the entire purpose of our event was (Jamie's Peer Evaluation).

This data from students' experiences demonstrates that even with formal accountability measures in place, group members still faced challenges when individuals did not fulfill their commitments. Frustrations with this "free-riding" (Popov et al., 2012, p. 312) is a theme found repeatedly in the research on group work, and while establishing systems to encourage accountability is one important part of the equation, these student comments indicate that they could benefit from interventions when their groupmates choose to violate the terms of initial agreements.

Face-to-Face Promotive Interaction

Johnson, Johnson, and Smith (2014) described promotive interaction as a natural result of positive interdependence, in which students engage in productive behaviors with their group members, including "orally explaining how to solve problems, discussing the nature of the concepts being learned, teaching one's knowledge to classmates, challenging each other's reasoning and conclusions, and connecting present with past learning" (p. 94). Because the group project was a focal point for students enrolled in FS 280, the instructors set aside time in four class periods for students to meet in their groups. Professor Ingham and Professor Burk intentionally checked in with groups during several of these in-class meeting times, checking to see if students had questions.

"The face time ... is the biggest part of increasing communication." For many students, these in-class group meetings provided a space to experience enhanced communication. Nine of the student participants (seven U.S. students and two international students) made explicit comments about how having this face time in class was something they really appreciated, and some of the student comments highlight the types of promotive interactions they experienced as a result. Cal explained how meeting in class provided a solution for the difficulties involved in scheduling out-of-class meetings and improved communication overall:

> So to find the time for three for our group and there's sometimes, most groups have four people. So it's like, finding the time for all four people to meet is nearly impossible. So when you have time in class, when everybody you know for sure

> is going to be there, that's been huge for just the communication with the whole group (Cal's Interview Transcript).

Kayla described how meeting in class helped her group members to feel more comfortable with one another, which also helped to make communication easier:

> The time in class was very helpful, um, 'cause it already kind of put us in a place that we're together, um, and somewhat comfortable. You know we weren't trying to go out of our way to be at a different coffee shop in someone else's neighborhood or anything like that you know? Um, I think that was helpful in just getting us started and acquainted. Um, 'cause the face time, I think is the biggest part of increasing communication (Kayla's Interview Transcript).

Shan agreed with this, stating that "They [the instructors] just leave us a lot of time so I think it really is good to, to improve my communication because I have enough time to, um communication with my group members … if I had some questions" (Shan's Interview Transcript). Jamie explained that hearing each other's opinions in person, when combined with reading nonverbal cues, was a much more effective way to build understanding:

> And then, you know ... It's easier I feel for certain things, especially when it comes to like, you know if everyone's sharing opinions on how to move forward with something … Um, partially just because um, you know, like tone and inflection and whatever emotion is behind, and opinion is also reflected, so then you can know, like, does this person feel very strongly about this standpoint, or is this just like, an idea getting kinda tossed into the wind, like- You know. And be

> able to kind of listen to one another and kind of views of, or like everyone's opinions I feel is also a lot easier- in face-to-face interaction (Jamie's Interview Transcript).

Having this face-to-face time was especially important because interview participants described how generally difficult it was to find out-of-class meeting times. Two international students and five U.S. students confirmed that their typical approach to group work was to avoid meeting in person, if possible, or wait to meet right before the project deadline. These students explained that their daily schedules were so busy that coordinating a meeting time that worked for everyone was intense and challenging. Nelson described the competing priorities that made scheduling out-of-class group meetings difficult:

> … everybody's so busy with all their other full class loads and … working and stuff like that, that it just gets tough. And then, um, you're kind of doing your own thing, so, um, I'd say yeah it's like hardly ... maybe probably the last week before it's due (laughs) that's when we would meet (Nelson's Interview Transcript).

"The dynamics of this are so different now." As I completed my observations and interviews, I learned that when students met in person, every group used Google Docs in some way to organize their work, and most groups that I observed used Google Docs actively during their in-person meetings. When I interviewed Professor Ingham, she explained how it was initially a surprise for her to realize students were often using their meeting times to interact electronically:

> I feel like the dynamics of this are so different now because they all interact with four computer screens in front of 'em ... It took me the whole semester to get used to that. Because sometimes they would just be sitting there and not saying anything and it was just like, are they working? (Professor Ingham's Interview Transcript)

Professor Ingham went on to explain that she supported tools like Google Docs because the platform seemed to be a comfortable medium to enhance productivity. In our interviews, all of the U.S. and international students and both TAs had something positive to say about using Google Docs; for instance, that it provided an effective and efficient way to be productive, it saved them time, helped to streamline their tasks, allowed them to access and edit shared documents so they could provide instantaneous feedback to one another.

However, not everyone felt positively about the use of Google Docs. For example, Hui described a negative experience with Google Docs in group work for a previous course, in which one of her group members deleted and rewrote a section contributed by another group member without communicating about it, which led to tension and conflict. After this experience, Hui felt that Google Docs could quickly become an ineffective replacement for face-to-face conversations because it allowed students to complete tasks, or in some cases, sabotage each other's work, without discussing opinions in more depth. She explained her concerns in our interview:

> Yeah, because, because like if I put something new on the Google Doc, but another person thinks oh, you are wrong, so just delete it. So, why, why, you

> delete my idea. I don't know how you think. You're just putting your idea. I don't know why you think this (Hui's Interview Transcript).

Besides her frustration that students could simply delete each other's work without explanation, Hui was also bothered by her observation that often students just typed their ideas in Google Docs but did not discuss them. She commented,

> Yeah, and they, and we usually type the main points and not the ... We won't provide the reason why we, why we think so. So, maybe some other people don't understand why you can't work it out with this idea. So, ha-, having the discussions are very necessary after we provide, our ideas (Hui's Interview Transcript).

Here Hui acknowledged that choosing not to discuss ideas described in the Google Docs robbed the group of a meaningful opportunity for dialogue. In the scenario that she described, it also seems that the use of Google Docs set up an easy opportunity for certain students to exercise power over others – without the ramification of having to explain decisions. Use of power in this way jeopardizes the potential for promotive interactions to foster healthy group development, and instead can lead to dysfunctional conflict and result in negative experiences for students.

Similarly, after observing student group work in FS 280 as a TA, and in doing her own group work as a student, Mia also felt that use of Google Docs "shuts off communication" (Mia's Interview Transcript). She elaborated on her perspective by articulating how Google Docs can lead to less collaboration and constructive discussion amongst group members:

> Like now that we have this medium that we can all interact on and like and be on at the same time, um I think that that cuts down on conversation um and actually figuring things out because you can kind of just go to this document and be like working on it, but you don't actually have to be talking about it. You can just like split up work and all be working on it at the same time (Mia's Interview Transcript).

Hui's and Mia's concerns about students working in Google Docs but not discussing their work in depth matched the patterns of communication I frequently observed in Groups 3 and 5. Students in these two groups would typically begin with a short time of discussion, to make some key decisions and discuss priority tasks, but after this, group members began working online or in Google Docs with considerably less of the types of "promotive" interactions that Johnson and Johnson (2014) described. On many occasions, students would be working on their computers, in many cases within Google Docs, in total silence together for long periods of time. For example, I noted a few different times when students were almost non-responsive to each other, although they appeared to be hard at work in their Google Docs files. At one point during a meeting with Group 5, I noted that "Nelson speaks up and says 'I like these graphs.' Alex responds and says 'yeah.' Neither look up from their computers during this exchange" (Group 5, Meeting 3 Notes).

However, Group 4's interactions were remarkably different, possibly because they did not rely on Google Docs files during their in-person meetings (although they did use it as a tool to organize their work outside of class). More than the other two groups,

they were more likely to be seated in a circle facing one another, and also facilitated more face-to-face, ongoing dialogue about the details of their project:

> They are working on figuring out how to contact their community. Ebo brings up a point about the Hispanic population to consider, that not all Spanish speakers should be grouped together into one group. Andy interacts with him about this point, as they discuss how to target groups that consider themselves to be Hispanic. Andy points out that grocery stores might be a good place to start. Kadim and Andy discuss the best way to reach out and break into the cultural groups that frequent places like grocery stores. Andy asks how to make a flyer look culturally appropriate? Ebo agrees this could be challenging. Andy asks what's the next step after someone takes a flyer. Ebo says whoever is there with the flyer must be equipped with preliminary information to give to the person who is interested in the helpline info (Group 4, Meeting 2 Notes).

All of the groups that I observed engaged in some promotive interaction; however, Group 4 seemed to more often engage in collaborative dialogue with greater nonverbal engagement than group members in Group 3 or Group 5.

Although this speculation that use of Google Docs "shuts off" communication was a concern only voiced by two case study participants, it has some support from research conducted by Turkle (2016), who claimed that while making our lives more convenient, advances in technology have in many cases, reduced the interactive quality of in-person communications. Apple, Reis-Bergan, Adams, and Saunders (2011) promoted Google Docs as an innovative tool for fostering accessible and convenient collaboration

and, in some cases, increasing student satisfaction with group work, yet Turkle (2016) reported that its use prioritizes efficient productivity over the meaningful interactions that can emerge from collaborative face-to-face conversations. Other scholars have speculated about the role that digital technologies play in reducing awareness of emotion and nonverbal cues. For example, Konrath, O'Brien, and Hsing (2011) conducted a meta-analysis on empathy levels of college students, and demonstrated that there was a 40 percent decline in students' abilities to express empathy over a period of thirty years. Konrath et al. proposed that this digression in empathy was directly related to students' increasingly frequent use of technological devices to communicate. Furthermore, Sana, Weston, and Cepeda (2013) found that when students used their laptops to multitask during a class session, their comprehension levels were impaired and they achieved lower test performance than their peers who were not multitasking on laptops. Although Sana et al.'s study was conducted in the context of a course lecture, the authors demonstrated how students struggled to process information being spoken to them when they were productively engaged on their laptops, a finding which may have implications for students who use Google Docs during face-to-face cooperative learning sessions. Adding further concern, Kirschner, Jochems, and Krejins (2005) made the important point that technological tools simply serve to reinforce students' task-based behaviors because they cannot truly replicate an environment that compels meaningful social interactions. They noted:

> Though there is more than enough empirical evidence that "deep" and "significant" learning is facilitated through dialogue, and even though most

> technological environments use a wide range of generic and specific tools to promote dialogue, ... their actual use is disappointing and the intended "deep learning" often fails to take place. Once the novelty has worn off, the tools are discarded and a feeling of uneasiness in the environment bubbles to the top. In our view, this is because such environments often lack the social interaction necessary for collaboration (Kirschner et al., 2005, p. 8).

Even when students are meeting in person, the use of online document collaboration like Google Docs may heighten students' awareness of the tasks that need to be completed and diminish their awareness of the opportunities they have to socially engage with their group members.

Based on my findings and previous research conducted by Turkle (2015), Konrath et al. (2011), and Sana et al. (2013), more study is warranted to determine if the use of Google Docs compromises students' attention and empathy levels and reinforces a task-orientation approach within face-to-face cooperative learning. And on a pedagogical level, the "different dynamics" created by the use of Google Docs poses intriguing complications for cooperative learning in cross-national groups, and therefore necessitates increased consideration from instructors who are hopeful to achieve deep collaboration and intercultural dialogue with the support of such tools. Further discussion of Google Docs will emerge later in Chapter 5 as I will provide accounts from case study participants who also describe its potential to serve as an equalizer in their group dynamics.

Social Skills

Johnson and Johnson (2014) described social skills as the capacity that group members have to establish trust, effective communication, and healthy conflict resolution methods. They asserted that "Leadership, decision-making, trust- building, communication, and conflict-management skills have to be taught just as purposefully and precisely as academic skills" (Johnson & Johnson, 2014 p. 845). One of the key ways that Professor Ingham provided opportunities for students to build social skills was through the use of a one-on-one interview exercise. This "one-on-one" exercise was designed in the format of a 20-minute peer interview. Students were randomly assigned to partners and appointed to the roles of interviewer and interviewee. Interviewers were instructed to only speak 20% of the time, and to spend that time asking critical questions to gain a deeper understanding of their partner's background, motivations, and passions. The interviewee was encouraged to respond to their partner's questions, with their responses ideally comprising 80% of the total conversation time. Professor Ingham emphasized the importance of developing deep listening skills through this exercise, and conveyed how the development of those skills would support students in all of their future careers and relationships. A course handout outlined key characteristics of a one-on-one and described the interaction as an effective method for getting to know others who have different backgrounds:

> A one-on-one involves a conscious exploration of another person's interests, passions, most important relationships, and stories. One-on-ones depend on

> putting aside prejudgments and stereotypes and listening carefully and strategically. It helps to develop respect for people of different backgrounds and is the foundation for work across differences (One-on-One Interviews handout, see Appendix H).

Throughout the semester, Professor Ingham took time to review the purpose of the one-on-one exercise and reiterate the importance of being engaged in the conversations. She also offered recommendations for students' nonverbal communication, explaining that by assuming an open posture towards their partners, students could facilitate a more meaningful and genuine conversation. Three U.S. students specifically mentioned the one-on-one interviews as a helpful strategy to support the development of their interpersonal skills. For example, Kadim commented that interviewing peers helped him to feel more comfortable interacting with community members for his project and learn valuable information from students who did not share his major:

> The one-on-ones allowed us to communicate our story and listen to someone else's. We practiced this [as a] class four to five times and it helped most during our project because we had to conduct multiple interviews with people around the community. Most of the courses I have taken over the last two years have primarily consisted of Nutritional majors. This class only had about 30% nutrition majors while the other majority were something else like food systems or business agriculture. Interviewing them really gave me insight on something other than my

> own major which allowed me to see the food system from a different perspective (Kadim's Final Narrative).

Renae described how practicing the one-on-one interviews supported her ability to better understand and accept the perspectives of others:

> Learning the skeleton of a "one-on-one" certainly provided the foundation for remembering to keep perspective no matter who or how different the person in front of you may be compared to yourself. This was such a vital and practical example of the necessary skills and traits that we will need to carry with us to our future field of work, no matter what it may be. Of course this also relates to our everyday interactions no matter where we are or who we come across in life. Beyond this, it really shows that if you take a little bit of time to get to know someone, you will discover why that person may think a little different than you, and generally it becomes understandable as well (Renae's Final Narrative).

Jamie mentioned the one-on-ones in my interview with her when she was explaining how she felt that more could be done to help students in her project group get to know one another better. Although she did not state it directly, she implied that having an exercise like the one-on-one interviewing embedded as a part of the group process might help group members learn about each other and facilitate better interpersonal relationships:

> If you're just going to throw out a bunch of people that don't really have shared history together, like, you know, first of all, like what are they gonna, like you know, how are they gonna be able to relate to one another? And be able to like,

> even just communicate, not necessarily on a group project but just with one another in general. Like, you know, like shared interests. So, it's like if you're just putting a bunch of random people together, like that's not really a guarantee that it's gonna pan out the way you want it to. So like, you know, kind of like the one-on-one type interview things that we're doing in here- ... You know I feel like being able to just have more like, in-class time to be able to communicate as a group would help a lot, just to kind of get more comfortable with one another, and to learn a little bit more about the group member's personality type, so that you know, moving forward ... Like, I guess how dependable someone might be, or how reliable they're going to be for getting something done in a certain time frame, or like, if they're going to be more like a leadership kind of role, or, you know (Jamie's Interview Transcript).

Besides the three U.S. students mentioned here, other student interviewees did not talk about the one-on-ones when I asked them to identify instructional strategies that provided the most support for their group work. It is possible they still found them to be valuable, but further research is needed to determine if other students had the same types of positive experiences that Kadim and Renae described. From an instructional perspective, Professor Burk explained that although she viewed the one-on-ones as intended to foster deeper trust between students, she was not sure to what extent trust had been built between students one-to-one times or during their group work. At one point in our interview, she also remarked that some students may have viewed the one-on-ones to be obligatory. She commented,

> I feel like they get a little tired of the sort of discussion questions, kind of, or you know, the one-on-ones. I think ... Once they're doing them, I think it's fine, but I think like, "Oh, here we have to do this again." (Professor Burk's Interview Transcript).

Professor Ingham also seemed to feel that some students may have viewed the one-on-ones as more of another task to complete than a critical opportunity to improve their interpersonal skills. She commented that one of her goals for future project teams is to help make a stronger connection to show how one-to-one interviews can advance students' relationship-building skills in general, and their listening skills specifically:

> As I was saying earlier, I know that I need to be more explicit about forcing them to practice that skill. Um, we sort of glossed over it a little bit. I think I gave it [the one-on-ones] to them as something to do in addition to a number of other things. So, I want them, I think next time I'll have them take the time and we'll do three one on ones in a row so that they're all each in a position to ... Or over the series of a number of weeks given them an opportunity to develop those relationships with their teammates (Professor Ingham's Interview Transcript).

It is possible that students did not recognize the one-on-one interviews to be particularly valuable because at least some of the case study participants viewed group work to be less about relationships and more about getting things done. For example, three U.S. students and one international student commented that due to the complications introduced by collaboration, they would prefer to work on their own. Nelson explained his preference for individual work as follows:

> It's tough to get on the same page, um, with like, with the groups just, uh, what we're supposed to be doing and stuff like that when we don't meet. So, um, um ... Yeah, I mean ... Yeah, I, I just don't ... I mean, I guess I don't mind it but it's not ... I'd rather probably do my own assignments, I guess, uh, in, in general (Nelson's Interview Transcript).

Similarly, two U.S. students explicitly articulated that group work was not about relationship building but it was more focused on achieving a goal or accomplishing a task. For example, Margaret explained her preference to stop "chit chat" in order to be productive:

> Like, I hate when people just chit chat. I'm like, 'We're meeting. This is valuable time to me.' (laughs) So I try and stop conversation a lot, which is probably kind of annoying to some people, but ... And I feel like I delegate tasks a lot. Or like, 'Can you do that? You do that and I'll do this and let's do it now.' So like, I delegate tasks and then try and keep people on track. Instead of like, me, I don't like, throw around too many ideas. I'm more of like, 'Do this, do that, get it done' (Margaret's Interview Transcript).

Maeve shared that even though some instructors will encourage networking and relationship building, she had experienced group work as a very task-oriented activity in her time at the university. She explained:

> And I think the university even in general, it's more about getting your work done. They don't teach you to like, build relationships with people. You know, they tell you to network and stuff but in terms of like, working in the classroom, it's not

> really about getting to know other people. It's about getting stuff done. … and I think, especially can be difficult in, you know, for a group project, like what we're doing that we are getting a grade for (Maeve's Interview Transcript).

To provide more evidence of the instrumental nature of this group work, I often noted during my observations that students seemed to be much more focused on accomplishing tasks than engaged in informal chatting or relationship-building conversations. To demonstrate examples of this, I recorded notes about the presence or absence of "chit-chat" during my group observation times.

> Overall, the group's attention is very focused on their computers and they stay focused on their task of working on the email (Group 3, Meeting 3 Notes).
>
> ….
>
> This group in general seems FOCUSED but not much small talk or banter is happening. Once Ebo stops asking questions, they sit in silence (Group 4, Meeting 1 Notes).
>
> ….
>
> This group is not very talkative in general, from what I have observed. This meeting is fairly typical of the other meetings. They each are working productively on a different part of the presentation. For the beginning portion of the meeting, Jie is really the only one actively trying to generate conversation between the group members, and with little response. However, it seems that the group just does not talk a lot in general (Group 5, Meeting 4 Notes).

Because of the focused and task-oriented tone in the group meetings that I observed, I did not witness many explicit examples of students practicing social skills or actively building relationships within their groups. Perhaps because the one-on-one interviews were structured separately from the group work, the student participants did not seem to apply the one-on-one protocol to their group relationships. Offering further possible explanation for this, Maeve commented during our interview that although she recognized that instructors had provided some resources to help build relationships within groups, she did not feel that students understood the rationale for using the tools. She felt that this could be solved if instructors could take some time early on in the group project time to promote team building using more interactive and engaging ways. As an example, she suggested the following idea for the instructors to try: "Maybe it would be something like, okay, before you come to class today, fill out this survey and figure out what communication style you have and then do it [as an in] class activity ..." (Maeve's Interview Transcript). Similar to Maeve, Mia also agreed that a more explicit and structured emphasis on building team relationships early in the semester could be beneficial:

> I still feel like giving groups like a challenge or giving them some kind of group work thing they have to do or solve like with multiple people in a group before they get introduced to the project, I still feel like something along those lines like that would be a helpful thing (Mia's Interview Transcript).

By suggesting for students to complete team-building activities in the early stages of group work, Maeve and Mia may be proposing a more strategic approach for

instructors who desire to see students build interpersonal and intercultural skills through group projects. If students typically approach their group work with a task-oriented mindset (as did several in my case study), building relationships might be viewed as taking away time from accomplishing the other more achievement-oriented goals of group work. Thus students who are inclined to view group work more as a set of goals to accomplish may respond better if relationship-building efforts are formally integrated into the group objectives. Although Johnson and Johnson (1987) posited that practicing social skills is a key condition to experience true cooperative learning, instructors may need to reframe relationship-building as an explicit goal of group work in order to appeal to students who are concerned about saving time and completing concrete objectives related to their project (Arkoudis et al., 2013).

Group Processing

Table 6 below provides an overview of the reflection assignments that gave students a chance to engage in group processing, which Johnson and Johnson (2009) described as an important opportunity to assess how group members are interacting and what could help to improve intragroup relationships. Professor Ingham structured these writing assignments in a way that allowed students to reflect on other aspects of cooperative learning. For example, Reflection Assignment #2 encourages consideration of positive interdependence with its focus on exploring shared self-interests. Reflection Assignment #3, while more focused as a topical reflection on the theme of cultural humility, also gave students the option to reflect on their group dynamics. The Mid-

Semester Reflection and the Peer Evaluation encouraged consideration of individual accountability and social skills.

Table 6: *FS 280 Group Reflection Assignments*

Reflection Assignment	Reflection Questions
Reflection #2	• What is my personal self-interest in this project? • What are the self-interests of my groupmates? • Who are the groups of people who will be impacted in some way by this work?
Mid-Semester Reflection	• Reflect on your individual contributions. How have you been contributing to the project to date? Is your contribution in balance with the contributions of others? • Reflect on your group work. To date, is your group working well together? How does the group ensure that everyone contributes? How does the group communicate, make decisions, and handle disagreement? • Overall experience: Are you enjoying the project (is it interesting, relevant)? Why, why not?
Reflection #3	• Reflect on how the concept of cultural humility plays a role in your current group project - you could talk about how you interact with your group mates; how you will incorporate the concept into your final project; or how you are demonstrating active cultural humility in how your approach the work, the questions you ask, and the stakeholders you reach out to understand their perspective in relation to the project.

Reflection Assignment	Reflection Questions
Peer Evaluation	• Write a short essay discussing your experience participating in the group project. Feel free to be candid about your own participation and that of the other group members (this will remain confidential). Discuss how work was assigned/delegated, strategies used for leadership, how did everyone work together (or not work together) to get the final resource & presentation pulled together. What worked, what would you do differently?

After students submitted their Mid-Semester Reflection, Professor Ingham compiled the feedback of individual group members into a team report, which she shared with the intentions of helping group members to see areas for improvement. In addition to the reflective work students were doing on an individual basis, this summative team report was a clear example of how groups had the potential to process together, and learn "insight into how to behave more effectively" (Yager et al., 1986, p. 395). Professor Ingham shared that she had used this method for three years to help support more effective group dynamics. She elaborated more about how this worked in our interview:

> … the intent is to summarize the strengths and weaknesses as defined by the group members. So they're all giving me, "Hey part is going really great and this part is going well, or this part is not going great, or I wish we did more of x." And then I send it back to the team anonymously as a full team report and I make recommendations like, "it sounds like your team has figured out great communication tools," I'll say, or, "there are too many tools and maybe you should narrow it down to one" (Professor Ingham's Interview Transcript).

She described this process as a time-consuming endeavor but felt that it gave groups a way to self-correct if needed. When analyzing student responses to this group processing opportunity, I noted that most of the student participants (nine U.S. students and four international students) had primarily positive comments about their group dynamics. I classified these comments as positive because they often expressed a fairly optimistic view of the group work process, communication methods, and equality of contributions. For example, Margaret submitted the following comments about her group work:

> Our group work is working well together for the most part. We all have our designated roles in order to make sure everyone contributes. When we need to we arrange a time where most of us are able to meet. We communicate through text and also through email. We haven't had to make big decisions yet because we just attended the hunger day on the hill event, which was the starting point of our project. If disagreement were to arise we would handle the dispute respectfully by talking through the issue (Margaret's Mid-Semester Group Reflection).

Li explained that her group had strong communication, good decision-making skills, and effective systems.

> So far, our group communicate well and we can rapidly make decisions and agree with each other. Brent and Cal are really nice, they illustrate the food shelves' issue and their ideas to me when I am confused about it. I think our system is effective and we will work together smoothly in the following days (Li's Mid-Semester Group Reflection).

A smaller number of my student participants (four U.S. students and one international student) provided constructive feedback for other group members or expressed complaints about their group process in their Mid-Semester Group Reflection. From Group 4, Ashwin and Andy expressed slight frustrations with their communication and progress in meeting goals:

> I believe everyone has their own to do list in this project, but it could have been better if we can give our outcomes every week in the Google Docs. Tomorrow, I will tell them what I think we should improve (Ashwin's Mid-Semester Group Reflection).
>
> ...
>
> ... communication was very spotty over the last week or two. I trust everyone is doing their work, but it feels like we haven't accomplished anything yet since we met in class two weeks ago (Andy's Mid-Semester Group Reflection).

In Group 5, Aaron was the only one who had slightly negative feedback, and shared his concern that when taking a lead for the group, he was taking on more of the group's work. However, he also acknowledged that he could play a role in helping other group members contribute more equally:

> I would say that there has bit of an imbalance in contributions within the group as I feel I have contributed the most. This imbalance is not large or detrimental in any regard, but I feel like it stems from me taking the lead. Going forward, I will try to not seize that role, but allow my group members to take over parts of the

> project and support their individual leadership (Aaron's Mid-Semester Group Reflection).

In both Groups 1 and 3, the U.S. students shared some specific feedback related to the cross-national dynamics in their groups. In Group 3, for example, Cal expressed his concerns that Li did not feel comfortable enough to share her opinion. In his reflections, he was careful to validate her contributions overall as equal and affirm her as a hard worker, so this was not formed as a complaint about her lack of contribution to the group. Rather he framed his feedback based upon his own uncertainty about how to make Li more comfortable to voice her thoughts in their discussions.

> When making decisions we all say what we think and then decide what's the best direction to go. I think it has been working well so far. My only concern is that Li is quiet and doesn't really talk much. I'm just afraid that she doesn't think she can express her ideas when that is not the case. I try to probe her ideas by asking her what she thinks but most times she just agrees so I don't know her true thoughts. I want her to know she can contribute and her ideas are valued (Cal's Mid-Semester Group Reflection).

In her feedback, Li reflected upon her interactions with Cal and Brent positively, but she was somewhat critical of her own contributions. She did not mention the nature of her verbal contributions to the group discussions, but instead she explained her lack of experience with food shelves relative to her group members, and her desire to "communicate more with team members" and "contribute more" to the project.

> However, I think my contribution may be not in balance with the contribution of others, since I am not familiar with food shelves and even did not know it's critical functions to our society before doing this project. Both of Brent and Cal have experience of working and volunteering at food shelves, therefore they are confident about our project and considerate the work plan attentively. In the following semester, I would like to communicate more with team members and contribute more to our project, such as collecting interviews, recording videos and pictures, etc (Li's Mid-Semester Group Reflection).

Li's feedback in response to this reflection indicates that because of a lack of experience with the project topic of food shelves, she may not have felt as equipped or knowledgeable to voice her opinions. Cal does not mention this as a possible reason why Li is quiet, so it is unclear if he recognized that this may have influenced the ways she interacted in the group.

In Group 8, Kayla, the only U.S. student in the group, had more critical feedback about her international group members' contributions and their communication, while the international students in the group had only positive comments about the group members and overall process. Kayla seemed to feel that she was doing more work than her group members, and she framed the language barriers in her group as a "small problem," even though she is careful to note that it will not stop them from meeting their project goals.

> Our group work has been a little slow to get going because I think we were confused about exactly what our project was about and how to complete it. I feel, thus far, I have been doing more than my group mates, but I think that was due to

> the confusion. I think the language barrier causes a small problem, but nothing that will hinder project completion (Kayla's Mid-Semester Group Reflection).

In contrast to this, Hui and Shan, the two international student group members in Group 8, reported that contributions between group members were balanced, the division of labor was clear, and that communication was "smooth" and "harmonious."

> All in all, my group members and I contributed to group project in roughly the same. Our group is working well together. I think our group have a harmonious atmosphere. We communicated smooth, and got together to make decisions. Most of time we had similar ideas in project, we followed our chair Kayla if we have a several different ideas and do not know which one is better. Three of four group members are international students, Kayla always has enough patient to listen our ideas, and respect to each other. I think our group member work very well (Shan's Mid-Semester Group Reflection).
>
> ...
>
> In my mind, I think my contribution is in balance with others' because when we met, we were doing the same thing and helped one another. After every meet, we have clear division of work. This is also how our group ensure that everyone contributes (Hui's Mid-Semester Group Reflection).

Reflections from Group 8 provide one instance where there seems to be a mismatch between students' perceptions of the group communication process and of each other's contributions.

Because Professor Ingham emailed each group a summative report that represented all students' feedback, this exercise definitely seemed to provide an important opportunity to illuminate helpful insights about the ways in which group members were interacting together. Reflecting on students' comments mentioned above, this method for group processing seems like it would have been particularly useful for Groups 3 and 8 since communication patterns were mentioned as a concern in both groups. However, if students receive and read an email summarizing the feedback from their team members, it is unclear from the level of analysis conducted in my study if that would provide significant motivation for behavioral change, or what more might be needed to help the group process further and determine a concrete way to make improvements. Determining the effectiveness of utilizing this method for reporting on group feedback represents an important area for further study.

Student Perspectives on Cooperative Learning

Based on the themes that emerged in the previous section, students were provided with various types of instructional support, which helped to foster some degree of cooperative learning within the FS 280 groups. However, each group's experience of the five characteristics of cooperative learning likely varied. One important factor to consider in this variation is students' attitudes towards cooperative learning in general, and towards cross-national interactions specifically (for those in cross-national groups). In this section, I will describe students' general attitudes towards group work as well as how U.S. and international students describe experiencing cross-national interactions

within group work. I will also analyze how their perspectives and experiences compare to prominent themes in the literature.

"Mixed feelings, definitely." When we first began our conversations, I asked both U.S. and international student interview participants to share their general attitudes about group work (irrespective of the composition of the group). The dominant theme that emerged is represented by one participant's response that there are "mixed feelings definitely" (Maeve's Interview Transcript). In my interview with her, Maeve explained that she enjoyed working in teams and thought it was helpful to prepare her for a future career, which provides additional evidence of the value student participants placed on group work for instrumental purposes. Describing her mixed feelings, Maeve mentioned it was also easy to get frustrated by the challenges she encountered with scheduling meetings and the different levels of interest her group members often had in the assignment. Similar to Maeve, eight out of 13 student interview participants (seven U.S. students and one international student) explained that they also had somewhat "mixed feelings" about group work. These students described a combination of frustrations and benefits about group work. I have included several quotes below to show a summary of the various "mixed feelings" that participants described about group work.

> So, uh, I think group work is good because you can look at more information, get more new ideas. But, sometimes, I think group work, I prefer individual because, because … for teachers, they … don't know if we, uh, if everyone has the equal contribution (Hui's Interview Transcript).
>
> ...

My immediate response, any time I hear the words like group work, or group project, is, honestly a little bit of disdain. Even though I know that I do work well with groups and that there is a lot of benefits to working in groups, I've always been much more of an independent worker (Jamie's Interview Transcript).

...

I think if you can do it [group work] well then it should distribute the work evenly, so … it-it should like theoretically be easier, but life does not always work out that way (Mason's Interview Transcript).

...

I mean it [group work] seems kind of like a big task or hurdle to overcome at first but when you really get to dividing things it- I think it's kind of nice... (Renae's Interview Transcript).

...

Okay so I think group work can be um both frustrating and um oh what's the word I'm looking for um helpful at the same time… . Like being a student, being able to work on a report and have feedback and get feedback from other students on your writing, if you are editing, um each other's parts and just seeing like how they go about writing something or how they go about thinking about a problem that you need to address. That's really helpful. Um, it's frustrating at the same time because not all students are always at the same point as you are at or like not all students like to produce the same quality of work as you might like to produce (Mia's Interview Transcript).

Regarding the most common frustrations, seven interview participants (six U.S. students and one international student) described concerns about scheduling meetings, and seven (six U.S. students and one international student) talked about the challenges of trying to get everyone in the group to contribute equally. Furthermore, four U.S. students and two international students commented about the ineffectiveness of their chosen communication method. Kayla described the email communication dilemma her group faced: "Communication via email was not effective. If I wrote an email out to everyone, I would not get a response back until the last few weeks before the project deadline" (Kayla's Peer Evaluation). Although there were multiple other ways to connect besides email, students still faced barriers. For example, Maeve explained that it was challenging for her group to find a method that suited everyone's preferences:

> … there's me, there's another guy who was like, yeah, email is fine, and there are other people who like, I really prefer texting, and then there was one guy who really preferred being called on the phone actually and like, talking, you know. And it's like, how do you (laughs) like get to everyone, you know, and that was really challenging (Maeve's Interview Transcript).

Expressing similar frustrations, Ashwin shared how he had to customize communication in order to get a response from his group:

> One thing that did not work well was the communication between group members. This happens because no one responded on the group chat. When I sent a chat to them individually, they finally replied. In the future, I would make sure

that all team members knew the importance of communication (Aswhin's Peer Evaluation).

When articulating the benefits of group work (generally), four students (one international and three U.S. students) explained that they liked having access to a variety of strengths and knowledge from other group members, three U.S. students thought it was useful to split up the work, and three U.S. interviewees recognized was how group work can prepare students for life after college. Those students who found it useful to split up the project work and those who appreciated the preparatory nature of group interactions provide additional confirmation that many of my case study participants placed value on group work for instrumental purposes.

When reviewed summatively, it is clear that students' mixed feelings about group work are complex, and the apprehensions students expressed about communicating, ensuring equality in contributions, and managing time conflicts align closely with other studies on the challenges of cross-national group work (Popov et al., 2012). It is important for instructors to anticipate these complex attitudes when designing group projects and supporting students in their group interactions. When conceptualizing the conditions to engineer an optimal cooperative learning environment, Johnson and Johnson (2009) did not include a component that directly addresses managing students' attitudes and expectations about what they will experience in group work, and this may be one of cooperative learning theory's limitations. Because of the many variables that challenge the process of group work, students may need to have a clear understanding of the rationale for cooperative learning in order to be convinced that the positive outcomes

will be worth the challenges they will experience (Arkoudis et al., 2013; Reid & Garson, 2017; Spencer-Oatey & Dauber, 2016). Furthermore, as discussed in the next few paragraphs, the mixed feelings students can have can be intensified when working in cross-national groups.

The theme of "mixed feelings" continued to emerge as my interviewees began to describe their experiences working in cross-national groups. Both U.S. and international students described varied perspectives based on their experiences, including a range of advantages and apprehensions, and I observed different types of interactions in the three groups that I observed. In the following five sections, I will provide evidence to demonstrate the ways in which students have mixed feelings about their experiences of cross-national group work, including the advantages some students perceived to experience, reasons to explain the apprehensions and discomfort that some students experienced, and characteristics of cross-national situations in which some students reported to experience little to no discomfort.

"It's clearly impressive what they're doing." Much of the literature on cross-national group work focuses on the challenges that students experience in their interactions (Ippolito, 2007; Popov et al., 2012; Strauss & Young, 2011; Turner, 2009). Participants in my study encountered challenges in their comfort levels and in their communication. However, during our interviews, six U.S. students readily articulated the admiration they held for international students, describing their empathy for the language learning process, and their respect for the accomplishments of their international peers studying English at a U.S. university. These comments seemed to demonstrate some level

of awareness of the complex and challenging task that international students are undertaking when studying in their second language and adjusting to a new culture. These comments were not in direct response to any specific interview question, but instead often emerged as the topics in our conversation evolved. A sample of these comments includes the following:

> Like I said, it's clearly impressive what they're doing. Um, just because English is very difficult to learn and to know every way to use theirs for example or even yours. Um, it could be very, very tough. I mean, I'm still, you know, still learning the English language. So to expect somebody to pick it up in five years or 10 years, however long they've been learning it, besides their own languages, it's tough … If I was in China I would be pretty quiet too, you know what I mean? Just because I don't, you know, learn a second language it would be almost nearly impossible for me and just the, the courage for someone to come over and do that is crazy (Cal's Interview Transcript).
>
> …..
>
> You know I'm sure that's just a whole different learning curve for international students to have to deal with, science classes, so I never hold it against anyone by any means to do that in their second language when I can barely get through it in my first, so yeah … (Renae's Interview Transcript).
>
> ….
>
> But I think for the most part people look at international students and understand that's difficult and that they are in a different situation than the rest of us … I

couldn't imagine going to school in a different country and to this high of a level. You know? (Kayla's Interview Transcript)

While these comments were brief and often made in the context of telling a story or explaining a point related to group work, they indicate that some U.S. students may have fairly positive and empathetic mindsets towards their international student peers. This serves as a sharp contrast towards the more negative and frustrated attitudes that other host students have been reported to hold towards international students in previous research (Brown, 2009; Dunne, 2009; Popov et al., 2012). And yet while it is important to note this empathy, at the same time, it is also significant that these empathetic statements were not accompanied by a description of specific contributions that international students make to the learning that domestic students experience (although a few exceptions to this are discussed in a future section, "He's another student, I guess, just the same as me"). Further probing could be informative here, to explore and better understand why the U.S. students in this case study rarely mentioned how international students could influence their learning experience.

"I think it's good." International students also had some positive feedback to share about working with domestic students. When asked specifically about their feelings about cross-national group work, the three international student interviewees often responded first with their positive views, explaining how they viewed cross-national group work as an opportunity to either build relationships or learn from the U.S. students in their groups. Shan explained that group work provided a chance to build friendships with U.S. students: "I felt the happiness through group project, and built good

relationship with my group members" (Shan's Interview Transcript). Hui also described how she appreciated having language mistakes corrected and learning valuable strategies from her group members:

> I think it's good … work, it's good working with American students because of the language, they can help me a lot. … Yeah. They can, they can help me to express myself. So, especially, uh, when we need to do a presentation. So, I really ... They can help me to check grammar mistakes. They can help me to perfect my, like my presentation (Hui's Interview Transcript).

Li explained that while communication was easier when working with other Chinese students, she appreciated the benefits of working with U.S. students because they could explain things about which she was unfamiliar. In our interview, she described an example of this:

> Especially some ... some, some words, I don't know what's that means ... I, cause in my accounting class, we discuss the case, two case per semester, and some cases there, it has my difficult, I have never, I never seen, I never saw before. So I don't know what's that mean. And so, my American group members explain that (Li's Interview Transcript).

While these international student participants acknowledged communication challenges, they seemed to see value in the group work process because it gave them a chance to interact with and learn from their domestic peers, an opportunity that previous research has identified as not likely to occur frequently between most students (Brown, 2009; Dunne, 2009; Halualani et al., 2004; Halualani, 2010). The relational and

supportive value that the international student interviewees anticipated to experience from cross-national group work aligns with literature from previous studies (Brown, 2009; Dunne, 2009; Campbell, 2012). Yet when comparing the previous two sections, "it is really impressive" and "I think it's good," U.S. students found ways to empathize about the situation of international students, but international students could more clearly identify how cross-national group work was beneficial. In many cases it was because the international students felt they could learn something from their peers. It is noteworthy that U.S. students did not as readily identify the learning they could experience from working with international students. It is possible that the U.S. students had experienced fewer cross-national interactions in their time at the university, or as discussed in the next section, that levels of discomfort within cross-national group work may have created communication barriers that limited U.S. students from learning about international students' perspectives.

"It's uncomfortable." In the literature on cross-national interactions, one of the prevailing themes students have described is a level of anxiety in their interactions (Dunne, 2009; Peacock & Harrison, 2009). A similar theme emerged in my findings as both U.S. and international student participants described apprehensions that they had about working in cross-national groups. Eight U.S. student interviewees reported to experience varying degrees of discomfort within cross-national interactions. For example, Cal explained:

> Initial thought um, would be, you don't know what to expect, like you don't know- Um, what the, what they think of you almost in a way. Like, how .. I don't know.

> Just to break that barrier sometimes can be a little tricky... (Cal's Interview Transcript).

When sharing the strategies she might use in the context of cross-national group work, Margaret explained that trying to figure out how to navigate communication without singling international students out and making them uncomfortable was difficult to do.

> Yeah. Almost like, talking slower or like, trying to understand them. You kind of make them feel uncomfortable. So I feel like I would try and not make it very noticeable. Maybe just ask them random questions to make them feel like they're contributing, but ... It's kind of like when you're passing someone like, in the hallway, that you obviously like, they look different. You don't like, look at them. You know what I mean? Like, don't make it noticeable or like ... Or like one of those things (Margaret's Interview Transcript).

Eight out of the nine U.S. student interviewees explicitly identified language barriers as a key source of their discomfort. Renae explained:

> I mean I guess it's horrible to admit, but at first it might seem like it would make more of a challenge just 'cause you know with experiences with language, just even culture just differences. You know probably the way you go about communicating or starting things or just, you know … (Renae's Interview Transcript).

Kayla articulated the dynamics in her cross-national group as sometimes "uncomfortable and like nerve wracking, you know…" and after describing a time when she tried to help one of the international students in the group explain her ideas, she commented that "I

think that um, you know I'm trying to just convince myself that like, they're probably just as nervous as I am" (Kayla's Interview Transcript). Similarly, Jamie expressed concerns that she might offend an international student if she needed to ask them to repeat something, and was apprehensive that language challenges might make it more difficult to work together effectively:

> 'Cause like, I mean English is a hard enough language to learn, and I wouldn't want to be in the situation where I can make someone like, feel bad about, you know, not being well understood because of you know, like, a very strong accent. So it's kind of like, oh, I don't want to you know, offend someone, but at the same time, it's like, don't ... "Is there a way that is more comfortable for you?" … 'Cause it's like, how do you ask that without offending someone, you know. 'Cause there's no really, you know, like no matter how politely you phrase can phrase it, there's no way of getting around the fact that you're basically telling them, like, I can't really understand what you're saying, because like, you know, I just can't. So … So my concern with that kind of thing is like, oh, wow, I really hope that I don't just unintentionally, you know, offend someone, or you know, like I hope we're able to still be successful in like doing in-person group work with that language barrier there (Jamie's Interview Transcript).

Maeve had similar concerns as Jamie, in that she was unsure of how to push through a communication barrier. She provided a detailed account of an experience she had a few days prior, when she had invited an international student in her group to share her opinion:

> … it seemed too like she talked really quietly and she had like, a fairly thick accent, so I know like, I didn't catch everything she said, and I feel like, she was maybe shy about that or self-conscious about that. And I think like, for me too, it was like, I felt a little like, awkward about it too, where it's like, do I ask her like, to repeat herself or like, like, you know, um, 'cause I just can't ... yeah, like, she f-like, you could tell if she seemed a little uncomfortable as well (Maeve's Interview Transcript).

In their descriptions of working in cross-national groups, the three international student interviewees also focused on language barriers as one of the main reasons for their discomfort. Shan explained that it was difficult for her to understand what her U.S. peers were discussing.

> Uh, I think, uh hmm. I think hmm misunderstanding is uh just a, they used some words I never listened, I can't understand. Yeah but most of time I can understand hmm um, uh I think hmm some US student they uh, uh, they usually use the some, uh, words, yeah. So just uh, I can't understand them (Shan's Interview Transcript).

Shan also explained that because she was not sure how to overcome these communication barriers, it was her typical preference to "make a group just with Chinese students" and "avoid to talk with the U.S. students" (Shan's Interview Transcript). Li, too, found it to be difficult to express herself in group meetings with U.S. students:

> … most of the time I listen to our group members talk and uh, I think I'm, I've ... I don't talk ... I don't talk more in a group or in a group meeting. And uh, sometimes

> I don't know how to explain my feelings about the problem (Li's Interview Transcript).

Hui concurred with these views on the challenges of using English in a group situation:

> But, I think the biggest problem is the language because I, otherwise I stop ... Because of the language, I, sometimes I cannot express myself, uh, exactly, or sometimes I think I already expressed myself correctly, but they do not understand. So, it makes me feel embarrassed or sometimes I feel nervous a little bit to meet American students. So, that's the biggest problem, I think (Hui's Interview Transcript).

Evidence of this communicative discomfort was also somewhat frequent in one of the three cross-national groups that I observed. In Group 3, as mentioned previously, Li was frequently very quiet, even when Cal tried to find ways to engage her in discussion. At different points, including his interview and his Mid-Semester Group Reflection (as previously mentioned), Cal commented about Li's pattern of not speaking in their group meetings, and he explained that he was unsure of how to help her feel comfortable enough to share her opinions. Li also discussed this dynamic in our interview, sharing that she appreciated Cal's efforts to include her, but because of her shy personality and the language barriers she experienced, it was difficult for her to talk more:

> [Cal] and [Brent] thought that, sometimes I just listen to them, and ah, don't talk more about it, and they think I, I'm hesitate about it, about my words, ah. Actually, I really hesitate about my, about my words, about if I can explain my

> meaning clearly. So, hmm, they want me to talk more, yeah, uh, that's all (Li's Interview Transcript).

During our interview, Li expressed that she was somewhat uncertain about how to talk more, but she seemed to interpret Cal's feedback as a gesture of genuine support towards her. Here is an example of one such interaction that took place when only Cal and Li were meeting from their group to finalize their power point for the final presentation:

> "What kind of background should we do?" Cal asks. After Li doesn't answer (she is looking at her computer), Cal leans over and asks for her opinion again, politely, but more directly this time, about the different possible power point designs. Without responding verbally, she points to one she likes, and he clicks on it and says, "this one?" She doesn't respond, but quietly clicks through on his computer and tries out a few different designs. He references a background design that she is looking at and say, "you like this one? Simple" (with an affirming tone). He points to another one, and says "I also kind of like this one. I don't know, what do you think?' Li doesn't respond verbally but keeps looking as he scrolls through different options. He tries a different one and she nods agreement that that is the best one. "It's not so plain but it's not so involved," he comments, looking to Li for confirmation. She doesn't respond verbally but seems to be generally supportive of his selection for their power point (Group 3, Meeting 3 Notes).

In this excerpt, Cal was facilitating the conversation and used different approaches to break the silence. In a later conversation, Cal articulated some discomfort that Li continually chose to be silent despite his attempts to get her to talk. Although he did not explicitly identify anxiety or discomfort, his voice was strained indicating a sense of distress in the following excerpt; he also spoke more slowly, and paused frequently as if searching for the right words to explain the tension he seemed to feel:

> Yeah, yeah. Sometimes, I don't know, I feel like she still ... She's still like really quiet. Which is kind of, I don't know, I just want her to make sure she feels like she could tell, say what she wants. And then like I ... yesterday ... we went to the food shelf, I picked her up. And even in the car, like car ride, she was so quiet. Like feels like I'm like trying to have a conversation and she gives like a couple answers back (Cal's Interview Transcript).

Group 8 was another group that reported to experience some discomfort in communication. While I did not observe this group, I had the opportunity to interview two international students (Hui and Shan), and one U.S. student from the group (Kayla). This group was described by the professors as one that experienced the most communication challenges in comparison to other groups in the class. Kayla shared that from the beginning that her group members (including her) were fairly confused about the goals of their project. She also perceived that they experienced several challenges because they did not share the same first language. She explained that she tried to help guide the group by continually asking questions and attempting to clarify information,

but communication was often stifled due to language barriers. Kayla provided an example of this challenge:

> Um, other than that, when we would sit down and do group work, um, I did a lot of the talking. Which I tried not to. I tried to ask a lot of questions. I tried to um, you know, do you have any ... Are you confused by anything? Do you have any ideas? Um, but I think the language thing kind of came in, 'cause sometimes they'd say you know, "I have a thought but I'm not sure how to like process it…" (Kayla's Interview Transcript).

As previously mentioned in this section, commentary provided by Hui and Shan confirmed that they struggled to articulate their ideas in their group with Kayla because of challenges with English proficiency.

Reflecting on the themes of discomfort that are common in student accounts described in this section, is important to consider the limitations in applying cooperative learning theory to the cross-national interactions students experienced. One of Johnson and Johnson's (2009) assertions is that cooperative learning can be an effective support system to help improve relationships for diverse groups of students. However, there is a lack of research that explicitly analyzes the ways in which cross-national interactions occur within the context of cooperative learning. Cooperative learning theory was developed decades ago, and was commonplace in U.S. schools for the students who are now undergraduates. Thus U.S. students are likely to feel comfortable navigating situations that involve cooperative learning because they have developed an implicit understanding for the unwritten rules of group work. A limitation of Johnson and

Johnson's theory for cross-national group work is that it assumes all students approach group work with similar skills, knowledge, and experiences, which is likely not the case for cross-national groups. U.S. students are more likely to have an advantage because of their prior experience with cooperative learning and their status as native speakers of English, and international students have to find a way to learn the rules of U.S. group work that domestic students have learned since they were young students. Similar to Cal, U.S. students may attempt to integrate international students when working cross-nationally, but they may fail to realize that the starting point for international students is very different, and therefore, being truly inclusive of international students may be more complex than it seems.

Another important finding from this section on discomfort is that university students in my study were able to express vulnerabilities in intercultural dialogue that has not at all been discussed in cross-cultural theory. There is an established discussion in the literature about "competence" and even "humility," but the vulnerable discomfort described by my study participants represents a middle ground of wanting to do the right thing but not really knowing how or feeling comfortable to do so. Further research could explore the role that this type of communicative discomfort may play in the process of learning through intercultural interactions.

"He's another student, I guess, just the same as me." Although most of the U.S. student interviewees expressed concerns about feeling uncomfortable or encountering language barriers when working with international students, the U.S. students in Group 5 did not vocalize these concerns about working with their

international student colleague, Jie, and instead seemed to perceive him as more like "another student … just the same as me" (Nelson's Interview Transcript). Nelson shared that while other international students in previous groups he had worked with had been more quiet and harder to include, Jie seemed to have strong English proficiency and was comfortable contributing frequently to the group:

> Um, yeah, he definitely talks a lot and he's very vocal about what he ... his ideas. So it's been really easy with him to make sure like ... that we're incorporating him into the group (Nelson's Interview Transcript).

Mason also perceived the interactions in the group to be comfortable overall, and described the ease with which Jie communicated to be a result of his stronger English proficiency and his ability to communicate in a "straight forward way." While he may not have realized it, Mason's comments here likely indicate a preference for others to use the direct communication style that is more characteristic of interactions in the U.S.

> Well I feel like the-the just asking questions about um, if we were ever unclear about something he said it was always like a pretty straight forward way to like work through it, um, I mean his English was pretty good so I don't think it was really like, was ever like a huge issue (Mason's Interview Transcript).

Although Jie declined to participate in an interview, I observed him on multiple occasions participating actively in his group's discussions. He contributed in a number of different ways: asking clarifying questions, suggesting a direction for the group, giving his opinion, and discussing next steps for future meetings. In one of his weekly writing reflections, Jie made a comment about the desire of Chinese students to be more vocal in

the U.S. classroom, in order to disprove the stereotype that all Chinese students care about is studying. He commented, "We are urgent to prove that we are more confident to communicate with others, and we are not the most silent one in class anymore. We have multiple hobbies, values, and different personal experiences …" (Jie's Reflection Assignment #1). I observed that he appeared to talk with his groupmates with relative ease, and although his group members sometimes asked him to repeat or explain himself, which he immediately did. During one group meeting I made notes about the following interactions taking place in the group, demonstrating Jie's ability to interact comfortably with the face-paced, task-oriented nature of communication that was happening:

> In the beginning of my observation time, Nelson and Jie were primarily conferring with each other. They were discussing what to include for their presentation. Jie was organizing the power point presentation with feedback from Nelson. From time to time he also talked with Mason … Jie was frequently talking in this group meeting. A few times he asked Nelson a question and Nelson asked him to repeat, which he did so confidently. Then Jie would ask Mason for feedback … (Group 5, Meeting 3 Notes).

In his interview, Mason commented how all the group members demonstrated some type of active participation, equating Jie's contributions with those of the other group members:

> I would say once we got going it consisted of um, kind of seeing like where we were at as far as what we had gotten done, and then um, then he [Aaron] would kind of take the lead and set things up and then from there it'd be like um, uh, me

> and Jie or Nelson would like kind of offer ideas or kind of explain what input we had … (Mason's Interview Transcript).

In their interviews, Nelson and Mason also were able to articulate more specific learning benefits that can result from cross-national group work, something that other U.S. students in this case study did not do. For example, Nelson explained

> ... it's definitely interesting to be able to work with other people from different countries. You get to kind of learn their different experiences that you were, uh, never exposed to, I guess, and stuff like that. So you end up learning a lot from them usually (Nelson's Interview Transcript).

Mason also mentioned that he appreciated hearing Jie's input about the role the government should play to help with those who are struggling with food insecurity. He explained how Jie voiced a different cultural perspective when the group was creating their recommendations to improve SNAP outreach efforts:

> So I think that's just kind of like what I would notice the different, and I could have asked him more, if that would of played a role, but I feel like it's just, it's a different perspective on the role the government plays (Mason's Interview Transcript).

It is noteworthy here that U.S. students reported positive learning outcomes with Jie. One of the reasons why is that he communicates and works more like them than do other international students – he speaks up frequently, and appears to be comfortable navigating the task-oriented, direct communication style of the group. Essentially, it seems that Jie was able to assimilate more easily than other international students because

he had learned the ground rules and had quick fluency in English for keeping up with the conversation. When contrasted with the experiences of students in Groups 3 and 8, it seems that in order for U.S. students to experience intercultural learning through cross-national group work, international students must be able to play by the group work rules that are normalized in U.S. culture, be able to express themselves clearly in English, and be willing to speak up without invitation. This task is easier for some students than others.

Bourdieu's (1986) concept of cultural capital provides a useful paradigm to consider regarding the dynamics that emerged within Groups 3, 5, and 8 in my case study. Bourdieu established cultural capital as the knowledge base associated with the dominant culture in a society that individuals rely upon when interacting with others. Cultural capital is demonstrated by one's abilities to speak and write in ways that signal membership in a specific culture or subculture. When embodied in an educational context, cultural capital relates to a student's ability to comprehend and use language in a way that satisfies the norms and expectations of members of the dominant culture. An example of cultural capital applied to group work in the U.S. might include students interacting with their peers in ways that allow them to accomplish tasks with an efficient approach and demonstrate verbal competence quickly and with ease; this was most strongly demonstrated within Group 5.

Relatedly, Bourdieu's (1986) conceptualization of "habitus" represents one's implicit knowledge and understanding of all of the values that are accepted as normal within a specific cultural context. Bourdieu posited that individuals respond quickly and

effortlessly when habitus is aligned within a familiar setting. For example, when asked to engage in a group discussion, U.S. students may typically respond by assertively jumping into the conversation and working efficiently to accomplish their task list. Bourdieu also described a type of disconnect when one's habitus and context are misaligned, and in these situations, individuals must learn to interact in ways that are congruent with unspoken cultural expectations. Since international students have been conditioned to act in ways that align with various academic traditions from around the world, understanding the rules involved with group work communication in the U.S. is likely to be an ambiguous process. Leask (2009) referenced these types of unspoken rules as the "hidden curriculum" within institutions of higher education. The cross-national interactions that occurred within Groups 3 and 8 suggest that U.S. students may lack critical awareness of the implicit rules that govern the process of group work in U.S. higher education, and that international students may have difficulty being included in group work when U.S. students are unaware of the structural and integration challenges they may face.

"We each come from very diverse backgrounds." While none of the students in Group 4 chose to participate as interview participants, I observed three of their in-class meetings, and noted that although they represented many different cultural backgrounds, they seemed to experience levels of comfort in their interactions that were similar to students in Group 5. In one of his reflection assignments, Ashwin clarified that although he was an international student, English was one of the primary languages in his home country. Thus I did not observe any clear examples of the type of discomfort that student

interviewees reported to sometimes experience in cross-national interactions. Instead, the group members seemed to participate fairly equally and comfortably; for example:

> Ashwin asks, "who knows how to make a website?" They discuss together who has website development skills. Ashwin shows an example of a website on his laptop while everyone leans in to listen. In general, there seems to be good engagement from each group member. Fairly equal balance of participation and discussion from each group member. Kadim often speaks but does not necessarily engage in eye contact as readily. When Ashwin talks he is often engaging with Ebo. Andy starts to ask clarifying questions "is there any way we could…?" He is specifically dialoguing with Ebo ... (Group 4, Meeting 1 Notes).

Although Ashwin was the only international student in this group, this particular group was not majority U.S. white Americans, as all other groups were. Two out of the three U.S. students self-reported to be first or second generation immigrants, with only one group member identifying as a white American student. Ashwin, Kadim, and Ebo reflected favorably upon this diversity at different points in their group reflections. For example, Kadim and Ebo shared the following comments about their diversity:

> Based on the self-interests of my groupmates, we are very similar. Two of my groupmates come from different countries. One was an immigrant 10 years ago, while the other is an international student. Although we come from different backgrounds, I believe we each share the same goal in helping people that are in a less fortunate position (Kadim's Reflection Assignment #2).
>
> ….

> In my group are individuals who are non-natives. We came from different countries and know the challenge we ourselves or our family faced. All of us are familiar with the experience of being without resource in our own life or those whom we interact with. This is what connects us and will refer to whenever necessary to resolve our differences (Ebo's Reflection Assignment #2).

These reflections indicate that some of the group members in Group 4 found a sense of commonality in their differences that helped to make them feel more integrated and view each other as equals. And because the nature of their project work required them to connect and communicate with community members from different cultural backgrounds, the diversity between the group members seemed to be valued by some as a resource for the project work (Arkoudis et al., 2013). Evidence of this mindset is noticeable in some of the previously mentioned comments as well as the following excerpts from Kadim's reflection assignments:

> We have worked on cultural humility with each member in the group based on our ideas and where we come from. Each of us has more knowledge/access to a specific community that is used in our project. It is important that we share this knowledge with each other to understand the differences in the culture. (Kadim's Reflection Assignment #3).
>
> ...
>
> I believe that each of my group members have been selected from different cultures so that we can get a different perspective from each member. We also

> have different connections to each of the targeted community that this project is designed for (Kadim's Mid-Semester Group Reflection).

Notably, only Andy, the white U.S. student, did not comment specifically in any of his reflections about the diversity of the group. He did, however, share the following reflections about the cross-cultural nature of their project work. While his comments here may indicate somewhat of a disconnect to the cultural backgrounds of the project stakeholders, he also expressed a willingness to learn and adapt.

> Most of our scope is of cultures that I do not belong in. I am not related to any of our target audiences besides that we live in similar areas. I am doing my best to understand why these cultures need our focus and how to give them adequate ideas that do not threaten their ideals (Andy's Reflection Assignment #3).

In summary, for Group 4 in particular, the rules of group work culture seemed to be different. This group, as opposed to all others, was not explicitly facilitated by a white U.S. student who took charge of the project, and for various reasons, diversity within the group seemed to be viewed by most group members as an asset to the group.

Discussion of Findings and Implications for Cooperative Learning

Several of the current studies on cross-national interactions within group work depict host students as resentful and, in some cases, even resistant to engaging with their international student peers (Dunne, 2009; Ippolito, 2007; Peacock & Brown, 2009; Turner, 2009). For example, Turner (2009) described a somewhat hostile culture that emerged in the cross-national groups in her class, in which local students characterized

international students with stereotypes and harsh judgments. However, I did not find evidence of the same type of negatively charged frustrations evident in the U.S. students' perspectives. Several U.S. interviewees described anxieties they felt about cross-national interactions and acknowledged difficulties in communication, which is similar to other studies reviewed in Chapter 2, but their general attitudes towards working with international students cannot be categorized as negative. Instead, the white U.S. students in this case study described some feelings of understanding toward their international student colleagues and more recent immigrant U.S. students expressed a sense of comradery with international students. In a more recent and comprehensive survey of international and domestic students, Spencer-Oatey and Dauber (2016) also noted a lack of negativity in students' attitudes about cross-national group work.

An additional finding revealed that several white U.S. participants who took leadership positions in groups, and identified themselves as verbal, reported discomfort, and ascribed the discomfort to language barriers of international students. Such ascription aligns closely aligns with what is also described in other studies (Dunne, 2009; Peacock & Harrison, 2009; Spencer-Oatey & Dauber, 2016). The largest communicative challenges in my case study appeared to be between white U.S. (often males) and Chinese (often female) students who self-identified as having difficulty with on-demand verbal language.

Furthermore, my finding that international students expressed mixed feelings about cross-national group work also aligns with other research (Leki, 2001; Long & Porter, 1985; Xue, 2013). While Hui, Shan, and Li looked to experience benefits from

interacting with U.S. students, at the same time they grappled with difficulties in being able to express themselves effectively. The ways in which these students characterized their communication difficulties suggests that if international students possess lower levels of English proficiency (either real or perceived), or are accustomed to different cultural norms in communication, it may be problematic for international students to engage in promotive interactions and practice social skills, two conditions that Johnson and Johnson (2009) determined to be key for engagement in authentic cooperative learning. Thus, as Baker and Clark (2009) recommended, it may be beneficial for international students to receive additional communicative support within a cooperative learning environment.

Some U.S. students in this study identified their own weaknesses in communicating effectively with international students, and to some extent, indicated an openness to finding strategies to make international students feel more comfortable in conversations. This sense of openness mixed with uncertainty on the part of U.S. students seems to provide confirmation for Spencer-Oatey and Dauber's (2016) claim that domestic students need greater preparation to identify "effective strategies for handling communication challenges in these contexts" (p. 13). What has not yet been identified in previous research is the type of communication support domestic students need when interacting with international students. Specifically, the comments provided by U.S. students in this study indicate support could be targeted to help them: 1) navigate language barriers in a respectful way without causing offense; 2) understand international

students' accents effectively; and 3) invite greater participation from international students in an engaging and comfortable way.

Based on my findings, it seems likely that at least in some cases language barriers may impede engagement from both international and domestic students. Findings from this study indicate that the role that group processing plays in a cross-national group may be an important element in cooperative learning. Because group processing is intended to raise students' awareness about their communication effectiveness and help them troubleshoot challenges, this study indicates that strategic debriefing may be the best prospect for enhancing cross-national interactions in cooperative learning. This finding aligns with other studies that have emphasized the importance of group processing (see DeVita, 2001; Woods et al., 2010). DeVita (2001) reported that students need explicit support to acknowledge and navigate communication challenges in order to achieve experience intercultural learning in a cross-national group. He suggested that when working collaboratively across cultural and linguistic barriers, all students may benefit from an intentional group process designed to achieve a sense of "cultural synergy" (DeVita, 2001, p. 32). However, whereas Johnson and Johnson (1987) established that students should utilize group processing as an intervention to solve a problem, findings from this study indicate that processing may be an important element from the very beginning of group development.

Data from my study suggests that because U.S. students are often in the majority, have great comfort with the unwritten rules of group work dynamics, and can speak fluently (if not in an accented and "like" infused version) in English, they emerge as

power players in groups. The task-oriented nature of group focus may lead to tensions when fast communication and decisive opinions are needed to move projects quickly to completion. Specific issues related to power differentials will be discussed in greater detail in the next section.

Power Differences in Cross-National Groups

The previous section illustrated that students in this case study were provided with multiple resources and supports intended to help them experience an effective cooperative learning environment. Yet even with this support, some students described considerable communication barriers and discomfort within their cross-national groups. To provide further insights about factors that may have contributed to these communication barriers, I will describe the ways in which students conceptualized power differentials in their cross-national group work. Because of its focus on establishing equal status to reduce prejudice and improve intergroup attitudes, I will report findings through the lens of Allport's (1954) contact theory as a framework by which to analyze students' interactions.

As previously noted in the review of the literature, because cooperative learning is designed to foster equal engagement in the pursuit of common goals, members of cooperative learning groups may also often meet the conditions set forth in Allport's (1954) intergroup contact theory. Two of the four conditions in intergroup contact theory overlap in Johnson and Johnson's (1987) conceptualization of group learning: having shared goals and working together in a cooperative climate. As explained in the previous

section, a variety of instructional supports were utilized to help FS 280 students identify similar interests and facilitate a cooperative environment in their groups. I have also provided evidence to show how students received supportive leadership from their instructors, which is another condition of contact theory. In the section that follows, I will expand my discussion of this and provide evidence of the ways in which instructors offered specific support for groups engaged in cross-national interactions. I will also report about factors students perceived to influence power dynamics within their groups.

Establishing Supportive Leadership for Cross-National Group Work

Professor Burk and Professor Ingham reported that they worked hard to create multiple methods of support for students throughout the group project process. In addition to the tools they encouraged students to use, such as the MOU, group roles, and group reflection assignments, they also made themselves available to students during group meeting times in class, and on specific occasions they checked in directly with each group to ask if there were any questions. During a group work session in mid-March, Professor Ingham reiterated her commitment to offer in-class support to the groups in her comments to students:

> Use your time wisely today so you get off on the right foot today. Find your teams, find a place that's comfortable to work. If you want to work downstairs… I'm going to check in with every team today so don't go too far (March 20 Class Notes).

Describing it as a constant work in progress to improve group work strategies, Professor Ingham explained that “we certainly also altered how we do the group work over the years to hopefully set them [students] up for more success” (Professor Ingham’s Interview Transcript). One U.S. student mentioned that after having a lot of negative group work experiences, he recognized and appreciated the support offered in FS 280:

> I think this class was very different than all the other group projects I've been in as far as usually, a teacher will just say, "Hey, this is your group. Figure it out yourself.... well you're adults, like you're going to be in the workforce, like you know, "Figure this out yourself,” versus … which it does lead to conflict sometimes, And um, if there's not always that like maturity level there or that kind of like, uh, want-wanting to like take responsibility, you can have issues. I think in this class, there were so many like from like the memorandum of understanding to constantly having like work time as a group in class … So I think that there are a lot of uh, I guess like agreements or the things that you know made people feel more um, I think it's more of like a responsibility … (Mason’s Interview Transcript).

Besides offering group work strategies to the whole class, the professors also explained to me on different occasions their interest in supporting international students directly. In a previous semester the instructors had consulted with the University’s teaching and learning center in order to identify methods they could use to enhance the learning experience for international students. When I asked the instructors what they believed was particularly helpful for cross-national group work, they discussed some key

strategies, and also described some of the challenges they had faced. This specific attention to improving the experience of international students in group work seems to align with what Allport (1954) had intended with the component of supportive leadership. Pettigrew and Tropp (2011) explained that in order to help reduce prejudices, authority figures need to demonstrate explicit support for improving positive intergroup relationships.

Professor Ingham discussed a range of different strategies that she perceived to likely be beneficial for international students. For example, she felt that international students may find support in written communication such as project descriptions, suggested timelines for project completion, and other guidelines that helped them to decode the project expectations early on. Furthermore, she felt that practicing the one-to-one interviews was a key tool to help all students become better communicators. Mentioning that she wanted to facilitate more one-on-one interviews in future classes, she explained that she perceived these conversations to help international students develop greater confidence in communicating, "and also hopefully teaches the English speaking students to be better listeners" (Professor Ingham's Interview Transcript). Professor Ingham also conveyed that her belief that choosing designated roles could support international students by ensuring that group members think carefully about how to contribute in a clear and defined way, and to do so from their areas of strength. She was hopeful that assigning roles could establish an inclusive structure that would protect international students from being excluded:

> I would imagine when you get to the end of the project, when everyone's scrambling, I can see that people would cut out anybody who would slow down the process of communication. So, that's where you see the U.S. students ... dominating and just doing it. So maybe there's a little less of that that happens (Professor Ingham's Interview Transcript).

Because there is considerable discussion in the literature about the most effective group formation strategies (Kelly, 2009; Reid & Garson, 2017), I inquired to learn more about how Professor Ingham used the Project Preference Questionnaire to assign students into groups. She explained that she tried to first create groups according to project interest, and then shifted students around to try to create a balanced representation of students from different cultural and language backgrounds. While acknowledging that achieving this cultural and linguistic balance was important, she seemed to place slightly more emphasis on making sure that students were assigned to a topic that was motivating to them.

The strategies that Professor Ingham reported as helpful for cross-national groups, including the use of visual materials, community building techniques, strategic group member selection, and structured discussion roles, are viewed in the teaching and learning literature as strategies modeled after principles of universal design. These principles are described as opportunities to enhance learning for all students, in addition to creating a more supportive experience for international students (Carroll & Ryan, 2005). Additionally, several of these instructional methods were recommended by Arkoudis et al. (2013) in their study involving focus groups with instructors and students

in Australia. As a result of their study, Arkoudis et al. (2013) reported six best practices combined into an "Interaction for Learning Framework," (p. 232) and three that focus specifically on creating opportunities for meaningful cross-national interactions in the classroom, including planning curriculum that supports interactions, designing experiences that foster interaction, and offering specific support to build students' skills for interaction. With the focus on one-to-one interviews, strategic group formation, peer feedback, and reflection assignments, Professor Ingham designed the FS 280 project in a way that aligned with many of the strategies described by Arkoudis et al's recommendations. However, some key strategies proposed by the authors but not employed by Professor Ingham include: 1) explicitly identifying interaction across cultural and linguistic differences as a specific course outcome, and 2) explaining the benefits of such interaction to students. Arkoudis et al. (2013) explained these strategies as "a critical component of the framework" (p. 233), so a future study could assess the extent to which the group learning experience is impacted by attending to these recommendations.

When I interviewed her about identifying specific support for cross-national groups, Professor Burk affirmed that she believed many of the methods described by Professor Ingham were useful for cross-national group work. She also provided more insight about the communication process she observed within Group 8, which was comprised of three international students from China (including Hui and Shan) and one U.S. student (Kayla). Both Professor Burk and Professor Ingham indicated that this group seemed to struggle to achieve their objectives, evidenced when they had a difficult

time articulating what the purpose of Food Day was in their final presentation. Professor Burk had tried to check in with this group and provide more direction for them, but even after doing this, she explained that she was somewhat unsure what they needed to be able to move forward. She described her strategies during the check-ins to consist of asking questions, suggesting next steps, and recommending that they seek further help from Professor Ingham. She concluded that the group likely experienced a communication barrier since there were several international students, but she was also puzzled that the U.S. student who served as the group's facilitator (Kayla) had not been able to successfully navigate the communication challenges and help the group achieve their goals more successfully.

> Um, you know, and there was one group that was the three quietest Chinese girls and a white American girl, and her role was to sort of facilitate the group. I mean, that was the role they all agreed on. Um, and honestly, I would say she didn't particularly do a good job of it, but still they all kind of deferred to her … I mean, that was a, an interesting group because I don't think their project was particularly successful, um, and I could say that there was some communication issues because of the cross-cultural thing, except that their facilitator was an American ... student, and so that's an interesting dynamic too. Like, what, what was the communication breakdown there? (Professor Burk's Interview Transcript).

When talking about instructional interventions with the students from Group 8, only Kayla acknowledged that Professor Burk had checked in with her group. While she said that she appreciated that direct opportunity to get more guidance, she explained her

concern that an in-person group consultation with the instructor may not be a comfortable environment to discuss challenges group members might be experiencing:

> … and she [Professor Burk] sits down and talks with us and checks in, but then again, you know if nobody answered, I would try and chime in, give everybody some time and if she noticed that I was the only speaking, she'd be like, "Okay, what about you guys?" [gesturing as if directed to the international students in the group]. But then it was still kind of uncomfortable. So having, having a group check-in like that, where everybody can participate in the most comfortable way, I think would help everyone feel more of a cohesive group too (Kayla's Interview Transcript).

Based on her observations of how Group 8 with a majority of international students had struggled to produce a successful final project, Professor Burk concluded it was likely more effective to assign students to work in diverse groups. She explained how when she taught the cooking lab she frequently tried to encourage or assign mixed culture group work so that the U.S. and international students would have opportunities to work together and benefit from each other's different perspectives. She commented,

> So, um, I guess I think a mix of students can generally be successful. Even if there's one or two international students, even if they don't speak great English. If there's more diversity in the group, I think that actually works better (Professor Burk's Interview Transcript).

Mia, one of the U.S. Teaching Assistants, also discussed why she thought it was important to have mixed nationality groups. In this excerpt from her interview, she

described a previous class in which the instructors and TAs had to invest more time into helping a group that was composed of all international students.

> ... in the lecture class I think um I remember um when I TA'd for it, we had two groups I think that were all international students and the rest of the groups they were intermixed with um U.S. students and um, it was just we had to put in a lot more work in communicating with them and talking them through things than we did when the groups were mixed. Like- Because if there were um issues like if they didn't really understand a part of the project or if they had to interact or email someone, interact with someone or email someone I think the language barrier was a piece of that and when they didn't have any other U.S. students in their group and they were kind of just all on their own together, then um we had to put in more effort to be like making sure that they're on the right track and they're doing everything that we thought they should be doing with that community partner (Mia's Interview Transcript).

Mia's comments reinforce a theme that was consistent throughout much of the data – that U.S. students and instructors seemed to assume that U.S. students were more skilled at group work than international students. These assumptions were also demonstrated in groups whereby students who were most adept at on-demand verbal communication and decision-making emerged as leaders, especially in groups where the majority of students were U.S. whites.

The data presented in this section indicates that instructors provided two levels of support. The first layer of support was described by Professor Ingham, and involved the

proactive establishment of specific structures like group roles, written handouts, questionnaires, etc., all of which may also help foster the principles of cooperative learning. Second, Professor Burk demonstrated that it is equally important to check in and consult with students to help provide guidance for communication challenges related to language or culture. Although Kayla reflected that she did not consider the consultation her group had received from Professor Burk to provide the most comfortable environment, she did not clarify what type of consultation would have been more comfortable, so this represents a specific topic for future study. Group 8's experience demonstrates that U.S. instructors may benefit if provided with more tools to help students navigate communication barriers in these types of situations, a conclusion which is also supported by Kimmel and Volet's (2012) study, and Spencer-Oatey and Dauber's (2016) findings.

It is important to note that in all cases described in this section, the underlying assumptions that guided the norms of group work communication were relatively unquestioned. Group work in this case study emerges as a pedagogical practice that appears to privilege some students over others because of their experience with group work or because of characteristics that are most valuable in group members. The following section will investigate status issues within the group work assignments of this study.

Examining Equal Status within Cross-National Interactions

Allport (1954) established the condition of equal status as one condition necessary for individuals from diverse backgrounds to experience positive contact which would result in prejudice reduction between in-group and outgroup members. Pettigrew and Tropp (2011) further clarified equal status to be defined as the extent to which members of two diverse groups "have the opportunity, ability, and power to shape the rules of interaction" (p. 62). Since only a handful of studies have addressed power differentials and their potential impacts on cross-national groups (Ippolito, 2007; Jon, 2013; Leki, 2001; Turner, 2009; Wright & Lander, 2003), one of the priorities of my case study was to determine how group members viewed power differences within their cross-national interactions. I sought to understand more about this primarily by asking student interview participants to describe who they believed to have the most influence in their groups, and why those individuals might be perceived to have a higher status. At the same time, I also made notes during my group observations about the students who assumed leadership and the ways in which they managed or shared their influence.

"The confident, talkative ones." Five out of the eight U.S. student interviewees, the two U.S. Teaching Assistants, and the two U.S. instructors in my study clearly stated their views that those who held more influence or power in groups were often the most vocal students. Interview participants often added in other associations with their descriptions of this type of student, including characteristics such as confident, outgoing, extroverted, and assertive. Professor Ingham commented that having "an extroverted

personality type" definitely gave students an advantage in the group (Professor Ingham's Interview Transcript). Mia provided examples of what other behaviors this vocal student is likely to demonstrate: "if like they talk first, they have louder voices, they sit up, they assert themselves, they have opinions, they I don't know. They ask questions. I think all of those things" (Mia's Interview Transcript).

Renae explained that while she didn't think it was necessary to be extroverted to assume a superior position in a group, she did think it was important to "speak out first" (Renae's Interview Transcript). She explained that the person who spoke first might have the best chance to set the tone and take on a leadership role in the group. Mason felt that it was important to differentiate this talkative type of group member as "somebody who is not afraid to be both vocal and opinionated and somebody … who is not afraid to uh, let somebody know in a group that they disagree with them ..." (Mason's Interview Transcript). Professor Burk explained the most influential group member as someone who had a combination of confidence and willingness to talk: "I do think, whether you're really confident or whether you're really lacking confidence totally affects your ability to engage comfortably in a group" (Professor Burk's Interview Transcript).

Viewing confident, talkative students as the most influential in a group setting is a common perception that is well documented by various studies of face-to-face group work in the U.S. (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009). In fact, previous research has demonstrated that students with extroverted personalities are believed to be the most intelligent (even if this is not the case), and the most likely to emerge as leaders in U.S. contexts (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009; Paulhus & Morgan, 1997; Taggar, Hackew, &

Saha, 1999). In her comprehensive work describing the values of introversion, "Quiet," Susan Cain (2013) discussed the extroverted ideals praised in Western culture and argued for more recognition of the undervalued qualities of introverted personalities. Relying on research from McCrae (2004), which explains how cultural values can influence personality traits, Cain (2013) asserted that individuals from Asian culture tend to prefer introversion and harmony in groups, which contrasts with the bold, verbal competence that is expected and rewarded in U.S. culture. Being careful not to overgeneralize, Cain (2013) explained further:

> The point is not that one is superior to the other, but that a profound difference in cultural values has a powerful impact on personality styles favored by each culture. In the West, we subscribe to the Extrovert Ideal, while in much of Asia (at least before the Westernization of the past several decades), silence is golden. These contrasting outlooks affect the things we say when our roommates' dishes pile up in the sink – and the things we don't say in a university classroom (p. 190).

Cain's point that one type of communicative style is not better than another would likely be accepted by many academics in the U.S. At the same time, consciously or unconsciously, academics repeatedly require learning experiences that privilege one type of student over another. Such privilege, especially as it relates to leadership in groups, is discussed below.

"The American students might usually be the leader." The three international student interviewees, and one of the U.S. student interviewees, conceptualized power in

terms of differences in national status and language proficiency. International students from two of the cross-national groups in FS 280 conveyed that it was common for U.S. students to take on higher levels of influence in a cross-national group. Hui explained, "If there's American students, I think, the students, the American students might usually be the leader" (Hui's Interview Transcript). She elaborated more on her opinion by explaining that U.S. students should always be the note-takers because international students might not comprehend everything accurately. Hui also clarified that both international students and U.S. students could be the leader, but U.S. students preferred to take the leadership role: "American students are really more prepared for, I mean, they, they want to be the leader … The American students says, 'I want to be the leader.' So, that's why; it's not (that) we want them to be the leader" (Hui's Interview Transcript).

When we discussed power and influence in groups, Shan agreed with this as well, stating "Uh you mean that, who is the leader? Something ... yeah. I think that, hmm, most of time it is the U.S. student. I just follow them" (Shan's Interview Transcript). She provided an example of this from a different class she was in:

> … in some classes, hmm, such as ES-- ESPN classes I'm taking now, uh, we divide in just three people, uh three people in the one small group and uh, we should write our discussion answer each classes, and my group member, uh, is a U.S. student and she, she just, uh, I think maybe, she, she thinks it is job for her to write down the answers. I never write some answers, the worksheet (Shan's Interview Transcript).

Shan referenced her group as an example, where Kayla was the only U.S. student. She explained,

> Uh I think, uh … this small group is a, is a-- is a kind of special example because of us three. We are Chinese. But we, we, we have no ideas, something like that, about all group projects. Uh, the, the U.S. students, she's a leader, and also come up with some good ideas and to make a decision about some opinions, or something like that. Yeah. And uh, uh, but if we have some ideas, we just ask her. "Uh it is okay?" For our project, we're not sure this is okay or not (Shan's Interview Transcript).

Shan also shared that it seemed U.S. students are very comfortable with the American style of education; their teachers have encouraged them to express themselves without worrying about having one right answer, so this gives them the confidence needed to provide direction for the rest of the group:

> … Chinese and U.S. have different teaching skill so, in China just teacher taught, teachers taught all the classes and we don't have the time to talk. But so, we, we, we influence this different, we influence this still, so, [if] we are not sure our answer is correct, we must [have it] approved by someone. Yeah I, I notice that in the US classes, different, uh, some student just come up with some ideas, maybe not related to this questions, the teacher will said, oh good. Something like that. They will not said, oh you are incorrect. I think maybe this, this, they are familiar with this teaching style. They have enough confidence. They, they are, they ... they are themselves, they are leader (Shan's Interview Transcript).

Li, the only international student in the Food Story Collection Group concurred that U.S. students should be the leaders, but primarily discussed their status as native speakers that she felt gave them an advantage:

> Um, cause we're not the native speaker, and um, for the project, for one role project um ... maybe sometimes, we can ah, may-may-maybe sometimes we will mis-misunderstanding the idea of the project, and um ... I think we are used to, um, used to not being the leader of the group, just um ... work with others, and um, come to, to just, come, ah ... not be the leader to, um pick up … the um, idea or the future image of our ... I don't know how to say it. Like ...it's better for a group when, ah, most of them are, um, American students. Um, I think that we Chinese students, um, don't, um, don't try to be the leader of such groups (Li's Interview Transcript).

Kayla was the only U.S. student who explicitly talked about cultural background as a factor that might create power differentials in a group. In our interview she commented, "I feel like people of like minority groups might feel like they have less influence because they might feel that way in society as a whole …. So like, traditionally a white male might have the strongest influence" (Kayla's Interview Transcript). When describing her group dynamics, she mentioned that the international students in her group indicated they wanted her to take the leadership role. Kayla described how this conversation went:

> Well, I mean, initially like I said they, you know we gave the titles and one was the facilitator and that's what they, they said at first they're like, "Well, you'll be

> leader." I was like, "No. No. No. No. No." (laughs). Facilitator, I'll keep the conversation going but I didn't want to be someone that they all just kind of followed (Kayla's Interview Transcript).

Kayla's consciousness about power dynamics in group projects provided an additional perspective on assumed leadership. She was the linguistically and pedagogically privileged member of her team, but was also uncomfortable with her presumed leadership role. She was also the only U.S. student interviewee who recognized the role that national status might play in determining group dynamics. When contrasted with the feedback from international students about how they viewed national status to influence group dynamics, the lack of awareness demonstrated by U.S. students provides support for Pettigrew and Tropp's (2011) assertion that in-group members (in this case, U.S. students) have a different experience of group interactions than outgroup members (international students).

This lack of awareness on behalf of the U.S. students represents a critical point of consideration for educators who wish to foster greater intercultural learning in their students. Jon (2013), whose study demonstrated that Korean students perceived power to be differentiated based on country of origin and linguistic proficiency, argued that efforts need to be taken to increase students' awareness of the power differentials that may emerge between students of diverse backgrounds:

> ... students need to be aware of potential power differentials and discrimination when they study abroad in other countries or when they have international students studying in their own countries. Domestic students also need to be

> conscious of the issues of power differentials and discrimination, as they may impose such issues on international students, according to their countries of origin and language. Administrators and faculty need to recognize this issue and help students realize it so that they can learn how to behave appropriately in meeting with students from different cultures (Jon, 2013, p. 451).

While international students may be acutely aware of their lower status in certain situations, data from this study indicate that domestic students may hold implicit biases that in some cases may contribute to structural inequities in the classroom.

"They usually give the easier job to international students." During our interviews, five U.S. interview participants described how they would often delegate tasks to international students. In most of these instances, the U.S. students explained that their intentions were meant to either be helpful or create efficiency in the group process. For example, when sharing tips for how to help international students participate more in groups, Cami mentioned that as a student, her best approach is to "try to get them involved in like smaller ways to build up confidence … So, like, just getting them involved in small ways and like, delegating things to them saying 'This is what you're in charge of.'" (Cami's Interview Transcript). Mia also explained that she viewed delegation as a way to affirm group member's strengths and ensure everyone felt that they were contributing value:

> Um, and then also just like divvying work up right. Like at the end of a group meeting, we um had like we'd say, "I'm doing this, Anna's doing this and you're doing this and like this is exactly like it needs to be done by Monday at this time

> and like and just splitting the work up and giving everyone an equal task or an equal role. If that makes- Or telling them that we think like oh I think you could like be good at this. You should, can you do this part? I think you'd be good at this. It's like bringing up qualities that you see in them that maybe that would make them feel good about themselves (Mia's Interview Transcript).

With a somewhat different approach, Renae explained that when she had worked with international students in the past, they were often hesitant to speak up, which meant that whoever talked first would have an advantage to volunteer for their preferred tasks, leaving the international students obligated to take whatever was left. Renae explained one specific example from her previous cross-national group work experiences:

> But um if you kind of, you know, if you lay out everything that needs to be done while saying "this person has this," "this person has this" so then it kind of almost directly tells them what they have to do but at the same time allows them to say "Okay, I'll do that." Not trying to be as bossy, um that's kind of how that guy ended up with the budget. You know I had said "I'm not good with budget and numbers," which I'm not, "I'm happy to do any other topic". And then one or two other girls said "yeah, I'm not either" so then he was able to say "okay, I'll just take that". Um and I think he is actually also, I should have asked him … he is an international student, but I think he's a senior so he's- it's not like he's new to um- but he didn't quite jump up to do anything on our first little part which was just writing stuff in on Google Docs. Um, so us- the rest of us kind of just did it (Renae's Interview Transcript).

A subtext to U.S. student leadership and delegation of tasks, however well intended, is that a hierarchy of leaders and workers is created. In both cases, the flow of work goes through the U.S. student, forcing international students to say "yes" or "no" to assigned tasks.

> Hui mentioned she considered U.S. students to be "kind" when they assigned her to do an easier task to complete: "… the American students, I, I met are very kind, so they noticed my English is not good enough, so they usually give the easier job to international students like time taker, like, the, um, uh, like activity, reminder like this" (Hui's Interview Transcript). When I asked how she felt about taking the "easier job," she explained that every job is equal and she worked hard to do her best. Similar to Hui, Shan also mentioned that she appreciated when the U.S. student facilitator in her group gave her the choice of taking the easier job in her group work.

Perspectives from the U.S. and international students on delegating strategies demonstrate some complicated nuances that characterize cross-national interactions in group work. Leki (2001) noted similar types of delegation patterns occurring in the cross-national groups she observed. She posited that domestic students in these cases were "positioning" themselves as experts and characterizing their bilingual peers as incompetent contributors. In her case study, contributions from the international student were in one instance not validated at all, and in another situation, the international student was consistently assigned the easiest task to complete.

However, because Leki (2001) did not interview the domestic students in her case study, she could only make assumptions about the motivations behind their delegation strategies. Perspectives offered by U.S. students in my case study suggest that in some instances, U.S. students may genuinely be trying to empathize with, support, or involve their international classmates by delegating easier tasks to them. If the delegation strategies used by U.S. students minimize the potential contributions of international students, it may be at times done unknowingly, or as in Renae's case, part of a larger strategy to efficiently divide up the work. Further, as suggested by Hui, international students may sometimes interpret an offer to do easier work as a kind gesture or favor, and as Shan indicated, international students may openly prefer to do tasks that are less challenging.

There appear to be multiple rationales for the division of work, but overall it seems that not much has changed in the past 17 years since Leki's first study on work division in international groups. Broader questions about expectations, assumed leadership, and group work remain, but data here indicate that there is a fine line between compassionate delegation of tasks and patronizing assumptions about abilities. As Renae noted, assumed leadership and delegation tasks by U.S. students appear to be an unwritten rule for cooperative groups, and this role may be both minimizing for international students and pressure-inducing for U.S. students.

"The biggest problem is the language." Only one U.S. student in this study perceived that power in groups was determined by national status, but many other U.S. students identified that being able to communicate effectively, assertively, and quickly

seems to give group members a greater position of influence. According to most students, these rules of engagement for group work were the determining predictor of leadership. For the three international student interviewees, these rules of engagement presented great challenges in being able to verbally express themselves in a manner that would allow them to participate as equals. For example, Shan articulated the linguistic difficulties she encountered when being pressed by her U.S. peers to offer her opinion:

> ... sometimes I'm embarrassed because uh, some of the Americans students, they just speak so quickly and I need to think about what they talk about and, to structure what should I say. So maybe, I, I, I think most of the time they just look at me, oh what is your opinions and I can 't just say that, if they don't ask me, it is hard for me to say something, just to follow their ideas in my mind (Shan's Interview Transcript).

Li described how she faced similar difficulties when trying to follow a conversation with her native-speaking peers:

> In general ... I think your ... our group, just- I ... most of the time I listen to our group members talk and uh, I think I'm, I've ... I don't talk ... I don't talk more in a group or in a group meeting. And uh, sometimes I don't know how to explain my feelings about the problem (Li's Interview Transcript).

Hui also described this type of communication dilemma she experienced when trying to formulate her thoughts quickly enough to be able to add her opinion to a discussion:

> Yeah. Because, if I have, uh, a new idea, I need to think a long time of how to express it, how to describe my idea to make them [U.S. students] understand it.

> But, usually, when I already think of I, I can't, I can't say it. But, they are already moved to another step. It's too fast, I think, they move (Hui's Interview Transcript).

At a later point in our interview, Shan elaborated further, explaining that she believed communication to be the main barrier that prevented international students from being a leader in a cross-national group:

> However, if we work with the U.S. student, uh, it is hard for us to uh just lead some group members to communication. I think maybe the communication is a big challenges. We just afraid of, afraid of to be a leader with the U.S. student. Or just to, of, worrying about they will said oh your English is not good. Oh, why you want to be a leader or something like that (Shan's Interview Transcript).

Language disparities have been identified in other studies as a prominent challenge in cross-national group work (Popov et al., 2012), and more specifically as a source of power imbalances (Ippolito, 2007; Jon, 2013; Turner, 2009). The international student interviewees offered articulate explanations to provide more insight on the nature of the linguistic difficulties they may experience when interacting in cross-national group work: at times, they felt a lack of confidence to produce language in front of native speakers, needed more time to try to figure out how to express their ideas, and struggled to keep up with the fast pace of group discussion. Hui, Shan, and Li saw these linguistic factors as limitations of their verbal competence, and as a result, viewed themselves to be in a lower status or position than U.S. students in group work. In sum, as demonstrated

by data in previous sections, group work, as it is currently constructed, is an English verbal activity that privileges the capabilities of some students over others.

"It might be culture." Culture was mentioned less frequently as a reason why international students may have difficulties participating equally in a cross-national group, but two of the interview participants went into considerable detail to describe some barriers related to culture. As reported in the sub-theme of "the American students might usually be the leader," Shan clearly felt international students could not assume a position of leadership or influence in cross-national group work because they had experienced a different educational system than U.S. students. In her comments about this (see sub-theme "the American students might usually be the leader"), she described how U.S. students had been trained to share their opinions more freely, they were not focused on giving the "correct" answer or having it approved by anyone before disclosing it, and they felt it was okay, or even good, to make a comment about something that was not as directly related to the topic of the class. Shan contrasted this with the educational environment she had experienced in China, in which she didn't have opportunities to talk in class, and she was expected to have precisely "correct" answers. Shan expanded even more on the reasons she believed U.S. students should be in higher positions of influence in cross-national group work:

> I think maybe they have, they, just the different education background. They uh, from the elementary school they also take the, some group work, presentation, something like that. They have the enough confident, like "Hey, I'm a leader ... uh

> I'm good at um, I'm good at communi-- communication. I have a good idea …" or something like that (Shan's Interview Transcript).

In her comments, Shan clearly characterized U.S. students as feeling competent with verbal communication, and implied that she and other Chinese students had not been equipped to verbally communicate their ideas in a way that was comfortable for them in the U.S. classroom. At the same time, she noted that U.S. students have been so enculturated into the process of group-work that they can participate with little effort. Reay, Crozier, and Clayton (2010), building on the work of Bourdieu (1986), have discussed the concept of "habitus" in relation to higher education. In this case, the rules and expectations of group work are part of a broader "habitus" that U.S. students and their instructors share. Despite efforts to reduce power imbalances, gaps exist. These gaps are then sometimes identified as the result of cultural and linguistic differences between students, rather than a structural issue.

Professor Burk also perceived that the communicative challenges that international students experienced in cross-national group work (and more generally in class participation) were somewhat culturally related. Her concerns align somewhat with the barriers that Shan described, as she explained her belief that Chinese students, in particular, were challenged by the academic culture at U.S. universities because they had experienced a very different educational environment before coming to the U.S. Professor Burk talked about how important it is in U.S. culture to be able to articulate an opinion as an academic exercise, and how difficult this seemed to be for the Chinese students in her classes to do:

> I don't think specifically the Chinese students share an opinion, really about anything. I mean even in their written posts, um, I think their perception of what they should do is reiterate what they heard you say or what they read. So I don't, I feel like the discussion isn't always a sort of, it's not about, what do you think and what do I think, so much ... Usually what I say is, you know, what's one thing you took away from the reading or what's one question you have, you know? And um ... even in the blogs, when I have them say like, what are three questions you have, usually the questions are, um, more factually-based. Or more information-based and less, like, why or how kinds of questions. ... My sense is that that's not the way that they are trained in educational settings. They're not supposed to have an opinion necessarily, or voice it to the professor. I mean ... I don't know. That's my sense (Professor Burk's Interview Transcript).

Professor Burk's perceptions that Chinese students are opinion-less is an example of the practices privileged in U.S. higher education, where students are asked to state their personal opinions on issues for which they may have very little expertise. Others have discussed the difficulties that Asian international students sometimes have in meeting the expectations related to critical thinking in U.S. higher education (Egege & Kutieleh, 2004). However, emerging scholarship suggests that even the concept of "critical thinking" is multifaceted and debated. It was not the aim of this study to investigate how U.S. academics conceptualized critical thinking, but use of the term itself may be based on unspoken norms, or habitus, in the higher education system. For example, Wang (2017) noted that there are several culturally-based interpretations of

critical thinking. Further, Egege and Kutieleh (2004) argued that it is problematic to expect students from all cultures to assimilate to the critical thinking standards upheld in the U.S. They commented,

> Even if good reasoning skills are considered desirable by most people, in most cultures, what counts as evidence of good reasoning is not universal. What Western academics recognise as evidence of reasoning, the tools used to reason with, the language and structure of the argument, actually represent a cultural, rather than a universal, method. This is important to acknowledge and understand (Egege & Kutieleh, 2004, p. 79).

Because of the cultural assumptions often present, Egege and Kutieleh discussed how important it is for instructors to make their expectations around critical thinking clear. In the context of an Australian university, they described using an instructional approach that gives international students opportunities to learn about and evaluate the western construct of critical thinking in order to promote understanding about unspoken pedagogical expectations and help students to avoid compromising their cultural values.

"The strongest connection to the work." Although most U.S. participants readily identified verbal competence as the prominent factor determining influence in groups, when prompted, several students identified other qualities that could be predictive of a student's influence in a group. For example, five U.S. students and one international student characterized influence as a willingness to work hard and have an achievement-oriented approach to the project work. The following comments from students' interviews provide examples of this characterization:

> I think the hard workers is kind of a type, is a type of students. The hard worker because, uh, I think, this kind of, uh, students really do the most of the jobs. So, they, they know more and they can provide more ideas (Hui's Interview Transcript).
>
> ...
>
> I would say Alex had the most influence um, just because he seemed like the most task-oriented in terms of like um, I don't know like taking the initiative to get things done (Mason's Interview Transcript).

Besides working hard to accomplish the project goals, a few participants discussed another way to have a connection to the work. Four U.S. students and two international students described influence as the level of expertise or knowledge a student has about the project topic. As evidenced by their comments below, Maeve and Shan both identified subject knowledge as a potential way to determine influence in a group.

> I guess like, like thinking of my own group for this class, like, I feel like I maybe have a little bit more influence because I do have more background knowledge then the other students in my group (Maeve's Interview Transcript).
>
> ...
>
> Uh it also has a group work ... uh, group work in class. Uh I'll do the three person, one group, um, had a I think a, oh I'm a leader in that group because I'm good at the cost -- the major costs so ... I know this answers and I will write down (Shan's Interview Transcript).

Demonstrating a strong connection to the work in either of these ways provides an opportunity for students to leverage influence that may or may not be directly related to language or culture, and therefore represents an important consideration for instructors as they structure the group work environment. For example, as referenced in Chapter 2, Reid and Garson (2017) discussed a method of group formation that prioritized not only cultural diversity but also skills diversity. In their study, the instructors provided students an opportunity to indicate their areas of strength prior to being assigned to groups, and then that information was utilized to diversify groups as much as possible, with the intention being that every student felt they had a valuable contribution to make to their group project.

Discussion of Findings and Implications for Allport's Contact Theory

Based on the findings described in this section, power differentials within cross-national groups seem to be influenced by a combination of factors: verbal competence, national status, language proficiency, and comfortability with the norms of U.S. academic culture, and these factors overlap in nuanced ways when students are interacting in cross-national groups. For example, if leadership emerges according to who possesses the greatest verbal competence, international students who have lower levels of English proficiency may be at a disadvantage when working with "confident, talkative" U.S. students in a cross-national group. It may therefore be difficult to establish Allport's (1954) condition of equal status where all group members "shape the rules of interaction" (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011, p. 62) unless the fundamental processes of group work are

examined and reworked. The supportive leadership provided by instructors could be instrumental to help students gain awareness about their implicit biases, and to foster greater understanding about how traditional group work dynamics may disadvantage some group members. Yet instructors can only provide this type of supportive leadership if they themselves recognize the power dynamics at play, and if they have identified strategies to help their students anticipate and recognize power differentials in group interactions.

When international students experience cultural or communication barriers that in some way prohibit their participation in a group, my findings indicate that U.S. students might play a role in helping to facilitate a more inclusive process whereby all students can contribute more equally. In both Group 3 and Group 8, the U.S. students who emerged as facilitators reported a desire to help foster more equitable communication within the constraints of U.S. group work norms. However, these U.S. students indicated some level of uncertainty about how to help the international students in their group feel more comfortable to communicate in group meetings. Therefore, the degree of awareness, willingness and comfort with which a U.S. student facilitator has to navigate structural inequities and communication barriers may impact how international students experience the group, and specifically the degree to which international students are empowered to act as equal contributors.

Cultural Humility in Cross-National Groups

In this section I will seek to demonstrate the ways in which cultural humility may mediate power imbalances in cross national group work. I will highlight characteristics of cultural humility that I observed in my student participants, and then report their views about how the expression of cultural humility could help to "level the playing field" (Mia's Interview Transcript) for all students in their groups. I will also compare students' perspectives about cultural humility to relevant literature.

Engaging in Critical Self-Reflection

Cultural humility encourages a strong focus on life-long learning accomplished through continuous self-reflection and interaction with others. As Fisher-Borne et al. (2015) pointed out, two levels of understanding are important for an individual to grow in the development of cultural humility: "Cultural humility requires an understanding of self on a deeper level and an analysis of power and privilege" (p. 175). Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) originally conceptualized cultural humility as a reflective mindset in which individuals are continually identifying personal biases and assumptions, and recognizing when others are disadvantaged by systemic inequalities. In FS 280, students were prompted by the instructors to engage in activities and write about topics that encouraged critical self-reflection at both an individual and at a systemic level. Students' reflections reveal that they had variations in their understanding of and their capacity for cultural humility. In the section that follows, I will report from students' reflections to demonstrate that throughout the duration of the course, some students developed greater

self-understanding, deepened their awareness about broader power differentials at work, and learned insights about the role of cultural humility in their group work.

"Gain more insight into personal biases and identities." For Reflection Assignment #3, Professor Ingham required students to watch two videos related to cultural humility, and in response, describe a time when they had been stereotyped by others, and a time when they had stereotyped someone else. All students who submitted this assignment had stories of stereotypes to share, and reflected at varying lengths about the lessons they learned from these stereotypes. Based on the ease with which students responded, stereotypes appeared to be a familiar concept, and as such this writing assignment provided an entry-level opportunity for students to engage in the type of self-critique encouraged by the model of cultural humility.

When explaining what they learned from stereotyping others, 11 of the U.S. and three international students who submitted this assignment expressed a similar pattern in their development of cultural humility around this experience: after a period of time of holding a certain assumption about others, they had an experience with one individual that helped them to confront their bias, and after some level of self-critique, they then experienced more openness to others who exhibited similar characteristics. Perhaps the best example of self-critique was provided by Ebo after he described his previously held judgments against people who had tattoos:

> From such realization, I felt ashamed of myself and sad for missing many opportunities to connect with someone in the past. Afterwards, I make all effort not to judge anyone based on what I see, be conscious of my assumptions, and

> talk openly with others of how my assumption deprived me of connecting with another human being until I became aware. This was a humbling experience (Ebo's Reflection Assignment #3).

Only one of the U.S. students denied ever having stereotyped someone else. She did, however, describe a type of self-critique in her explanation in that she indicated a commitment to open-mindedness in her interactions with others:

> I honestly cannot think of a time in which I have stereotyped another person in a face-to-face encounter. I hate it when people misjudge me, so I make a point of not doing the same to other people. I don't make assumptions about other people, because if I don't know someone personally, it is in no way, shape, or form my place to make assessments about their life (Jamie's Reflection Assignment #3).

When explaining how they reacted to being stereotyped, students expressed a range of emotions and responses. Five U.S. and two international students commented that after learning how to navigate the stereotype situation, they were able to "move on," "move past," or "move forward" from the experience, seemingly indicating that it represented a critical incident in their lives. Five U.S. students and one international student reported to initially respond to the stereotype placed on them with some type of negative emotion, such as irritation, anger, or hurt feelings. Four U.S. and two international students used the stereotype situation to provide an educational opportunity to others. For example, Kadim shared about the common perception that others hold of his Nutrition major as an easy degree, and he explained that he typically uses this as a chance to clarify the intensive coursework that is required of him.

> Another example is when people ask what do they even teach you in nutrition, it sounds like an easy degree. I tend to inform them that it takes over two years of chemistry and over two years of biology courses along with advanced nutrition courses (Kadim's Reflection Assignment #3).

Two U.S. and two international students responded with varying levels of empathy to those who had stereotyped them, conveying an understanding about the misunderstanding that had occurred, and indicating they made a conscious choice to believe that good intentions were present despite the stereotype. An example of this is provided by Shan in the following comment:

> I think the majority of my classmates have the same questions. They think all Chinese are rich and reluctant learners. However, they do not know the true situation, and were affected by reports of bias and distortion. A single story leads critical misunderstanding and untrue situation. My partner's stereotype (of) me that is not his mistake, (it) is whole (the) society and culture (Shan's Reflection Assignment #3).

Two U.S. students explained how they achieved greater self-understanding from being stereotyped. Ebo reflected about his gains in self-awareness in the following comment:

> As an immigrant to the United States, I had faced different assumptions others held of me as well as I held of others. The exchanges I encountered were mostly light hearted. Each taught me more about myself, the roles I play, and how to move forward (Ebo's Reflection Assignment #3).

The stories told by students' experiences with stereotypes overall demonstrated a strong level of authentic and meaningful reflection. This exercise holds instructive potential as a reflective learning opportunity for instructors who desire to help students increase their awareness of implicit biases and power imbalances.

"Think about the problem from their perspective." At various points in the course, students also reflected about the broader systemic inequities that others experienced within the food system. For example, in their final narrative paper, a few students were able to describe a new understanding of why certain populations have been disadvantaged by the food system in the U.S., or new insights they had learned about individuals from a different cultural background. This was a theme that was woven throughout course activities as well as within students' projects, and students were given multiple opportunities to discuss and reflect how different groups of people experienced the injustices and food insecurities. In the examples below, Nelson, Jie, Cal, and Ebo articulated new insights they gained that demonstrate varying levels of cultural humility.

Nelson's reflection demonstrated a specific example of renewed self-understanding about his background in comparison to the experiences of others. In this sample of his reflection, he indicates an understanding of how the use of power in the U.S. food system has negatively impacted specific groups of people, although other than "think about whom this food system affects," he does not mention any specific actions that he can take to redress power imbalances.

> Having lectures about how different cultures experience the food system expanded my cultural humility. Being a white male from a suburb in a working

> class family, I never had a problem with getting enough food or experienced discrimination. When Frankie, Joey, and Samantha came to our class to speak it really helped me examine the different history of our food system and how different groups of people got trampled over in order to make the United States system more efficient. Going forward, my perspective has changed and I will make sure to think about whom this food system affects directly and its flaws (Nelson's Final Narrative).

Jie also discussed how experiences in the course helped him to develop both greater self-awareness, and an others-oriented mindset. In addition, he mentions specific actions he can take to help make a more "equitable food system," indicating a sense of his individual accountability in helping to redress power imbalances.

> I would still remember, that in the State of Minnesota, there are still certain number of people who live upon food stamps, and for many other reasons, the number is always underestimated. That is the most shocking fact that I learned in our group project. Before I did this project, I seldom thought about those who live upon on SNAP and I just shopped what I wanted. The idea of resource and social justice were not into my consideration. Now, when thinking about the people below the line of poverty, we kind of have the responsibility to save the resource and lower the price of food, so that make it as the equitable food system (Jie's Final Narrative).

Cal described how he was impacted by having greater understanding about those who have suffered inequities within the food system. He does not mention how this

influenced him on a personal level, but specifically states a desire to "reverse these injustices."

> One aspect that has resonated with me was the injustices in the food system that have happened in our passed [past] and are currently happening ... The food timeline showed many injustices towards people of color, Indians, and minorities in general. As a farmer and agricultural professional after graduation from graduate school I want to help reverse these injustices that have been occurring in our food system history (Cal's Final Narrative).

Finally, Ebo described how being introduced to the cultural humility framework created a shift in how he learned about someone's culture and how he approached interpersonal relationships with others. In the following excerpt from his final narrative, he explicitly described how his mindset had changed from one seeking cross-cultural "competence" in which he sought to learn generalizations about someone's culture prior to an interaction, to one of "humility" in which he withheld assumptions and focused on developing understanding through interpersonal interactions. This focus on interpersonal learning as the vehicle for gaining intercultural awareness is central to how Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) conceptualized cultural humility.

> Cultural Humility during this year course study expanded opened a new horizon. Beforehand, I was familiar with cultural competence. While studying Nutrition, I came across different cultures expressed while exploring traditional foods. At first, I recognized how I viewed each culture by comparing it with myself in somewhat ethnocentric way. In addition, I held prejudices on other cultures as

> part of my upbringing with limited exposure. Each of these hindered my ability to experience any culture fully. As a result, I sought for opportunities to meet and learn about different cultures consciously. For instance, I wanted to learn more about the Karen culture as a result of meeting someone. Usually, I do research on the culture before interacting with the person directly. This time, I chose to learn about the Karen culture through conversation with my friend, based on her experience, and in the way how she lives it. One thing I learned from this experience was that she held most of her Karen culture including food and family centered life. However, she also included Western culture where she expresses her feeling without hesitation. She has been influential to the point where she encouraged me to voice my concern to my boss. These are the tenets of cultural humility, which is to understand culture at a personal level (Ebo's Final Narrative).

Students' descriptions reported in this section only capture a few written comments that were articulated related to developing a greater level of cultural awareness, and further inquiry into students' perceptions related to these issues would likely prove to be informative to the cultural humility framework.

"My interactions with my group have to be with an open mind." As demonstrated in the previous sections, students' reflective accounts about stereotyping and inequities in the food system seemed to foster growth and understanding of self and others, which in turn, may have helped to develop higher levels of cultural humility (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998; Foronda et al., 2016; Hook et al., 2013). When asked

to describe the role of cultural humility within their groups (also in Reflection Assignment #3), students demonstrated varying levels of abilities in attempting this analysis. Based on my analysis of students' responses to this part of Reflection Assignment #3, 12 students (eight U.S. and four international students) described some way in which awareness of cultural dynamics played a role in their group, and eight students (seven U.S. students and one international student) discussed how cultural sensitivity related to stakeholders within their group projects.

As I analyzed all of these comments more carefully to look for evidence of critical self-awareness and/or others awareness that aligned with the tenants of cultural humility (Hook & Watson, 2015; Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998), I found that two U.S. students and one international student provided fairly brief and somewhat superficial comments on the topic. For example, Aaron simply wrote out a brief description of the diversity within his group, acknowledging that each group member probably held some kind of stereotypes, but without further reflection about what those might be or how it would impact group interactions:

> Cultural humility will play into my group in a few ways. First, my group is made up of diverse members. We have a foreign exchange student, two student athletes, and a fraternity member. This is a strange make-up of guys with each group carrying their own negative stereotypes (Aaron's Reflection Assignment #3).

Aaron's comments indicated an awareness of the dynamics in his group, and an identification that athletes, international students, and fraternity members may see the world differently. However, there was little self-reflection in his comments.

Six students (three international and three U.S. students) portrayed a level of cultural awareness within their group primarily as they expressed the importance of listening to, understanding, or accepting diverse ideas from other group members. Ashwin explained his beliefs about how cultural humility was related to his group in this way:

> My group project consists of different people with different origins and personalities. The concept of cultural humility helps us to interact politely with one another. Although we often have different perspective on one similar thing, we always manage to understand that different opinion is okay because we grew up in different situations and we experienced different learning process. We always try to respect one another's opinion and make them as a process of learning (Ashwin's Reflection Assignment #3).

Developing one's ability to have greater appreciation for diverse views may be an important part of the developmental process when confronting biases and learning from interpersonal interactions (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). In fact, appreciation of difference represents one of the three stages of ethnorelativism in Bennett's (1986) model of intercultural sensitivity. However, this evolving state of cultural awareness does not necessarily demonstrate an understanding of personal biases and an acknowledgement that power differentials need to be both recognized and equalized (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). Only three of the 10 students articulated a more detailed analysis that demonstrated a greater understanding of the core aspects of cultural humility at the level of their group dynamics. For example, from the Food Story Collection group, Cal

described his desire to stay open-minded and not have assumptions about either of his group members. In this reflection, Cal demonstrated a capacity for cultural humility by identifying some key biases he held about his group members, directly confronting those biases, and stating his desire to understand more about Brent and Li through his interactions with them.

> My interactions with my group have to be with and open mind. I know that I can go into interactions with people who do not look like me with some prejudices. Brent is very much like me in that he is a farmer and is in the same major as I am. So, we have taken many classes together and done many group projects together. Since we are very similar in a lot of aspects, I do not want to assume that we are identical in all aspects of life. I know that this could be a natural assumption for me, so I have to be aware of it. I stay open to the fact that we could still value different things and have different opinions though we are seemingly identical on the surface. The opposite is true with Li. She is not from the United States. Even as I write this, I notice that I assume she is from China just based on how she looks. But, I know this may not be true. She is very reserved and quiet, so it is difficult to know where she is at on various topics that might come up in discussion. So, when I talk with Li, I do not want to have assumptions. I want to be open-minded and hope to understand how she feels about different things (Cal's Reflection Assignment #3).

Cal's comments exemplify Tervalon and Murray-Garcia's (1998) call to move away from discourses of "competence" in relation to intercultural communication.

According to the authors, a self-identified or externally measured sense of cultural competence (for example, through contemporary instruments like Cultural Intelligence surveys or the Intercultural Development Inventory) may lead an individual to believe they have the answers they need to effectively communicate across cultures. Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998), rather, call for individuals to approach each cultural engagement with a willingness to learn and critically examine one's own place in the interaction, similar to the way that Cal has described above.

From Group 5, Mason described the culture his group had established as one that allowed individual group members the freedom to be who they were without feeling stereotyped or judged. His analysis of the group's dynamics imply that even if someone held a personal bias, they did not let it negatively impact their group interactions. He demonstrated a capacity for cultural humility by articulating his awareness of how withholding personal biases could allow for equality of contributions.

> I think cultural humility plays a role in our current group project because we all have different backgrounds that come together into one group ... None of us knew each other before coming into the group project and therefore we really don't know each other's past experiences in life. One may come in with a stereotype towards something while another may have a stereotype of their own. I think we have gotten along well together as a group and it seems like we have all given each other a chance to speak and interact with one and other without bringing any stereotypes to the table. Earlier in this assignment I talked about how I am sometimes stereotyped as being dumb because I am a large male athlete. I never

> felt like in our group I was stereotyped that way and feel like I have always had an opportunity to voice my opinion. I think moving forward we will all allow for each other to bring their strengths to the table and will not limit any group members capacity due to a stereotype. I think thus far we have done a good job of making everyone comfortable to where they can work in the way they want to without feeling they have been boxed into a certain category (Mason's Reflection Assignment #3).

From Group 8, Kayla talked about the strategies she used to try to encourage participation from her group members. In this reflection, she demonstrated a capacity for cultural humility because she recognized that her group members may feel disadvantaged because of their discomfort in speaking English. Although not stated directly, she implied an understanding that she may hold more privilege in the group as the only native English speaker. At the same time, she expressed her desire to mitigate the potential power differentials created by language proficiency and interact with her groupmates as equals by using a few different communication strategies.

> My group mates are all foreign exchange students, with English as a secondary language. I try to leave comments or questions open ended in the group meetings so they can give their input. I understand they might be uncomfortable speaking from time to time for various reasons, and I do not want to be the only voice of the group. I ask throughout if they have any questions or ideas. I also try not to speak any differently or treat them as incompetent because their English is not perfect, because I know they have been attending the University successfully in

> English this whole time. I try to look at them as I would look at any other classmate, and to keep the work professional (Kayla's Reflection Assignment #3).

By asking students an explicit question about the role of cultural humility within their groups, the instructors created an opportunity for critical self-reflection and awareness raising of the complicated dynamics that can exist in cross-national groups. The range of student responses to this prompt indicates they were likely at different points in their awareness and development of cultural humility. Even after explaining their stories of stereotypes and at different points reflecting on broader topics of inequity within the food system, only a few students who submitted this assignment were able to demonstrate an explicit awareness of how personal biases or power differentials might impact their group interactions.

Mitigating Power Imbalances

One of the differentiating features of cultural humility as compared to other intercultural communication approaches is its focus on the responsibility of individuals and organizations to mitigate power imbalances. In Fischer-Borne et al.'s (2015) conceptual model of cultural humility, individual accountability takes a central role, and is continually supported by a commitment to critical self-reflection and life-long learning. The ideal outcome of individual accountability is taking intentional action to redress power imbalances. When asked to generate examples that demonstrate how cultural humility could be embodied in a cross-national group, many of my case study participants explained their strategies to mitigate power imbalances in a few specific

ways: by “stepping back” from dominating the group, actively inviting others in the group process, and working to bridge communication gaps.

“Stepping back.” Four U.S. students and one of the U.S. instructors felt cultural humility should include an intentional choice to “step back” in some way -- to make space for others to participate, or to defer to the ideas and opinions of others. Interview participants generally described this as sort of an intangible, subtle adjustment, and the selected examples in this section represent slightly different ways in which it might be actualized. For instance, when I interviewed Maeve, she felt that an important strategy to use when working in a cross-national group is to first have an awareness of the amount of “space” you are taking up, something she primarily conceptualized as how much one is talking within the group. She described “stepping back” as a choice to be quiet in order to make sure that others have a chance to speak.

> Um, and also like stepping back when you realize you're talking a lot and let people answer questions or yeah, discussion first. Um, which that is something I noticed like, a lot of people don't do that and a l- and um, you know, there's a lot of people that have a lot of really good ideas and things to say, um, which is great but I think too like, you gotta like someti- like, be aware of that, and like that you're taking up a lot of space. Um, 'cause sometimes people, you know, that are more encouraging and maybe, you need to be quiet for a couple seconds and then someone will speak up. You know, not immediately, just like filling space all the time (Maeve’s Interview Transcript).

Maeve's suggestion to intentionally be quiet could be a powerful tool to open up the "space" for others to communicate, especially when considering that research contributed by Kim (2008) and Kim, Ates, Grigsby, Kraker, and Micek (2016) has demonstrated that silence may be used and interpreted differently based on one's cultural background. Findings from these studies indicate that U.S. instructors and students may benefit from greater understanding about how to respond when international students are silent in discussions or group learning situations. The ideas that Maeve expressed here aligns with a broader discussion in the literature about providing adequate "wait" time so that students from various backgrounds may feel more comfortable to participate in a conversation (Kim, 2008; Kim et al., 2016).

Cal explained a similar level of awareness about making space for others when he discussed his interactions with Li: "she's very quiet so it's tough to like try and get her to, you know, say what she, what she thinks. Because I don't want to like, I don't want to override her just because I'm more vocal" (Cal's Interview Transcript). As I observed in his group interactions, Cal was definitely the most vocal and assumed the informal leadership role quickly, but he also made a conscious effort to stop talking at different points in the group work and try to involve Li by looking her way, checking in with her about what she wanted to do, and asking her questions.

In her interview, Mia also described a way of "stepping back" that allowed others to take part in the group. She talked about an international student she had worked with in the past who was reluctant to talk in her group. She explained that she had worked out a strategy in which she intentionally put herself in a lower position by explaining that she

did not know the answer to a question their group was discussing (when I probed, she explained that in some cases she did know, but chose to pretend that she did not in an effort to get her international peer to contribute more). After saying this, she would add in a request to learn about the international student's opinion, and felt that he often was more likely to respond when she deferred to him using this strategy.

> … like when we just ask his opinion, it's just generally, then it's just kind of like oh yeah, I don't know. But when you add like those um things in, they're like those "oh I don't really know, like we don't have any experience in this either," then like [his] willingness to respond and like have an idea is different than it would be otherwise … he felt like he had more of a like his opinion had, mattered more, like it was more important because we didn't really have a good idea otherwise … but like just saying like I don't really know if this is the best way to approach this, what do you think? I've, I don't have much experience in this and while you might not either, like what do you think about this? (Mia's Interview Transcript).

When working with her three international student groupmates, Kayla also explained an awareness that she needed to step back; in her words, she made an intentional effort not to "drive" their group project by herself. In the same tone of humility, she also expressed that she was unsure if she was using the best approach, but she was doing her best.

> So I tried to just be open and um, understanding of what they had to say and just including ideas and trying not to just drive the entire thing myself. Um, and I'm

> not sure if ... I know I haven't had a whole lot of experience in needing to do that. Um, and I only know how to do it the best way I can, which is just try and be understanding of my group members. Um, so I don't know if I could've done that any better (Kayla's Interview Transcript).

Professor Burk framed cultural humility in terms of deference, and she also used the term "stepping back" when she described what she perceived to be an expression of cultural humility. She described this "stepping back" in tandem with asking questions and learning about the views or ideas of others.

> Um, but just like, question asking and sort of stepping back from the ... directing. Which I think is hard. Even if you're not necessarily a dominant personality, but if no one else is doing that, instead of just doing it to say, how do you want to do this or what would you suggest? (Professor Burk's Interview Transcript).

One potential parallel to this mindset of "stepping back" to make more space for others is discussed in Foronda et al.'s (2016) concept analysis of cultural humility. It most closely matches the attribute the authors define as "egoless," which they further equate to the following concepts: "requiring modesty, being egoless, humble, down to earth, having neutrality, having humble attitude, being equitable, having a quiet ego, humility, approach (others) as equals, and lack of superiority" (Foronda et al., 2016, p. 212). In addition to this egoless mindset, it also seems that some of the respondents expressed a sense of self-awareness in tandem with recognizing the need to "step back." For example, Cal and Maeve both commented about the need to recognize when they were being too vocal, and Kayla mentioned she was aware of her lack of experience in

facilitating an inclusive communication process. As applied to cross-national group work, when individual group members have a greater awareness of how and when to "step back," this intentional effort could help to redress power imbalances by creating a more equitable space for all students to verbalize their contributions.

At the same time, international student perspectives on "stepping back" were conspicuously missing from this analysis. This omission highlights the very power issues that are examined in cultural humility discourse. Because U.S. students and instructors were the holders of power, the facilitators of group dynamics, and the most experienced and therefore proficient with group work engagement, they held the power and therefore had the privilege to decide whether or not to "step back." In this analysis of the interpersonal dynamics of cultural humility, there appears to be a recognition that certain individuals hold more power than others, but not a specific strategy for power sharing within groups beyond the intentional reflections expressed here by participants.

"Make sure they feel comfortable ... to participate and voice their reasons." When describing their views on cultural humility, some case study participants focused on the importance of asking questions with the intent of making the group more comfortable for international students or others who might feel that they have a lower status within in the group. Four U.S. student interviewees, two U.S. Teaching Assistants, and one U.S. instructor identified this type of question asking as an approach that they either had used in a cross-national group, or a strategy they felt would be effective if they were in a cross-national group, and three international student interviewees confirmed they viewed this to be a way to express cultural humility. Cal

offered one of the strongest examples of utilizing opinion-seeking questions to facilitate more comfort in his cross-national group. In our interview, he talked at length about his efforts to try to give Li a chance to share her opinions more freely with the Food Story Collection group:

> But I feel like it's my job to kind of include people and try to bring them in. Um, and so when I have somebody from a different culture I want to kind of make sure they feel comfortable. And that like, they're, they're comfortable to participate in and voice their reasons. Or even like specifically say like, "Li, do you think that's a good idea? Or do you have [ideas] that you think that would work?" Or something like that. So I specifically ask her what she thinks or what she wants to do ... (Cal's Interview Transcript).

During times with Group 3, I observed that Cal was notably persistent in his attempt to invite Li into the conversation, and was not deterred when she was at times seemingly unresponsive to his efforts – he simply kept checking in with her in every conversation. He also was the only student in the groups that I observed who made an intentional effort to comment about Li's quietness in the Mid-Semester Reflection assignment. Because he knew that his comments would be shared with Li, this represented an intentional choice on his part to let Li know that he wanted to hear her voice in their group discussions; he explicitly articulated this as follows: "I want her to know she can contribute and her ideas are valued" (Cal's Mid-Semester Reflection).

When I interviewed her, Cami explained that she felt that cultural humility could be expressed when students who held more power intentionally sought the opinions of

other quieter students. In her role as the TA, she had observed U.S. students in cross-national groups specifically asking questions to learn about the “quieter” international students’ opinions:

> But honestly when I've seen groups, like the past couple weeks when we've been in here with like two or three groups, and they're the mixed groups, I've seen some of the, like the white, more privileged people, um, like directly ask the people who are being quieter, the, the, cu- international students like "So what are your thoughts on this? Like what are you thinking regarding this issue?" I think just asking for what their needs are and their perspective um, even if they're not like, willingly sharing it, showing that there is a desire to hear from them. I think that is what I've seen some of the students do. Not all of them, but I've heard it from at least two of the groups that were in here at least. Um, like, asking specific questions, trying to be as direct as possible. So that other people in the group that might be at a disadvantage could interact and improve the project as a whole (Cami’s Interview Transcript).

Maeve characterized this type of question asking as an “invitation” and as “intentional” in her description of how cultural humility could be expressed in a cross-national group: “Yeah, um, yeah like I said before, just inviting them into the conversation, like, being like, "What do you think?" Or like do, yeah, being intentional about that” (Maeve’s Interview Transcript).

Mason also described cultural humility as creating a comfortable environment where group members feel welcome to share their opinions without fear of being judged

or dismissed. He perceived this supportive environment to be one in which all are open-minded and encourage team members to share their ideas:

> Um, so I think, I think just kind of making the environment to like is conducive to everybody having an opinion that feels valued would be important. Never um, like it's something we never did in our group was like shoot an idea down. Um, I should say, shoot a person down for their idea ... more so than like, they'd just be like, "Ah, I don't know, like maybe we, I was kind of thinking this like we ... what does everybody else think?", and then kind of get a consensus on it versus like, "Oh, why would you have that idea? That's, that's dumb.", so we like, we never, that never really happened. Which I felt like our group was pretty mature versus I had been in groups that weren't as mature about things like that. So I think getting somebody who is not talking to speak, in a, in a group like that feels almost more cliquey, can be-be difficult, but ... 'cause I do think the environment's important to getting them to talk to. And then just encouraging them as much as you can really (Mason's Interview Transcript).

Similarly, Kayla described cultural humility as giving others the chance to have their voice heard, "… and like being able to feel comfortable to express yourself and have it respected" (Kayla's Interview Transcript). In an attempt to create this comfort, she explained that she focused a lot of her efforts on asking questions when leading the group process with her international student classmates in Group 8: "I tried to ask a lot of questions. I tried to um, you know, do you have any ... Are you confused by anything? Do you have any ideas?" (Kayla's Interview Transcript).

When asked to describe what cultural humility could look like expressed in cross-national groups, Professor Burk also discussed using question-asking strategies so that group members would feel more encouraged to talk. She emphasized the importance of asking questions with a compassionate approach.

> Yeah. I mean, I do think that question asking is, uh ... is maybe the best approach So, you know, "What do you think?" Or how, you know, "How would you do this?" Or "How did you do that?" Or ... um, and just sort of gently forcing them or gently pushing them, I guess, to have to actually talk, without making it, um, about sort of a, a should. Like, you should, you know, "You need to do this, what do you say?" But to sort of have a little more compassion in the asking (Professor Burk's Interview Transcript).

Hui, Shan, and Li all described their typical reaction as generally appreciative when U.S. students made an extra effort to ask them intentional questions during a group process. When I asked Hui if she could identify someone whom she felt had high levels of cultural humility, she shared about a classmate in her biology lab who had consistently tried to give her an opportunity to share with the group.

> There's a four people group in lab session, and, uh, uh, two international students in the group. Another from Vietnam, but he is born in here. So, he, his English is pretty good, but, uh, but for me, I'm not good enough. But, uh, Landon, is, … uh, is my, one of the members. So, Logan tried to, uh ... I mean, during the lab class, uh, he asked me how do you think about it after, I mean after, in the discussion. I, I usually didn't say, I usually didn't say too much, but he always asks me how do

> you think, how do you think? So, it gave me opportunity to express myself and help me, and trying to help me explain my opinion to, uh, other people (Hui's Interview Transcript).

Li explained that she felt someone with high cultural humility would treat each group member equally, and she saw Cal and Brent doing this by checking in with questions. "Um, about every problem, about each steps, we will ask everyone, um, opinion about it" (Li's Interview Transcript). She talked about how Cal and Brent frequently asked her opinion in their group meetings, and she confirmed that she found this to be helpful.

> … um, they will ask my, um, opinion, toward the question we are discussing, and um, they-they asked, they maybe, before we do every decision for our assignment, our project, we um, they ask about it. Whether I um, agree with them or disagree, what's my reason, like that. And we will talk about this … (Li's Interview Transcript).

Shan identified Kayla as someone she perceived to possess cultural humility. She explained that when deciding which roles each person in their group should take on, Kayla had asked what everyone else wanted to do first, and then had offered to assume responsibility for the more challenging role.

> Uh, yeah I think my group member, the U.S. student, the only U.S. students that, she has the cultural humility, high cultural humility. And hmm. Yeah. Uh, she do, she, she, she uhh, I remember that we, uh, decide the work, uh, the work load, they have the some hmm leader, time taker, note taker, uh have the one that I can't

> remember that. Um, and the, she will ask our first, which job you want to take and of course we will pick the easier one ... Yeah the easier one and uh, she will, she will pick the hard one (Shan's Interview Transcript).

These question-asking strategies described by my interview participants in this section align with the way cultural humility is characterized in recent literature. In Tervalon and Murray-Garcia's (1998) foundational description of cultural humility in a healthcare setting, they place an important emphasis on question-asking that empowers the patient to be able to share their viewpoints and needs. Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) further explained that they envisioned the culturally humble provider to be engaged in "patient-focused interviewing" to demonstrate value of the patient's concerns and perspectives, and that with the use of non-authoritarian "communication skills, perhaps along with other specifically cross-cultural interaction techniques, physicians potentially create an atmosphere that enables and does not obstruct the patient's telling of his or her own illness or wellness story" (p. 121). Additionally, in Hook et al.'s (2013) scale of cultural humility for use in therapist-client relationships, the following criteria are included as a way for clients to assess the cultural humility of their therapists: "genuinely interested in learning more, open to seeing things from my perspective" (p. 357). Further, these question-asking strategies can be logically categorized under the concept of "supportive interactions" (p. 212) in Foronda et al.'s (2016) concept analysis of cultural humility, in which the authors describe a variety of positive interactions that occur when cultural humility is being enacted.

Although both U.S. and international participants viewed their questioning techniques to be a type of cultural humility, and a few described these opinion-seeking strategies as a way to "include" others, it is important to consider that the strategies described in this section were likely to be effective at inviting students to participate in ways that were comfortable to the U.S. students. Chen and Ross (2015) posited that institutions may often be expecting international students to integrate into the normal practices within U.S. classroom culture without recognizing significant sociocultural gaps that exist between the international student and the institution. In the cases described here, the U.S. students are trying (gently and carefully) to facilitate integration of the international students into the culture of their group work. However, it is problematic to categorize their efforts as truly inclusive because U.S. students are simply inviting students into existing, unquestioned group work structures without realizing the sociocultural barriers that may need to be overcome. Therefore, the fact that many U.S. students lacked an awareness of the structural inequities involved in U.S. group work may have also limited their understanding of interpersonal strategies that would more closely embody Tervalon and Murray-Garcia's (1998) conceptualization of cultural humility. At the same time, students' invitational behaviors may present a new avenue of research related to cultural humility in invitational settings. Although the structural exclusions exist, students' attempts at "stepping back" represent a micro-approach to cultural humility within the context of broader classroom dynamics. The students' and instructors' conceptualization of "stepping back" may contribute to the broader conceptualization of cultural humility.

"Bridge any potential language gap." Six U.S. students, two U.S. TAs, two U.S. instructors, and three international student interviewees explained communication strategies they had used to mitigate linguistic barriers in their cross-national interactions. Various strategies were used, including clarifying meaning by asking questions, holding in-person meetings to enhance opportunities for communication, and using alternate ways to communicate such as writing or typing in Google Docs. Speaking from her role as the Teaching Assistant, Cami felt it was important to clarify meaning if there is a misunderstanding. She shared an example of a time when she did not understand that the international students in her cooking lab were trying to explain a frying pan. She emphasized that it is important to persist in getting clarification, even when it gets difficult or challenging:

> Don't stop asking questions. Um, I have had to have people repeat things to me several times in order for it to like actually enter my brain correctly. Um, cuz like (sigh) uh, there was something that ... There was some word that (sigh), I think it was something like a frying pan but they were asking for it in like a different way that wasn't the word for frying pan. But it was like a synonym of it, so like we could get there, but it wasn't like, quite right. Um, so like, just getting clarification and trying to continue to understand and not just getting frustrated and giving up. Um, I think that's probably just the most important part is to not give up. If you don't understand something, don't settle (Cami's Interview Transcript).

Nelson also discussed the importance of clarifying information if he did not understand. He acknowledged that it could be awkward, but said he thought it was better

to truly understand rather than pretend he knew what they were intending to communicate:

> But, um, I think they probably appreciate it more me asking, uh, to ... until I understand than just kind of giving them a blank look and going, "Oh, yeah." (laughs) You know, so ... Uh, yeah, it is kind of awkward but I feel like it's probably a better, better way to go about it than just kind of ignoring what they have to say and, um ... Yeah, make sure ... make sure that I hear them (Nelson's Interview Transcript).

Professor Burk also described a question-oriented, deferential approach to mitigating language barriers. She gave an example of how she would approach a miscommunication with an international student:

> Uh ... I think I would just say, you know ... I would start by explaining to them what you're noticing. Again, not in a correcting kind of way but just a, "It seems like you understand this this way, am I right?" Or "Is this how you understand this? (Professor Burk's Interview Transcript).

Mason provided a direct example of this type of question-asking to clarify meaning from Group 5's interactions:

> Um, I think to, so we had the example right away of like the senior access chart and uh, Aaron did a really nice job of just like asking Jie, "What did you, what were you trying to show on this?", and then um, and then later on in the PowerPoint, like I said, he forgot how he phrased the word, like "leans on", I just asked him like uh what he meant by it. And then he explained it and I was just

> like, "Okay, well, I- I guess I got like the first and last part, I didn't know like, um, the um, like the usage of that-that word I guess that way." And then he just, we just talked about it and then um, and then I think we all understood what he was saying (Mason's Interview Transcript).

Renae explained that although the groups she usually met with tried as much as possible to avoid out-of-class meetings to save time, she shared about a specific situation in which the international student in her group indicated a preference for meeting outside of class. She described how, in this case, having face-to-face meetings seemed to provide a more supportive environment and brought more clarity in communication for the international student.

> ... I guess in the cases where you're- where people are struggling with the content or even just actually doing their part. Um, in those cases we have made it a point to meet outside of class as a group cause then we're actually all watching and helping each other. Like when I was with the Chinese student in the lab group, by the end of the semester we started every lab, um, almost every lab report we did we'd have to present what we did 'cause we were making up our experiment, we present it to the class. So each week almost we'd have to do a PowerPoint and presentation at the end, so by the second half of the semester we ended up just meeting in the building after you know we'd finish it in class and just all- we'd be on the Google docs but we'd be in person ... I think he was the one who asked to start doing that actually 'cause then I don't know if it was a language barrier thing ... Then he was more clear on exactly what we needed to be doing ... (Renae's

Interview Transcript).

Kayla gave a specific example of a time when she encouraged one of her international student group members to persist in articulating a difficult concept:

> We were talking, I don't remember who it was but one of us were speaking together and uh, she was looking for a word and I said, "Hey, just go around it as much as you can." Like that's what I was taught when I learned other languages. It's just go around whatever word you can't think of and give the idea as much as you can, and like, somebody will pick it up. They'll get it (Kayla's Interview Transcript).

Reflecting on other ways to bridge communication gaps, Jamie explained that she was open to exploring various types of communication if discussion in the group was proving to be challenging. However, she also conveyed that she was not sure how to bring this up without causing offense. Although her intention was to be flexible and support the unique communication needs international students might have, she was concerned it may seem rude to ask if they had a preference for a different type of communication.

> I suppose like, if there are communication challenges, um, you know sort of figuring out like, what communication avenue is most comfortable for an international student ... you know what, it's hard to think of a scenario in which to ask that, well, wouldn't come off as potentially sounding kind of rude? You're like, "Hey you're like, is, you know ... Like is there another way that works well

> for you for communicating. Like-E-mail, Google Docs, Google Slides, or you know, texting you," Or something like that (Jamie's Interview Transcript).

Jamie's comments highlight her awareness of power differences and self-critical approaches to trying to mitigate such differences. Her comments also represented one way in which the structure of group work might be challenged, thus opening up new opportunities for more egalitarian participation.

To provide more support for Jamie's ideas about alternate communication methods, two international student interviewees mentioned how useful it was to be able to write out their ideas in a group setting. Hui explained that if she was being quiet, it was often because she was not sure how to convey her ideas effectively through oral communication. Instead, she commented, "I hope, that I only hope that they [U.S. students] can, um, use another way to gather the information, like what I said, like write it down, or find another way" (Hui's Interview Transcript). Hui emphasized how helpful writing was for her by sharing an example about one of her group meetings for another class. In this particular group meeting, she had asked her U.S. groupmates if they could do a writing activity to come up with ideas for their project.

> I told them, okay, uh, everyone stop discussing, so everyone has 10 minutes to write down their ideas and, uh, exchange their ideas to one another. So, I think that's effect-, is effective and help-, much helpful because I, I had time to think and I can write down ... I think my writing skills are better than speaking skills. So, and, uh, those American students are agreeing my suggestions. So, I'm glad they can agree with my advice. So, but, I only did it this way once. But, I think it's

> pretty helpful.Because when you, when you write on something you can like, you can try like a, I mean not only write the words, but you can, because, I don't know how to say, uh- ... draw pictures to help them understand (Hui's Interview Transcript).

Hui's idea for a written exchange of information highlights one mechanism for making group work more inclusive. Unlike the invitations to conversation provided by U.S. students above, Hui's suggestion provided a way for all students to participate and engage equally. Her suggestion changed the structure of how group work was done to reduce barriers.

Li also explained that in a few different classes, she relied on writing to communicate her knowledge of how to solve problems if she was struggling to talk about the problem.

> Oh like, in accounting class, in accounting group, I can, I can, I can write down, write down my progress, my answer of the problem, or my formula about it ... Hmm, but in the food collection project, I don't, um ... communication, hmm, I don't have some strategy for this project ... I think, um write down the, like the, accounts or something, the accounting, it is clear. It-it is very clear for me and for my group members to understand it. Um, compared it to if I just talk about it (Li's Interview Transcript).

To confirm that Li found it to be more comfortable to write than to speak, I observed that while Li rarely verbalized her ideas to Cal and Brent, she was almost always actively contributing to the group by typing into a Google Doc. On at least one occasion, Cal

used this as an opportunity to engage her in a conversation. Her group was working in a shared Google Doc writing interview questions for their contacts at food shelves and Cal asked her what she meant by a question she had written. Although she seemed reluctant to respond, he persisted by kindly pointing out that he had written a similar question, and then suggested maybe they could work on merging the questions together. I made the following observation about this interaction:

> Cal smiles and comments to Li (in a friendly tone): "We kind of wrote the same question I just noticed. Are you trying to go for how the food shelf is helping?" Li looks up and says "yeah" quietly. Cal confirms that is what he is also intending to communicate with his question, and then he suggests a few different ways to phrase a new (merged) version of the question. Li does not respond verbally to him or look up, but keeps typing on her laptop. She does not seem to ignore him in a rude way, but she just seems uncomfortable, or shy, to talk about the question she wrote. Cal does not seem frustrated by Li's lack of verbal engagement, but he persists in trying to seek her input (Group 3, Meeting 2 Notes).

Although from an observer's perspective, it would seem that Cal was unsuccessful in getting Li to contribute verbally to the group, using Google Docs allowed him to try to negotiate meaning with her based on her written contribution. This example demonstrates both an approach to increasing inclusion (Google Docs) as well as ongoing examination of power differential within the group (Cal, in the end, was the one who made the editorial decisions, albeit in a very gentle way).

In my interview with her, Professor Ingham mentioned that she felt Google Docs provided an important communication medium “because international students are gonna be able to contribute more equally in that space” (Professor Ingham’s Interview Transcript). She also thought it could help to level the playing field for international students because it provides “written communications in an immediate space that they can look at ...they're less likely to be kept out of the loop” (Professor Ingham’s Interview Transcript). When I asked if the U.S. students agreed that Google Docs were useful to help navigate communication barriers in cross-national interaction, most generally agreed. Li and Shan confirmed that they appreciated the opportunity to write out their ideas in Google Docs. Shan commented, "I think maybe the Google Doc is a, is a, is a easier for us than the discussion. Because we have the time to hmm to think about our ideas and just uh, type it” (Shan’s Interview Transcript). However, as mentioned previously in “the dynamics of this are different now” section on cooperative learning, Hui was not convinced that Google Docs were useful method for equalizing communication because she felt that students rarely discussed their ideas after adding them to the Google Doc:

> Yeah, and they, and we usually type the main points and not the ... We won't provide The reason why we, why we think so. So, maybe some other people don't understand why you can't work it out with this idea. So, ha-, having the discussions are very necessary after we provide our ideas (Hui’s Interview Transcript).

In the previous section discussing findings related to cooperative learning entitled "the dynamics are different now," Google Docs is characterized as an efficient way to increase students' productivity, but Hui's comments (reported previously and repeated here) warn of some potential hazards of using Google Docs. In this section, however, Google Docs emerged as a tool that could potentially allow instructors and students to restructure the way that group work is conducted, in ways that might allow international and other multilingual students to contribute more equitably to the group. Clearly, the use of Google Docs to support group interactions can have varied results, and as Vallance, Towndrow, and Wiz (2010) argued, instructors should discuss the challenges of learning technologies explicitly with their students. Additionally, further research regarding the use of Google Docs as a means to equalize communication and restructure group work as a more inclusive practice would be informative.

Communication strategies used by the students, instructors, and TAs in this study to mitigate language barriers are similar to the supportive interactions conceptualized by Foronda et al. (2016) in their concept analysis of cultural humility, which include a range of positive behaviors that embody cultural humility and facilitate meaningful interpersonal exchanges. Foronda et al. (2016) also described "misunderstandings" as an antonym to cultural humility, implying that resolving misunderstandings is a way of expressing cultural humility. Hook et al. (2013) included one criterion on the cultural humility scale asking therapy clients to assess the extent to which their therapist "asks questions when he/she is uncertain," which is similar to the clarification strategies described by my interview participants. Griswold, Zayas, Kernan, and Wagner (2007)

conducted a qualitative study in which they explored the development of cultural humility in medical students who had brief exposures to working with refugee patients. In this study, one of the authors' findings was that developing enhanced communication skills, particularly listening skills, represented a critical opportunity for the medical students to learn from the refugee patients. However, besides these brief references, there is a void of discussion in the cultural humility literature about other specific strategies that may be used to mitigate communication barriers.

Discussion of Findings and Implications for Cultural Humility

Developing Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Awareness

An authentic expression of cultural humility necessitates an awareness of self and others. In response to different reflection prompts, students in FS 280 demonstrated some evidence of personal growth in attitudes, skills, and behaviors that find some degree of congruence with the literature on cultural humility. Specifically, their descriptions of question-asking and communication strategies align with what Foronda et al. (2016) described as supportive interactions intended to "flatten" (p. 212) power imbalances and enact cultural humility within the context of relationships. Although most students who participated as either an observation or interview participant were able to demonstrate a greater understanding of cultural humility as a result of participating in the course project or working in a diverse team, Cal and Kayla displayed higher levels of cultural humility based on my observation and interview data, and according to how other students and instructors described them. This is evident because the international students in Cal's

group and in Kayla's group made several comments about the positive group work experiences they had, and in some cases, they directly referred to Cal and Kayla as examples of U.S. students who had demonstrated cultural humility to them.

Another source of evidence of the cultural humility that Kayla and Cal facilitated was in the outcome of their group projects, not in terms of product so much as in the relational process. In their concept analysis, Foronda et al. (2016) contributed an important understanding of the consequences of cultural humility, described as "mutual empowerment, partnerships, respect, optimal care, and lifelong learning" (p. 212). Both groups could demonstrate some evidence of these consequences. While students in the Group 8 may have experienced communication challenges and difficulties accomplishing their project objectives, Hui and Shan seemed to respond positively to Kayla's facilitation efforts, and described her in terms of respect and kindness. In fact, during one of the last cooking labs of the semester, I observed that Kayla and Hui teamed up to cook the assigned recipe together, a rare type of spontaneous self-selected partnership between an international student and U.S. student that even surprised Professor Burk (April 14 Cooking Lab Notes). During this cooking session, I watched as Hui took a lead in showing Kayla how to cook jiaozi, a traditional Chinese food.

Similar types of consequences of cultural humility were evident in Group 3. Upon several occasions in her interview, Li referred to Cal as kind and thoughtful, specifically noting his actions to lead the group with careful planning, and his intentions to include her and treat her as an equal. Although Cal struggled to figure out how to get Li to share her ideas verbally, he explained his desire to not overpower her in his way of

leading the group, and reiterated a few times that he valued her opinion and wanted her to know that. In all of his group evaluations, at midterm and for the final peer evaluation, he affirmed her as a strong, hard-working contributor to the group. Professor Ingham also commented on Group 3 and noted the cultural sensitivity she observed in their interactions:

> I feel like the, like, the story collection group really just showed ... I don't know what the word is, they just, I just think that they did a fantastic job on many different levels. I felt like Cal and Brent were really conscientious of making sure that Li was included. There was cultural sensitivity. I don't know if it came from our class or if it was again, because of the previous work in food shelves but there was ... they seemed especially equipped to do that project (Professor Ingham's Interview Transcript).

An important caveat to make is that in some cases of cross-national group work, the expression of cultural humility would perhaps not be best enacted through the invitational and communication strategies mentioned in this section. To assume that all international students need or would be appreciative of these gestures is to violate the core principle of cultural humility by making stereotypical assumptions. One U.S. participant explained this concern and emphasized the importance of learning about others before making assumptions about their communicative abilities:

> I feel like depending, you know, depending on where an international student is at, just with their own individual language development, would be more indicative of like, needing to find those strategies as opposed to just assuming

> from the get-go, like " Oh, international student." Like, like, "What do you need for, you know, communication services?" Or something (Jamie's Interview Transcript).

Although the three international student interviewees seemed to feel valued and affirmed when U.S. students tried to include them by asking questions or inviting their opinions, two case study participants discussed important ways in which questions could be asked that may not be perceived to be helpful. In one of his reflection assignments, Ashwin shared that he often felt frustrated when his U.S. group members asked him if he understood or had questions. He felt stereotyped by their choice to single him out as someone who likely did not have strong English proficiency, and explained that actually English was one of the primary languages in his home country:

> During my study abroad here, I always experience the same stereotype of being an international student. People always think I am unable to fluently understand, let alone communicate, with them. In fact, English is one of my primary language. My school in my home country, Indonesia, uses English as a teaching language. At that time, they always asked me whether I understand what they say or not. They also always asked me whether I have questions or not. When I said I did not have question, they asked me whether I was sure or not. Although I knew they did that so we all could proceed with our group work and presentation, I just did not think it was necessary for them to ask multiple times whether I understood them or not. In fact, the only one that was being asked was me. No one else was being asked whether they understand or not (Ashwin's Reflection Assignment #3).

Professor Ingham also mentioned a type of question asking that may be similar to what Ashwin described in his reflection assignment. She made a distinction between questions that explicitly highlight a weakness and questions that invite someone in as a valuable contributor to the conversation:

> If you approach it as, "Are you uncomfortable talking to the group?" Like, put that cultural difference like front and center and I think in some ways can diminish them. Right, because it's an incapacity. Whereas, if you come back to them outside the group and say, "I really would value your opinion on the conversation we were just having if you would want to chat about it." You're saying like, "Hey, I value you as a person and we're equals here in this project" without explicitly putting this, you know, sort of, cultural piece front and center (Professor Ingham's Interview Transcript).

The comments made here by Jamie, Ashwin, and Professor Ingham demonstrate why critical awareness of self and others is vital to an authentic expression of cultural humility.

Developing Institutional Accountability

One of the main tenets of the cultural humility framework conceptualized by Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) is "Institutional Accountability." The environment within FS 280, which supported communication between students, provided specific examples of how students and instructors can engage in the practice of cultural humility. These examples highlighted that participants identified power differences between

students in groups, and students worked to interpersonally alleviate the gaps in communication and participation that seemed to be inherent in group work, especially when majority students (U.S. white Americans) played leadership roles.

The cultural humility framework also calls for “Institutional Accountability” as an area of commitment for ameliorating power differences. One way that instructors enacted institutional accountability was through encouraging students to manage their group dynamics equitably, for example, by creating formal accountability measures in the memorandum of understanding, and by assigning roles to help each team member commit to expressing their individual contributions to the group. Another way that instructors enacted institutional accountability was through the numerous reflective exercises that students were required to complete. Students, in general, tended to have an instrumental approach to their work (wanting to complete assignments quickly), but instructors forced the issue of reflection. These assignments provided space for students to reflect on their own cultural location and how power, communication, and participation were framed in groups. Specifically, the self-reflection of certain U.S. students appeared to be helpful in making international students feel more welcomed and valued in group work.

However, a missing area of reflection from U.S. participants was a critical reflection upon how communication patterns within group work may be based on cultural norms, and how those norms may exclude students from different national backgrounds - in the case of this study, Chinese students who spoke English as a second language. Although the international student participants were able to identify the communication

barriers they faced, and U.S. students exhibited awareness of their power to varying degrees, U.S. students were unable to demonstrate an awareness of specific strategies to make group work more inclusive from the start.

This micro-study of a particular classroom provided clues about ways to create more inclusive group projects, but cultural humility, as a framework, appeared to only have an impact on interpersonal, not structural issues of group work, as evidenced by the persistent lower status participation of international students in Groups 3 and 8.

Summary

This study indicates that through reflective practice, cultural humility may be exhibited by instructors and students alike. In some circumstances, U.S. students came to understand their power within groups and worked to ensure that their international colleagues found a way to participate in groups. This participation, however, had to be creatively devised because the structure of group work privileged students who were familiar with its habitus, had strong conversational English skills, and were willing to make fast decisions (even if all information was not yet collected). This privilege allowed U.S. students to reflect upon and practice cultural humility, but did not change the very learning structures that may have necessitated cultural humility and identification of power differences in the first place. Group work, as a practice, has a strong history in the U.S. educational system and is a norm in undergraduate and graduate classrooms alike. Findings from this chapter indicate that cultural humility in practice can improve the communicative conditions in groups, but that the fundamental tenets of face-to-face

communication toward common goals may need to be revisited in 21st Century higher education classrooms, where experiential and communicative hierarchies may exist between students who have vastly different primary and secondary schooling experiences.

CHAPTER SIX: Implications For Theory And Practice

The purpose of this study was to understand the experience of undergraduate students interacting in cross-national groups and to identify strategies that undergraduates perceive as most effective in addressing the challenges identified by the literature in this field. Previous chapters provided an overview of and rationale, consideration of relevant literature, an explanation of methodology, a description of the case study, and key findings. Important themes that emerged from the data are considered again in this chapter, with a specific focus on implications for theory and practice within higher education, a discussion of directions for future research, and an explanation of study limitations.

Implications for Theory

Implications for Cooperative Learning Theory

Although Johnson and Johnson (1987) posited that the benefits of cooperative learning extend to students from diverse backgrounds, their theory was originally developed for use in western educational settings, and for classroom situations where cultural and linguistic diversity were not prominent factors that influenced group work (Nguyen et al., 2006). It is therefore important to recognize that members of cross-national groups may experience some limitations or complications related to the five principles of cooperative learning (Baker & Clark, 2009). Specifically, it may be more difficult to engage in promotive interactions, practice social skills, or have effective group processing if students are experiencing communication challenges related to

cultural or linguistic barriers. When facilitating cross-national groups, it will be beneficial for instructors to supplement cooperative learning theory with a robust knowledge of intercultural theory. This is similar to Baker and Clark's (2009) recommendation that instructors and students receive extensive training in the principles of cooperative learning as well as principles of intercultural communication.

As one of the five tenants of cooperative learning, group processing may provide cross-national groups with an opportunity to assess potential structural inequities, as well anticipate barriers related to communication effectiveness. To maximize this opportunity, however, it may be useful to re-envision the role of group processing in cooperative learning theory. Instead of conceptualizing group processing as just one condition to be met and utilized primarily when students encounter challenges, it may be more beneficial to consider it as a strategic communication practice to be used at the start of and throughout the group's duration. Envisioned in this way, it may also help students facilitate more successful positive interdependence, individual accountability, promotive interactions, and social skills in cross-national groups. See Figure 2 for a visual way to perceive the relationship between group processing and the other four components of cooperative learning.

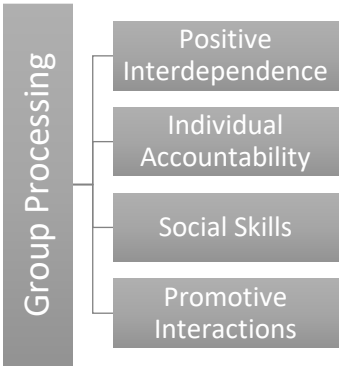

Figure 2. Model of cooperative learning with group processing in a facilitating role

Implications for Intergroup Contact Theory

While there is extensive research to support that the fulfillment of contact theory's four conditions will result in improved attitudes and decreased prejudice between culturally and ethnically diverse group members (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006), there is limited research to understand how linguistic differences influence intergroup contact (Harwood, 2010; Mak et al., 2014). This case study provided a direct opportunity to investigate how differences in language abilities may influence the "contact space" (Harwood, 2010, p. 148). Findings from my case study indicate that when there are language disparities between students working in cross-national groups, students' capacity to achieve equal status in terms of verbal contributions may be jeopardized. As has been demonstrated in other studies (Ippolito, 2009; Méndez García & Pérez Cañado, 2005; Turner, 2007), an imbalance in language abilities may create further inequities in the group, for example, if domestic students perceive that linguistic abilities are indicative of intellectual competence.

My findings also provide insights on ways in which instructors can provide pedagogical support for cross-national groups to fulfill the condition of supportive leadership in contact theory. With the use of various strategies that align with cooperative learning theory (Carroll & Ryan, 2005; Johnson & Johnson, 1987), an instructor's supportive leadership may help to mitigate students' perceptions of each other as equal contributors.

Implications for Cultural Humility

Openness, respect, and egolessness are all culturally humble attributes that are identified in the literature (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998; Foronda et al., 2016; Hook et al., 2013), and that emerged in my study, but redressing power imbalances with "supportive interactions" (Foronda et al., 2016, p. 212) may require culturally sensitive communication skills that are not explicitly discussed in the current literature on cultural humility. Based on my study findings, various types of invitational or clarification strategies may be important to the enactment of cultural humility within groups, but if these are not grounded in an understanding of how to navigate cultural and linguistic barriers with sensitivity, they may result in superficial attempts that further reinforce stereotypes (similar to the questions asked of Ashwin in his reflection described in Chapter 5), and do not lead to the ideal outcomes of cultural humility which include mutual empowerment, respectful relationships, and transformative, lifelong learning (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998; Foronda et. al, 2016). Essentially, the current literature places the greatest emphasis on attitudes associated with cultural humility, with

a description of desired behaviors as those that redress power imbalances, but does not address what skills are important to support the enactment of cultural humility in a cross-national relationship.

Furthermore, the fact that students were able to demonstrate some evidence of cultural humility on an intra- and interpersonal, but seemed to be largely unaware of the structural inequities of U.S. group work -- and in a class that focused on analyzing inequities in the food system -- is informative. This may indicate a need for further studies to clarify how the development of self-understanding influences the formation of institutional accountability related to systemic power and privilege. Understanding factors that facilitate transformative learning regarding these core dimensions of cultural humility would prove beneficial for educators in all fields.

Implications for Internationalization

As described in the literature review in chapter two, inherent in the discussion of internationalization constant tensions resurface: How can institutions best steward the international students who have been recruited to subsidize tuition dollars? How can instructors honor the experiences of international students while meeting institutional goals of facilitating an internationalized classroom? And, how do administrators best support the faculty and staff who may feel ill-equipped to do these things effectively?

Beyond having application to cross-national groups in the classroom, cultural humility offers a model for institutions to be held accountable to the power that they wield in shaping the international student experience, as well as the experiences of all

others on campus who are impacted by the goals of internationalization. An application of cultural humility to the ideals of internationalization would mean that power imbalances are shifted in ways that allow us to create international partnerships while integrating an intentional, continuous process of learning. The culturally humble way of learning implies that at every level of the campus, university community members are engaging in self-critique, identifying and confronting biases, asking questions with an open mind, and gleaning new insights from every interaction. The model of partnership that cultural humility proposes is one in which power differentials are redressed: faculty and staff position themselves as learners; domestic students learn how to "step back" and overcome communication barriers in order to forge friendships with international students; and institutional leaders are held accountable to make decisions that that mitigate systemic inequities. And when applied specifically to cross-national interactions, the institutional accountability facet of cultural humility requires that systemic change goes beyond interpersonal interactions to address structural barriers to inclusiveness.

Implications for Pedagogy

Support Purposeful Integration in Group Formation

While evidence exists in the literature to support both sides of the group formation debate: allowing students to self-select their group members and having an instructor-facilitated process of group formation (Kelly, 2009; Strauss & Young, 2011), findings from this case study support a strategic, instructor-facilitated group formation

process. This purposeful integration of cross-national groups could be accomplished through the use of various types of questionnaires to understand more about students' personalities, educational backgrounds, areas of expertise, and self-interests (Kelly, 2009; Reid & Garson, 2017), and it could be particularly helpful to identify more information about students' comfortability communicating in a small group setting. For example, it may prove useful to determine students' self-reported level of English proficiency, through use of an explicit question such as "if English is not your first language, please explain your comfort level in communicating in English for small group work." Knowing this information will allow instructors to strategically place international students (and other non-native English speakers) in groups where they are likely to receive more communication support -- if that is what they need.

Furthermore, it could also be useful to identify students (either international or U.S.) who are interested in improving their intercultural communication skills through small group work. This could be determined by asking a question such as: "Are you interested in participating in or facilitating a cross-national group?" Identifying students who want to join cross-national groups may help to create a more effective group process by enabling instructors to offer training and support to students, thereby maximizing the potential to improve the communication effectiveness of the group. Identifying U.S. students who readily see benefits to working with international students may also help to equalize power differentials posed by language disparities (de Figueiredo & Mauri, 2012), and support international students in gaining important language practice through

meaningful and mutually beneficial interactions with U.S. classmates (Long & Porter, 1985; Xue, 2013).

Foster Inclusive Communication

For instructors who want to include an intentional focus on learning through cross-national group work, a priority is to establish support for students that will facilitate an inclusive communication process with special attention to culturally and linguistically diverse variables. Utilizing a variety of instructional strategies that align with cooperative learning and are based on principles of universal design will ultimately support all students more effectively in the group work process (Carroll & Ryan, 2005; Johnson & Johnson, 1987). In addition, I suggest the following as methods to create more inclusive communication within cross-national groups.

Equip Students as Facilitators. Findings from this case study indicate that both U.S. and international students felt that group communication was at times impeded by cultural and/or linguistic barriers. However, U.S. students who emerged as group facilitators expressed a willingness and expended effort to try and overcome communication barriers. International student interviewees also recognized the challenges they were experiencing and provided perspective on what strategies would be most helpful to enhance communication. Empowering students who are assigned to work in cross-national groups with extra support is a gesture that could help to mitigate power differentials and enhance the potential for intercultural learning through group work. This support could take various forms, depending on the instructor and the class,

but it might include access to training on intercultural communication skills or extra group consultations with the instructor. Through these training initiatives, students should also be made to understand how they are developing skills that will serve as valuable competencies for future work in a global environment.

Encourage Multiple Modes of Communication. One key finding from this case study of cross-national group work is that international students may be able to contribute to groups more equally if instructors highlight the benefits of using alternate forms of communication, such as writing or Google Docs. Communicating through different mediums can also provide more support for all students who are quieter and have greater comfort writing their ideas instead of speaking. Instructors play an important role in in normalizing classroom communication, and all students benefit when instructors are explicit with their expectations (Campbell et al., 2016; Carroll & Ryan, 2005). Instructors can thus encourage this approach with a direct statement about how and why alternate communication mediums may benefit group work, and students would be best supported if they can see examples of constructive ways to use Google Docs that support promotive interactions and do not jeopardize the group's positive interdependence.

Integrate Cultural Humility into Group Processing. When engaged in cross-national group work, findings from my study suggest that students can benefit when they learn more about the following: how to identify and confront assumptions and biases, ways in which national status and language disparities can create power imbalances in group work, and strategies to navigate linguistic and cultural barriers without causing offense. Instructors can address these learning outcomes and utilize cultural humility as a

supportive framework to facilitate group processing throughout the duration of a group project. At various points in the group's development, students can be encouraged to reflect on their interactions in ways that foster growth in their understanding of cultural humility. They could begin with one-to-one interviews similar to those used by Professor Ingham in this case study, which may support students in confronting their biases and practicing listening skills through a model of interpersonal learning (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). Early on, and with support from the instructor, students could also have conversation about power differentials and the establishment of ground rules that may help to encourage individual accountability and mitigate power imbalances. As the group work progresses, students can be empowered to develop their own questions to learn important insights about their group process. In this study, because of power differences, U.S. students were often the focus of cultural humility findings. However, cultural humility is a practice that can be implemented by all students in higher education settings.

Utilize Reflective Journaling to Facilitate the Development of Cultural Humility. Schuessler et al. (2012) demonstrated the value of using reflective journaling as a tool to develop cultural humility. My case study findings also support this instructional strategy. Specifically, reflection upon stereotypes may provide an accessible and familiar way for students to begin to process a deeper understanding of cultural humility.

Directions for Future Research

Cultural humility is an emerging construct that currently is the focus of many scholars and practitioners in the fields of health care, social work, and psychology (Fisher-Borne et al., 2015; Hook et al., 2013; Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). Because only a few educational researchers have analyzed the development of cultural humility in college students (Hockett et al., 2014; Lund & Lee, 2015), there are several areas of future research to pursue. For classes that include any emphasis on the development of intercultural skills, teachers can conduct research to examine how cultural humility develops based on student reflections. Further research to learn about how international students or other minoritized populations on campus have experienced cultural humility will add to understanding of the construct. And for classes that integrate a specific focus on cross-national group work, learning from both dominant and non-dominant culture group members about how they perceive cultural humility to be enacted in ways that shift power balances will provide greater insights as well. A multiple case study design would allow the opportunity to replicate this study in different classroom contexts, in various disciplines, and assess the ways in which students' cultural humility may develop with the influence of various contextual factors.

Additional research to establish a means to measure cultural humility in individuals would expand the current knowledge base about cultural humility. Hook et al. (2013) piloted the cultural humility scale for use in therapist-client relationships; however, their scale includes only attitudinal components regarding open-mindedness,

respect, and curiosity, and is lacking a specific way to measure the behaviors that individuals engage in which help to mitigate power imbalances.

One final area of recommended research is to identify a means by which to systematically compare the concepts and attributes of cultural humility to those in the more widely-accepted intercultural theories such as Deardorff's (2006) model of intercultural competence, Bennett's (1986) theory of intercultural sensitivity, or Earley and Ang's (2003) cultural intelligence framework. Identifying a way to systematically analyze the tenants of each framework and identify areas of potential overlap or incongruence between these intercultural development models would be useful.

Study Limitations

Since only one classroom with a small number of participants was the focus of this case study, the findings are not necessarily transferrable to other classroom or contexts (Yin, 2014). Although some findings may seem directly applicable to other cross-national groups, it is important to recognize that the key themes and overall results of the study are likely to be context-dependent.

Only a small number of international students consented to be interviewed, and these three were Chinese students who self-reported to have somewhat low levels of spoken English proficiency. Although reflection data was obtained from other international students in this case, a more in-depth understanding of perspectives from other international students representing a variety of national and linguistic diversity on the topics related to this case study is lacking. If further data were gathered from a larger

number of international students representing greater diversity, the findings of this study may be impacted. Furthermore, I did not use a formal means of assessing English proficiency but instead relied on students' self-reports and my own interactions with them to get a general sense for their confidence levels in oral communication.

Not every student who agreed to be observed also consented to be an interview participant, and similarly, I was not able to observe all of the student interview participants at work in their groups. This created a gap in my understanding in two ways. For those students who participated as interview participants but not in the group observations, I cannot verify the extent to which they acted in ways that are congruent with accounts provided in their interviews. For those students who participated in the group observations but declined to be interviewed, I was not able to gain a more in-depth understanding about the patterns of interaction that I observed in their groups. Also, because some of my interview participants were not members of cross-national groups in FS 280, they relied on previous experiences with cross-national groups to respond to the interview questions.

Besides examining student reflections for evidence of culturally humble attitudes and behaviors, an explicit assessment of cultural humility was not included as a focus of this study, nor was there a formal way to measure prejudice reduction or improvement in intergroup attitudes. Utilizing a more objective method to assess cultural humility may have contributed further clarity on students' capacity to demonstrate cultural humility to one another in their cross-national groups. Furthermore, learning insights about how students developed cultural humility prior to enrolling in the course would also offer

useful insights. Finally, this study did not take into consideration students' formal, graded performance in their group projects, so I cannot make observations about possible associations between students' project grades and the outcomes of their group work processes.

Summary

This case study has explored the ways in which students experience cross-national interactions in a cooperative learning context. Specifically, my study provides insights about how students experience power differentials within cross-national groups. Students and instructors also demonstrated some strategies for utilizing cultural humility as a framework to mitigate power imbalances. The application of cultural humility was primarily limited to the level of interpersonal dynamics and did not affect change at the structural level of group work, although the use of some communication methods may encourage more inclusive communication for cross-national groups.

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APPENDIX A: Research Participation Questionnaire

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research! This is a very brief questionnaire to provide some basic demographic information. The information you provide for my study will be kept confidential. Please let me know if you have any questions – you can email me at bethanyp@umn.edu.

1. Your First & Last Name:
2. Your Email Address:
3. What is your major?
4. What is your year in school?
    a. Freshman
    b. Sophomore
    c. Junior
    d. Senior
    e. Other:_____
5. What country are you from?
6. Are you an international student on an F-1 visa?
    Yes
    No
    Other:
7. What is your native language?
8. To fully understand how students are experiencing the group project, it would be helpful to read your class reflections and other assignments you have submitted. Is this okay with you?
    Yes
    No
9. What kind of gift card ($25) would you like to receive for participating in the observations?
    a. Starbucks
    b. Target
    c. Amazon.com
    d. U of M bookstore

APPENDIX B: Consent Information for Participants

You are invited to be in a research study of seeking to understand the experiences of University students participating in cross-national group work. You were selected as a possible participant because you are currently teaching or are a student enrolled in a University course that utilizes cross-national group work. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you have before agreeing to be in this study. This study is being conducted by: Bethany Peters, PhD student in the College of Education.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study, we would as you to do the following things:
Be observed by me during your group project meetings 2-3 times throughout the spring 2017 semester. For doing this, I will offer you a $25 gift card.
Participate in up to a 60-minute interview with me to share your experiences about working in cross-national groups, as well as possibly a follow-up interview. For participating in the interview(s), I will offer you a $25 gift card. For each observed group meeting or interview, I will ask permission to audio record the conversations.

Confidentiality:
The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report that we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records.

Voluntary nature of the study:
Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University or your professor. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting these relationships.

Contacts and Questions:
The researcher(s) conducting this study is: Bethany Peters. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact the researchers: Bethany Peters, bethanyp@umn.edu, or Bethany's advisor, Christopher Johnstone, john4810@umn.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, MN 55455; (612) 625-1650.

APPENDIX C: Student Interview Protocol

Interview Purpose: This interview is designed to provide insight into how University undergraduate students perceive cross-national interactions within group work in a higher education context. Thank you for taking time to give your input on this important topic!
Interview Details: It is estimated that it will take approximately 45 minutes to participate in this interview. All of your responses are anonymous and will be kept confidential. Please contact Bethany Peters (bethanyp@umn.edu) if you have any questions or concerns.

Key Definitions

- **Cross-national group work** is defined as a group of students from two or more different countries working together to complete a major course assignment. In many cases (but not all), cross-national group work involves students who speak English as their first language and students who speak English as a second or third language. For purposes of this survey, cross-national group work does not include co-curricular experiences or student groups.
- **Cross-national interactions** are defined as any interactions that take place between two or more students from different countries. In many cases (but not all), these interactions take place between students who speak English as their first language and students who speak English as a second or third language.
- **Cultural humility:** As described by Hook and Watkins (2015): "Intrapersonally, cultural humility involves a willingness and openness to reflect on one's own self as an embedded cultural being, having an awareness of personal limitations in understanding the cultural background and viewpoints of others; interpersonally, cultural humility involves an other-oriented stance (or openness to the other) with regard to aspects of an individual's or group's cultural background and identity" (p. 661).

1. Can you describe your general attitude towards cross-national group work?
2. What benefits do you experience when participating in cross-national group work? Can you give specific examples?
3. What challenges do you experience when participating in cross-national group work? Can you give specific examples?
4. What strategies have you (or other group members) used to overcome challenges with cross-national interactions in group work? How have these strategies proven to be effective or ineffective?
5. Think of your most recent group work experience when you were working with students from other countries. Can you describe the roles that each group member played to help accomplish the group goals?
6. Can you describe the types of students who have the most influence in cross-national group work situations in which you have participated? Who has the least influence?

7. [Explain paraphrased definition of cultural humility]. In what ways have you experienced cultural humility in cross-national group work? (either demonstrated by you or by another group member?) In what ways does the expression of cultural humility help to mediate the challenges students experience in cross-national group work?
8. What types of guidance or support do you receive from your instructor when participating in group work with cross-national peers? What type of instructional support has been most effective at helping you overcome challenges of cross-national group work?
9. What additional instructional support would help to improve your experience in group work with students from other countries?

Demographic Questions

- What is your country of origin?
- What is your native language?
- What is your year in school?
    - Freshman
    - Sophomore
    - Junior
    - Senior
- What is your major?

APPENDIX D: Faculty Interview Protocol

Interview Purpose: This interview is designed to provide insight into how faculty members at the University structure cross-national group work for undergraduate students. Thank you for taking time to give your input on this important topic.
Interview Details: It is estimated that it will take approximately 45 minutes to participate in this interview. All of your responses are anonymous and will be kept confidential. Please contact Bethany Peters (bethanyp@umn.edu) if you have any questions or concerns.

Key Definitions

- **Cross-national group work** is defined as a group of students from two or more different countries working together to complete a major course assignment. In many cases (but not all), cross-national group work involves students who speak English as their first language and students who speak English as a second or third language. For purposes of this survey, cross-national group work does not include co-curricular experiences or student groups.
- **Cross-national interactions** are defined as any interactions that take place between two or more students from different countries. In many cases (but not all), these interactions take place between students who speak English as their first language and students who speak English as a second or third language.

- **Cultural humility:** As described by Hook and Watkins (2015): "Intrapersonally, cultural humility involves a willingness and openness to reflect on one's own self as an embedded cultural being, having an awareness of personal limitations in understanding the cultural background and viewpoints of others; interpersonally, cultural humility involves an other-oriented stance (or openness to the other) with regard to aspects of an individual's or group's cultural background and identity" (p. 661).

1. Can you describe the method you use to place students into groups for graded assignments? How often do you intentionally assign students to work in cross-national groups for a graded assignment?
2. Can you explain the types of learning outcomes you hope students achieve when working in cross-national groups and your approach to assessing these outcomes?
3. What benefits do you think students experience when participating in cross-national group work? Can you give specific examples?
4. What challenges do you think students experience when participating in cross-national group work? Can you give specific examples?
5. What strategies have you observed students using to overcome the challenges they experience in cross-national group work? Which of these strategies seem to be the most useful or effective?

6. Can you describe the types of students who have the most influence in cross-national group work situations in your classes? Which types of students typically have the least influence?
7. What instructional strategies do you use to help students overcome challenges with cross-national interactions in group work? How have these strategies proven to be effective or ineffective?
8. What types of additional instructional support do you think would be helpful to support students participating in cross-national group work?
9. [Explain paraphrased definition of cultural humility]. In what ways have you observed cultural humility demonstrated in cross-national group work in your classes? In what ways does the expression of cultural humility help to mediate the challenges students experience in cross-national group work?

APPENDIX E: Code Book

Attitudes about Group Work "Mixed feelings definitely"

- "I'm not too ecstatic about group work"
- "I'd rather just do everything myself"
- "There is a lot of benefits"
- "Depending on the quality of my teammates"

Case Description

- **Course Documents**
- **Group Cases**

Cross-National Interactions

- **Advantages**
  - "It's clearly impressive what they're doing"
  - "You get to kind of learn their different experiences"
  - "They can help me to express myself"
- **Apprehensions**
  - "You don't know what to expect"
  - "It's uncomfortable"
- **Communication Barriers**
  - "The biggest problem is the language"
  - "It might be culture"

Cultural Humility- references to culture, pertaining to students or class content

- **Engaging in Critical Self-Reflection**
  - "Gain more insight into personal biases and identities"
  - "I love to hear people's stories"
  - "My interactions with my group have to be with an open mind"
  - "Think about the problem from their perspective"
- **Mitigating Power Imbalances**
  - "Bridge any potential language gap"
  - "I can be a part of change making"
  - "Intentional community building"
  - "Inviting them into the conversation"
  - "Stepping back"

Group Work Practices

- **Google Docs in Groups**
    - "It just makes it that easier"
    - "It helps the international student"
    - "Shuts off communication"
- **"So just one person did it"**
- **"People tend not to respond to emails"**
- **"We seldom should meet outside of class"**

Instructional Strategies- supports provided by the instructors for group work

- "Clear-cut instructions"
- "Develop those relationships"
- "Face-to-face time"
- "Group check-in"
- "Ground rules"
- "Making it relevant"
- "Put them in mixed groups"
- "Similar self-interests"

Power Differentials-

- **Determining Group Dynamics**
    - "the confident, talkative ones"
    - "every job is equal"
    - "the person that is willing to do the most work"
    - "the American students might usually be the leader"
    - "the strongest connection to the work"
    - "it depends on the language"
- **Delegation Strategies-**
    - "Giving everyone an equal task or role"
    - "Try to get them involved in small ways"
    - "Try to just like make sure she can pick stuff"

APPENDIX F: Public Narrative Worksheet

Adapted from Marshall Ganz, "What Is Public Narrative?" (used in Obama Campaign, 2008) by Harry Boyte, Center for Democracy and Citizenship Augsburg College, May 2014

"Public Narrative," developed by long time civil rights activist, community and labor union organizer turned Harvard professor Marshall Ganz for the Obama campaign in 2008, has since become a resource for change-making around the world. Narrative, writes Ganz, is the process "through which individuals, communities, and nations make choices, construct identity, and inspire action. It can both instruct and inspire – teaching us not only how we *ought* to act but motivating us to *act."*

Public narrative is different than one's individual story. "Some of us may think our personal stories don't matter," says Ganz. "On the contrary, if we do public work we have a responsibility to give a public account of ourselves – where we came from, why we do what we do, and where we think we are going."

Public narrative has three parts – "story of self," "story of us," "story of now."

Story of self: Story of self tells of the key formative experiences which shaped you, "communicating the values that are calling you to act." Story of self is built around one or two key "choice points," moments of large consequence in your life when you faced a challenge of some kind, made a choice based on some core values, experienced a consequence, and learned something of basic importance – "a moral."

- Write a few notes on your life, your childhood, your growing up, your education or early work.
- What one or two key experiences of challenge forced you to make a choice? Be as concrete and specific as possible. Remember, each story of self is unique – yours alone.
- Share with another person. Practice. Share with a group. Practice. Story of self deepens and develops over time!

Story of us: Story of self overlaps with story of us. There are many "us's" – family, community, organization, profession, movement, nation. A story of us tells the values of some community, long formed or now forming. It helps define a community, comparing and contrasting with other communities. It is about collective identity.

Stories of us that have depth have founding moments, key choices made, challenges faced, defining experiences, outcomes, lessons learned.

- Discuss (either as a whole group or divide in to small groups) what brought "us" together. Come back together. Why did the community form, or why is it forming? If it is a group with history, what was the founding moment? What was the challenge or opportunity? What have been key experiences? Key lessons?

Story of now: Story of now locates the community in the larger challenges or threats of our time. An example was Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech on August 28, 1963. It is important to remember that King preceded the dream with a nightmare – the failure of America to make good on the "promissory note" to African Americans. He said the March has "the fierce urgency of now" because this debt could no longer be postponed.

- Discuss: What is the challenge or threat in the world to which the community responds?

Celebration: If the community lasts, how can you celebrate? A celebration is not a party. "It is a way that members of a community come together to honor who they are, what they have done, where they are going" – and what are the key lessons. Retelling the story of us and the story of now helps to keep groups alive, to create "new beginnings."

APPENDIX G: Project Preferences Survey

1. Your first and last name.
2. Your email.
3. What is your major / area of study?
4. Do you have easy access to transportation in order to visit project sites?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Other (please specify)
5. How strong are your *written* English communication skills?
    a. Very Strong.
    b. They are OK.
    c. Not Strong.
6. How strong are your *spoken* English communication skills?
    a. Very Strong.
    b. They are OK.
    c. Not Strong.
7. Are you interested in participating in the PhD Research study "Intergroup Dynamics, Power, and Cultural Humility as Experienced by Undergraduate Students in Cross-National Group Work"?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Maybe - I'd like to talk with the researcher to understand more about participation
8. Please Rank the 10 class projects from 1 to 10. Number 1 being the project you most want to do and number 10 being the project you would least like to do.
9. Tell us a little bit about your rankings. How is your self-interest related to your top rankings?
10. Is there anything else you'd like us to know as we put groups together?

APPENDIX H: One-to-One Interviews Handout

A one-on-one interview is an intentional process of getting to know what motivates another person. It helps to develop respect for people of different backgrounds and is the foundation for work across differences. Some call the one-on-one the genius of the new generation of civic efforts because it breaks down stereotypes and it also changes the rules of involvement. Today, much activism is based on the idea of "outreach," trying to get people involved in the issues which have already been defined, directed toward outcomes already determined. If you use one-on-ones to find out others' self-interests and build on them in serious ways, you are doing something different: enlisting people by engaging them in what they are interested in. You begin to co-create the civic effort together.

A one-on-one involves a conscious exploration of another person's interests, passions, most important relationships, and stories. One-on-ones depend on putting aside prejudgments and stereotypes and listening carefully and strategically. If you do this much, people will constantly surprise and sometimes amaze you with talents and insights you never imagined. One-on-one interviews are also a way to develop new power through building public relationships across lines of difference. Like other civic skills, they involve a good deal of practice.

To find out others' self-interests requires that you learn to listen in a particular way, with attention to body language, emotional tone, a sparkle in the eye. You identify what energizes and activates the other person. One-on-ones aim at "public knowledge"—you are listening for people's public interests and potential to take action with others. You are not creating a therapeutic or intimate relationship, where you delve into hardships in order to provide comfort.

Tips and Tools

- **Be prepared:** It is best to set interviews up in advance, think about what you want to know, and make the interview short (at least the initial one), about a half hour.
- **Keep it informal:** A one-on-one differs from a job interview, a survey, or an academic approach. You do not have a standardized set of questions—you go with the flow, looking for body language, sources of passion, personal histories.
- **Look for connections:** Ask questions to keep the conversation flowing. Look for connections and contrasts in experience between yourself and your interviewee, but resist launching into long stories about yourself. The other person should be doing most of the talking.
- **Ask direct questions:** Find out what is important to the other person. For instance, ask about her connections to her home, or how she came to her job. Find out about the public issues that make her angry or energized. "Why did you get involved in this group?" "Why do you care about this issue?" "What have you learned from this experience?"

- **Avoid asking yes and no questions:** They are too quick and you don't learn much. If you do ask them, follow up with "why?"
- **Listen well:** Build on what your interviewee has already said. This involves paying close attention. An interviewee who feels listened to is likely to talk more than someone who feels that their words are falling on deaf ears.
- **Be sure you understand:** Clarify what the talker is saying by restating what you've heard and asking if you've got it right.
- **Look for the energy for action:** If you can see that the person is fired up about a public problem, ask if she has ever taken action on it before and how. Find out if she would be interested in working with others to take further action. Plan a follow-up, if it is useful.
- **Evaluate:** Afterward, think about the outcome of the interview. What worked? What can you do better next time?