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Workforce Education and Development Curriculum Responsiveness to Culturally and Internationally Diverse Graduate Students: A Mixed Methods Study

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WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM
RESPONSIVENESS TO CULTURALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY DIVERSE
GRADUATE STUDENTS: A MIXED METHODS STUDY

By

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A Dissertation
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Doctor of Philosophy Degree

Department of Workforce Education and Development
In the Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale

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DISSERTATION APPROVAL

WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM
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for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

In the field of Workforce Education and Development

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November 2, 2009

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Debra Ferdinand, for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Workforce, Education, Training, and Development, presented on November 2, 2009, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM RESPONSIVENESS TO CULTURALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY DIVERSE GRADUATE STUDENTS: A MIXED METHODS STUDY

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Dexter Wakefield

This descriptive study used a mixed methods design and sought to examine students' perceptions on workforce education and development (WED) curriculum responsiveness to culturally and internationally diverse graduate students at a Midwestern university on four dimensions: *teaching strategies (to include delivery)*, *curriculum inclusiveness*, *international responsiveness*, and *curriculum improvements*. The research study design consisted of the mixed methods Follow-up Explanations Model (QUAN emphasized) complemented by the With-in Stage Mixed Model. A pragmatic paradigm guided the collection and analysis of the study's census data (survey and focus groups).

A newly developed WED Curriculum Responsiveness Survey (.850 Cronbach's alpha index) containing closed- and open-ended questions facilitated data collection from all the population. Three follow-up focus groups gathered qualitative data for explaining the survey quantitative results. Study participants comprised graduate students with at least one year continuous enrollment from fall 2007 to spring 2008 in the WED program at a Midwestern university. A total of 69 (44% response rate) participants responded to the census survey

comprising three main study groups: U.S. majority, U.S. minority, and International students.

At this snapshot in time and based on study findings of students' perceptions, WED curriculum responsiveness to culturally and internationally diverse graduate students at a Midwestern university appeared to be inadequate. This was evident in the resulting overall weak correlation in the most used and most responsive teaching strategies to students' learning style preferences in its WED program. Generally, U.S. minority and international students perceived cultural insensitivity to occur sometimes to quite often in teaching delivery respectively. Both groups found WED curriculum content to be typically aligned to the interests of the dominant group (Caucasians) quite often. All student groups (U.S. majority, U.S. minority, and international) found a limited representation of international perspectives on WED course topics.

These findings imply that students experienced much intellectual and cultural bondage with a U.S.-centric curriculum in their graduate studies that does not fully prepare them for today's global marketplace. Students' suggestions for reversing these trends were to diversify/internationalize WED curriculum content, diversify teaching styles, hire diverse faculty, and provide faculty diversity training. These suggestions were strongly supported by the theoretical and empirical literature on critical race theory, critical education theory, curriculum inclusiveness, multicultural education, and internationalization in U.S. higher education.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my dear parents for their outstanding example of excellence in work: to my late father, a former owner of a driving school, who was known for *perfect Henry driving* (PHD); to my mother, a retired worker of a national nutrition center, who is known for *preparing healthy-tasty dishes* (PHD). Watching them master their occupational skills over the years helped to inspire the pursuit of the highest degree in my chosen field of endeavor: Workforce Education, Training, and Development.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Personal Reflection

In response to criticisms that his work on Critical theory is imbued with pessimism, Tierney (1997) wrote:

It is as if some colleagues would prefer that we not point out flaws in our system so that we may then assume that the organization is healthy and trouble-free. However, we ought not [to] gloss over the challenges that confront individuals such as those who are returning adult students [to higher education]. Critique is important, essential, if we are to improve. (p. x11)

I reiterate this point as a returning adult to higher education after a five-year break as a quality assurance officer at a national training agency. This research stems from learning experiences as an international student at a Midwestern university, which prompted my investigation into the central phenomenon. Its intent is not to arraign but rather make recommendations for improvements.

A prior visit in 2003 to the University's Workforce Education and Development (WED) department afforded the opportunity to view its high-tech facilities and confirm that the distance education courses offered met with my expectations. On joining the University's WED program in 2004, I became aware of the University's goals as described in its *Southern @ 150* initiative. Commendably, these goals include enhancing efforts to maintain curricula that

are responsive to the ethnic, geographic, and international diversity of its students and acknowledging diversity as a core value in achieving its educational mission (Southern Illinois University Carbondale [SIUC], 2005a, 2005b). Yet, as a new international student in the University's WED master's program, I was surprised to learn from a senior advisor, after selecting the core WED courses, that an introductory computer class plus two multi-media courses included too many computer courses for my program of study. Presenting documented evidence of the need for such distance education skills that would increase potential for home-based employment still did not prompt a reversal of this decision by the WED department. That experience raised questions in my mind on the purpose of U. S. higher education: Is it to serve the career goals of high-paying international students or is it to serve the centers of power that decide which academic paths students should take? Perhaps it's the latter.

Subsequently, excitement about my new program of study began to wane as I often felt like a spectator in WED classes at a Midwestern university, which gave mostly U.S. perspectives on course topics. Undoubtedly, these U.S. perspectives added value to my intellectual development but left global knowledge on WED wanting, especially for developing countries. Left with the solo challenge of trying to modify the U.S. developed model for WED, with its many layers, to my small developing country context, I eventually accepted the host-country curriculum for expediency in completing related assignments and passing exams.

Coming from a small twin-island state with a British system of education also made it difficult to accept “corrections” on some assignments for words in British spelling (like *learnt, analysing, judgement, and organisation*) and also to adjust to the somewhat informal style in U.S. classroom delivery. For example, in responding to my question on the difference between the syllabus and curriculum, a professor, recognizing my Caribbean accent and former background in a British system of education, remarked, “the Brits polluted you ...” in commenting on the answer to the question. I hold British education in high esteem so rather than feel polluted or inferior, dropping this first class in my program of study seemed to be the better option. Even more unsettling was the habitual posture of another WED professor with a foot on the front desk and legs open to support a propped elbow while teaching the class. This posture appears to be accepted as being “down to earth” in the U.S. classroom but is considered inappropriate for educational settings in my home country.

Still, learning of the reported under-achievement of some culturally diverse groups (e.g., African Americans and Hispanics) in U.S. higher education compared to the dominant Caucasian group was an eye-opener. Such disparity is not usually the case in my home setting with a majority of similar African and East Indian descendants. Primary reasons given in required WED course readings and class discussions at the Midwestern university, for this achievement gap included increased high school dropout rates, lack of role models, and personal challenges among U.S. minority groups (Haycock & Huang, 2001; The Washington Times, 2005).

Not convinced by the apparent perception that U.S. minority students are almost at fault for their inadequacy in academic achievement, I pondered on learning experiences in diverse classrooms. My cursory glances revealed that some Caucasian professors gave more time and attention to Caucasian and Asian students than to students of color. For example, in such instances, my contribution would be overlooked for the sake of time by the professor, causing me to wonder if I was experiencing the double bind of being an “international” and a student of “color”.

Moreover, I found the recent mandatory transition by the Midwestern university from a social security number (SSN), as the student identification (ID) number, to a system generated DAWG Tag number (SIUC, 2009b) culturally alarming. A dog, how ever used figuratively as a sporting mascot at this University, is not held in such high esteem in other cultures; it’s almost unthinkable that as a human being with intellect, mind, and soul that I can attach myself to a Dawg Tag number (level of a dog). In my opinion, this Dawg Tag number almost gives faculty the right to “bark” at students.

The above experiences were very challenging in assimilating into the U.S. higher education culture because my culture is noted for its commitment to racial equality and sensitivity, proclaimed in its Calypso music and national anthem: “... every creed and race find an equal place ...” (ending line). These experiences coupled with the heightened awareness of the *Southern @ 150* initiative at a Midwestern university underscored the rationale for the study topic: *WED*

Curriculum Responsiveness to Culturally and Internationally Diverse Graduate Students.

Background to the Study

Curriculum Responsiveness

In their reputable text, *Workforce Education: The Basics*, Gray and Herr (1998) asserted that a comprehensive workforce education (formerly vocational education) curriculum should respond to key strategic questions that included the following: "... Who will be served and for what purpose." (p. 140). Answering this question is even more critical to decisions on curriculum content and instructional design (Diamond, 1998; Friedman, Flint, & Rothenberg, 1996) for culturally and internationally diverse students (e.g., African Americans, Latinos, Asians, Native Americans, and Africans). Reference to "cultural diversity" in this study is likened to a phenomenon that includes differences in race/ethnicity, language, values, customs, attitudes, geographic location, and religious persuasion (Sahin, 2003).

Responsiveness is referred to what Stake (2004) in program evaluation posited as paying more attention to the cultural plurality of a program's stakeholders. Curricula that are relevant to the diverse cultural backgrounds of students improve their motivation to learn, which ultimately impacts their academic performance (Capella-Santana, 2003; Gay, 2000). Thus, in the context of the this study, WED curriculum responsiveness is referred to as follows: (a) The equitable representation of ethnic groups and international perspectives in curriculum content whenever possible, and (b) incorporation of different teaching strategies that promote learning in the culturally and internationally diverse

groups served by the curriculum. Further illumination of the nature of WED curriculum responsiveness from its early foundation to development is provided in the following subsections: Overview of WED Foundation, Culturally Diverse Groups in WED, Teacher Preparation for Culturally Diverse Groups, Growing Diversity on American Campuses, and Responding to Campus Diversity.

Overview of WED Foundation

Workforce education and development (WED) is a more modern name for an educational field that has its foundation in vocational education. Traditionally, vocational education prepared individuals for work in a specific craft (e.g., stone masonry) outside of the school curriculum and was targeted at the lowest social class such as slaves in early Greek and Roman societies. Those in the upper classes, including kings and soldiers, were excluded from manual labor because of their high social status in these societies (Gordon, 2003). Could the way in which vocational education evolved from its inception contribute to the social stigma that has plagued those served in this field over the centuries?

There seems to be a parallel between the social stigma attached to vocational education (VE) in the European model and that of the New World. The custom of apprenticeship, the oldest form of VE in the U.S., was established by early British colonists in the 17th Century using a work-based curriculum. Colonial apprenticeship in the U.S. consisted of two forms: *involuntary* apprenticeship allowed for the indenturing of deprived youths to serve an apprenticeship for the purpose of teaching them a salable skill for economic survival; and *voluntary* apprenticeship allowed for an apprentice, under a formal agreement, to learn a

trade through direct instruction from a master craftsman in exchange for work (Barlow, 1967; Wonacott, 2003).

From its foundation, VE appeared to be almost content free with direct instruction as the main teaching strategy used in the teaching-learning process for developing skills among mostly marginalized minorities. Walter (1993) explained: “The teaching-learning process in vocational education is intended to serve as the vehicle for achieving specific outcomes embodied in the goals of the vocational program” (p. 61). In the absence of written content that does not allow for comment on the ethnic groups or international perspectives represented in it, the question is asked: What was the extent of the master craftsman’s responsiveness (i.e., the ability to promoting learning) to the apprentices? Unfortunately, abuses of apprentices occurred with masters exploiting their cheap labor and providing minimal instruction in their trade (Gray & Herr, 1998).

In response to this apprentice abuse, the first American education law - “The Olde Satan Deluder Act of Massachusetts Bay Colony”- was passed in 1647. Under the law, masters were required to teach apprentices skills inclusive of general education (reading, writing, arithmetic) and provide food, shelter, clothing, and religious training (Gordon, 2003). The new education law made provisions for VE to include general education content along with skills-based training; yet, little is written on its curriculum responsiveness to the apprentices cultural diversity more than to suggest that “education for African-Americans [*sic*] has been limited to the immediate needs of the prevailing economic interests, but has fallen short of ... the highest educational goals [they desired] for themselves

...” (Walter, 1993, p. 216). By the mid 1800s, the social stigma associated with VE in the European model was well infused in colonial America because “... the only youth who participated in formal workforce education at public expense were from the lowest of social classes” (Gray & Herr, 1998, p. 10).

The industrial era of the 1800s brought a growing demand for manufactured goods requiring mass production technology with large numbers of factory workers. As a result, there was a decline in the apprenticeship system and a shortage of trained persons to handle the practical plant and machinery problems in U.S. industry (Walter, 1993). Initial efforts to retool defunct factory workers and apprentices (mostly ethnic minorities) with academic and vocational learning were spearheaded by trade societies and charitable organizations. The U.S. maiden Farm and Trade School established in 1814 in Boston was one such initiative, specifically catering to orphans (Bennet, 1926). Another example was the Carlisle Pennsylvania Indian School, where the children of defeated Native American leaders were sent and exposed to a job training curriculum (Gray & Herr, 1998). Likewise, General Samuel Chapman Armstrong commissioned the Hampton Institute in 1868 during his tenure as “superintendent of education for African Americans of Virginia” (Gordon, 2003, p. 10). Hall (1973) noted that this school marked the beginning of the American manual labor movement, which required students to exchange their skills and knowledge for tuition as part of their schooling in developing a strong work ethic. Embracing a pragmatic approach, manual labor schools in the 1800s promoted learning by doing developed by Swiss educators, Rousseau and Pestalozzi. Patterned after the

Russian system for teaching tools and machinery skills, manual training required practice in labs or shop work coupled with theory for subjects like engineering (Venn, 1964). Significant contributions to the development of vocational education by key scholars and philosophers such as Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. DuBois, David Snedden, Charles Prosser, and John Dewey will be further discussed in the literature review as part of the theoretical underpinnings for VE.

Enhancements to the VE curriculum to include theory content along with lab work appeared to be more responsiveness to the labor market needs of an industrial society with little attention for equitable representation of ethnic groups in curriculum content or their varied learning styles. Building on the overview of the WED foundation and in keeping with the study topic, this discussion continues in the next section in identifying the culturally diverse groups served by the changing vocational education curriculum in colonial America. This focus will help to highlight the importance of curriculum responsiveness for these groups in continuing this discourse further in the literature review.

Culturally Diverse Groups in WED

Through the curriculum design lens of Gray and Herr (1998), the researcher asks the question: “*Who are the culturally diverse groups traditionally served by the WED curriculum?*” These include Native Americans, Hispanics, and especially African Americans, who have a long history in American VE. Legislation also played a pivotal role in their gaining access to this field. During the 1600s, apprenticeship programs existed for slaves and manual labor schools

were opened for African Americans by the 1830s, which contributed significantly to the economic development and settlement of colonial America (Gordon, 2003).

In response to the growing but unmet need for a trained technical labor force resulting from industrialization, U.S. Congress passed the landmark Morrill Act of 1862. The Act allowed for the sale of state lands to provide income for establishing agricultural and mechanical arts colleges to meet the labor market demands of industry (Lazerson & Grubb, 1974). These institutions were to be separate but “equal” for Caucasian and African American students in the southern states. It was not until the passage of the Second Morrill Act of 1890 that educational opportunities became available for African Americans in all southern states (Gray & Herr, 1998).

Regrettably, societal racial prejudice negatively impacted the equitable representation of ethnic groups such as African Americans in VE in the 1800s (Hall, 1973). In contrast, U.S. Caucasian students had greater access to VE, were more skilled, and secured the better jobs in American industrial development. They (30%) outnumbered the African American students (16%) in the higher-level trade and industry programs (Gordon, 2003). Arnold and Levesque (1992) pointed out, “... it is possible that Blacks may be underrepresented in the higher-level programs due to continuing racism and structural biases” (p. 20). Similar inequity exists more than a century later. Sims (2009) noted the under-representation of U.S. minorities (e.g., African Americans and Hispanics) in the Information Technology field, which is partly fuelled by obstructive educational practices toward them in U.S. higher education

Race as a discriminatory factor did not only affect African Americans in VE. Under the federally sponsored Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in the 1900s, industrial training schools (off-reservation boarding schools) were established to teach basic literacy skills in addition to freeing youths of their so-called inferior Indian culture and assimilating them into the dominant Caucasian culture (Slater, 1992). Recognition efforts by anthropologists and reformers of Native American cultures resulted in a congressional study on Native American education, which led to the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 (Hudson, 1994). The Act promoted self-determination for Native Americans, which improved the responsiveness of the curriculum significantly for them as Gordon (2003) noted: "... [There was] increased tribal self-government and input into education, Native American teachers were trained, textbooks were published in Native American language, and "community" schools ... designed to serve multiple tribal needs ..." (p. 137)

Other limited-English-proficient (LEP) students traditionally served by the VE curriculum in the 1900s also included Hispanics (majority group), Asians, Europeans, Middle Easterners, and Africans. Limited data and information on these groups indicate that they were generally underrepresented in VE and had limited access to vocational schools. Factors identified for their low participation in VE included discrimination, stereotyping, low academic performance, low career aspiration, lack of funding, and family commitments (Gordon, 2003).

With specific reference to Chinese students, Bradley and Friedenber (1988) revealed that a San Francisco school district faced discrimination

charges, under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, for excluding 3000 Chinese-speaking students from their programs on the basis of national origin. In this instance, victory for the Chinese students in gaining access to vocational education meant victory for other LEP students to include Asians, Hispanics, Africans, and Middle Easterners. Such inroads into more equitable representation of ethnic groups in U.S. education now move this discussion to how these cultural differences among students impacted teacher preparation for racially diverse classrooms.

Teacher Preparation for Culturally Diverse Groups

The desegregation of U.S. public schools in the 1960s, as a result of the Supreme Court's ruling in *Brown vs Board of Education*, meant that schools went from being monocultured to multicultural classrooms. A series of Acts were passed during the 1960s and 1970s to enable equal access to education for all students regardless of race, national origin, language, sex, age, and economic level. Such legislation included the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Economic Opportunity Act of 1965, Comprehensive Employment Act of 1973, and Education Amendments of 1974 for the needs of LEP students (Gordon, 2003). Legislating equal access for all students should be accompanied by curriculum changes to accommodate for student diversity in the teaching-learning process.

Subsequently, the development of a best practice model for bilingual vocational training (BVT) programs was funded by the federal government spearheaded by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education in 1976. Components of this best practice BVT model included bilingual instructions and simplified English, provision of vocational English as a second language, offering

counseling and support service, promoting job development and placement, and specific LEP student recruitment (Anderson & Rampp, 1993).

In addition, there was an emergence of multicultural teacher education programs to prepare teachers (Caucasian middle class majority) for their multicultural classrooms. However, an absence of quality benchmarks for these programs led to the revision of accreditation standards for teacher education programs to include criteria for integrating multicultural components. Follow-up reviews of these programs in the 1980s by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education showed that only 8 (13.5%) out of 59 college and university teacher education programs complied with the new multicultural standards. Most programs were non-compliant for *student admissions* and *faculty qualifications* (Ladson-Billings, 1999).

Further comprehensive reviews of multicultural teacher education in the 1990s showed that programs had two traditional approaches: (a) The integration of diversity issues throughout the curriculum supported by field experiences, and (b) the use of a sub-topic or add-on to the regular program (Ladson-Billings, 1999). The latter approach was more common, whereas the former was preferred because of its proven effectiveness in changing teachers' attitudes towards inclusiveness in the classroom.

Wakefield and Talbert (1999) found that only fifty percent of agricultural education undergraduate students were exposed to diverse settings in their teacher preparation with less than one-half actually student teaching or holding internships in such settings. These findings resulted from an analysis of census

data collected from 53 of the 93 universities listed in the annual Directory of Agricultural Education published by the American Association for Agricultural Education (AAAE). Yet, evaluation of teachers' performance in diverse classrooms went unchecked in many of these programs (Ladson-Billings, 1999). Without such evaluation, legislative and accreditation efforts were rendered almost futile in ensuring equality in education for culturally and internationally diverse students.

More recent qualitative research by Cain (2003) in her dissertation on "Constructions of Cultural Responsiveness of Curricular and Teaching Practices by Nurse Educators" still showed evaluation gaps. Cain conducted document analysis along with semi-structured interviews and observations with six nurse educators from four higher education institutions in the U.S. Midwest. Her conclusions included the following: "more explicit standards and guidelines are needed for more systematic implementation of a culturally integrated curriculum. Further research is needed to evaluate how effective are various teaching practices used in teaching cultural diversity" (p. 1). To reiterate the importance of teachers' preparation for today's diverse classrooms, the next section examines growing cultural and international campus diversity in the U.S.

Growing Diversity on U.S. Campuses

Student enrollment statistics show that U.S. campuses are becoming more diverse, increasing by 19 percent or to 16 million students by 2015 and will include the following major ethnic groups: Hispanics will increase from 10 to 15%; African Americans from 12.8 to 13.2%; and Asians from 5.4 to 8.4%; but

Caucasians will decline from 71 to 63% (Chronicle of Higher Education, June 2, 2000). According to Open Doors (2008), the U.S. hosts the largest number of international students worldwide with their total student enrollment for 2007/ 2008 at 623,805, a 7% increase over the previous year. Asian international students remain the largest ethnic group representing 61% to include India as the largest sending country, followed by China, Korea, and Japan.

Open Doors (2008) reported that higher education represents the fifth largest service sector in the U.S. economy. Sixty-seven percent of all international students' funding comes from outside the U.S. Through tuition and living expenses, they contribute approximately \$15.5 billion dollars to the U.S. economy annually. Arguably, international students represent a significant source of revenue and cultural currency to U.S. campuses. Other service sectors like retailing and banking are quick in responding to customers' growing preference for customization and innovation instead of sameness/standardization (Gordon, 2003). In contrast, higher education as a service sector has been slow in its curriculum responsiveness to the growing cultural and international student diversity on U.S. campuses (Gay, 2000; Green, 2002; Mehra & Bishop, 2007; Selvadurai, 1992).

Growing student diversity along with attractive tuition revenues warrant attention to the curriculum needs of culturally and internationally diverse students on U.S. campuses. Gay (2000) likened such attention to include culturally responsive teaching, an approach characterized as teachers being aware of the cultural characteristics/differences among student groups, how such cultural

differences affect the teaching-learning process, and how to accommodate for these cultural differences in teaching delivery. When teachers lack these knowledge and skills, their teaching becomes culturally unresponsive. Mehra and Bishop (2007) called attention to international students need for more curriculum internationalization defined as “incorporating non-US issues and elements into LIS education” (p. 2). The latter definition will be used accordingly in the context of this study. Legislation also paid attention to students with language differences. The “Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) Improvement Act” of 2006 placed emphasis on improving access for special populations (to include non-English speaking students) (U. S. Department of Education, 2006).

Responding to Campus Diversity

A Midwestern university is striving to increase its diversity responsiveness to include being known “for a faculty and student body that reflects the human and ethnic diversity and intellectual pluralism of the world” (SIUC, 2005a, p. 6). Only recently, the University agreed to a consent decree with the U.S. Justice Department regarding three of its fellowship programs that were found to be in violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. As a result, these fellowship programs were revised to comply with the conditions of the consent decree and do not include race, national origin, and gender as qualifying criteria. Instead, these fellowship programs will be “open to individuals whose personal or family background, life, and/or cultural experiences could contribute to a more

reflective, responsive environment in the program, the institution, and the larger academic community” (Graduate Highlights, 2006, p. 1).

In addition, its Affirmative Action policy (visible on bulletin boards) includes maintaining cultural and educational diversity in university curricula (SIUC, 2006b), a laudable intent given its cultural milieu. The university also holds a number one ranking for African American students (17% of its total student population) among the “big five” Illinois national universities (Illinois State, Illinois-Urbana-Champaign, Illinois-Chicago, and Northern Illinois) (US News & World Report, 2007b). A Black Resource Center was recently established at the Midwestern university to provide academic and support services for the its growing minority student population (SIUC, 2009d) in keeping with its Southern @ 150 initiative. Strategically, plans to review the Midwestern university’s Southern @ 150 initiative for accomplishments and adjustments are forthcoming (SIUC, 2009e).

Already among the top 100 accredited minority degree producing universities in the U.S, the University has diversity as a core value in achieving its educational mission and continues to promote diversity seminars campus wide (Southern Spotlight, 2007c; Trevino, 2007). These events aim at increasing instructor cultural competence (i.e., accommodating for cultural differences in teaching) and building a more inclusive class and campus climate (The SIUC Office of the Associate Chancellor (Diversity), 2006; SIUC, 2009c). Buila (2009) at the Midwestern university observes that there is usually a notable absence of Caucasian educators at workshops on cultural competence. Further elaboration

by Buila on the application of cultural competencies in the classroom revealed that “Colored” students question the legitimacy of Caucasian educators to address cultural diversity issues, while Caucasian students suspect “Colored” educators of having personal agendas in teaching about white supremacy and oppression.

However, the campus-wide instructor course evaluation (ICE) form at this Midwestern university is yet to be modified to capture the impact of training diversity initiatives in measuring faculty cultural competence and separating students’ responses by race/ethnicity/national origin (SIUC, 2007a). Likewise, the on-going evaluations of its WED program does not measure program effectiveness by student race/ethnicity/national origin or address issues like intellectual pluralism or internationalization (SIUC, 2006c). Without these data, effectively determining the cultural and international responsiveness of WED teaching and curriculum content in preparing “world-class” WED graduates (SIUC, 2008) would be elusive.

Like any other university its size, the University has a large international student population representing over 100 countries (SIUC, 2005a; SIUC, 2005c). A breakdown of the University’s race/ethnic student enrollment for 2007 was as follows: White (Caucasian) – 14, 559 (69.3%); Black (African American) – 3,132 (14.9%); Hispanic – 653 (3.1%); Asian – 432 (2%); and other – 2,227 (10.6%) (SIUC, 2007c). At the time this research was initiated (fall 2007), a breakdown of the ethnic diversity of its WED master’s students for fall 2006 (September to December) was as follows: Black (African American) – 55 (25%); White

(Caucasian) – 126 (58%); Hispanic – 8 (3%); Asian – 3 (1%); Foreign – 11 (5%); Unknown – 11 (5%) with a total of 214 students. A similar breakdown for fall 2006 of WED doctoral students was as follows: Black – 3 (5%); Whites – 41(75%); Foreign – 8 (14%); Unknown – 2 (3%) giving a total of 54 students (SIUC, 2007b). With such wide disparities in student race/ethnicity numbers, evaluation data that fail to reflect feedback by student diversity or faculty cultural competence could result in the following: the aggregate majority responses (obviously from Caucasians), by default, may be used to effect program changes in favor of the majority group, potentially resulting in culturally unresponsive teaching and limiting international responsiveness.

A search through the literature showed only a few studies relating to culturally and internationally diverse students' learning and curriculum needs were conducted at this Midwestern university. These studies were conducted at mostly high schools and to a lesser extent at the University. For those conducted at high schools, findings revealed that minority students felt low test scores were partly linked to internalized racism (e.g., self-doubt on academic ability); gifted ethnic students' learning styles required differentiated curricula; and competency deficits existed in cultural awareness among teachers of diverse learners (Durbin, 2002; Hudgens, 1992; Yong, 1991). Findings for studies conducted at the University on African Americans' career choice attainment revealed that the biggest barriers to such attainment included financial resources and racial discrimination; pre-medical minority students benefited significantly from collaborative - and computer-supported-learning in their preparation of timed

writing exams; and more research on the relationship between international students' academic achievement and curriculum design for programs was imperative (Bowman, 1989; DeLost, 1998; Harre, 1995).

Foremost authors have used critical education theory, critical race theory, and multicultural education to highlight and address issues in school/college curricula that affect culturally diverse students that include racial stereotyping (Asher 2007; DeCuir & Dixson, 2004); language barrier; and curriculum culture bias (Bartlett & Brayboy, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 1999; McLaren, 2003;). Still, today an "achievement gap" (SIUC, 2006a, p.1) or more adequately termed an "education debt" exists for culturally diverse minorities when compared to the Caucasian majority in U.S. higher education (Ladson-Billings, 2006).

The Midwestern university's WED department conducts on-going evaluations of its WED program in order to identify needed improvements. Among these improvements in 2003 was the replacement of the WED 580- Characteristics of Clientele course with WED 581-Workforce Diversity in response to program evaluation feedback. In keeping with the University's Southern @ 150 initiative, the WED department hired three female minority faculty in 2005 consisting of two female African Americans and one of American Indian heritage. The selection process for future faculty carefully considers ethnic diversity among other criteria (Anderson, M, personal communication, August 15, 2006).

The University's WED program is ranked among the top 10 in the U.S (U.S. News & World Report, 2007a), which undoubtedly will impact positively on

its future enrollment. The latter will also reflect the growing cultural and international diversity of U.S. campuses. The WED department's mission is to "help create a world-class professional and technical workforce based on values and respect for occupational competence, the dignity of work, equal education opportunity, and life-long learning" (SIUC, 2008). To this end, the following sections present the statement of the problem followed by the significance of this study and purpose statement.

Statement of the Problem

Given the legacy of racism in the U.S. (Barlow, 2003; DeCuir & Dixson, 2004), growing diversity on its campuses presents a challenge in maintaining responsive curricula and teaching delivery for culturally and internationally diverse students. Two issues giving rise to this challenge are culturally unresponsive teaching and internationalization. Culturally unresponsive teaching occurs when teachers are unaware of the cultural characteristics of different groups, how these cultural differences affect the teaching-learning process, and how to accommodate for such differences in using different teaching strategies and experiences to promote learning in all students (Gay, 2000).

Internationalization in the context of the study is including non-U.S. perspectives in curriculum content (Mehra & Bishop, 2007).

Current developments at a Midwestern university and research on accommodating culturally and internationally diverse students in education reveal several gaps. At this university, evaluation practices for its WED program overlook student ethnicity/national origin or intellectual pluralism in measuring

program effectiveness (SIUC, 2006c; SIUC, 2007a). Feedback from its campus-wide diversity workshops/symposia to increase faculty cultural competence and overall campus diversity responsiveness show a need for more inclusive curriculum and diverse faculty to adequately accommodate the University's growing student diversity (The SIUC Office of the Associate Chancellor (Diversity), 2006; SIUC, 2009c). A subsequent focus-group series with the University's international students revealed that they are mainly dissatisfied with the quality of service and education afforded to them (International Student and Scholars Office, 2006).

Studies conducted at the Midwestern university targeted culturally diverse groups at mostly high school and undergraduate levels separately using either quantitative, qualitative, or both (Durbin, 2002; Yong, 1991). Therefore, the existing body of knowledge needs to be extended to a new population like culturally and internationally diverse graduate students to give a collective picture of the central phenomenon. Theoretical research suggests that theory is ahead of practice as evident by the existing achievement gap for minorities (Ladson-Billings, 2006) indicating a need for more action research regarding factors impinging or enhancing cultural and international curriculum responsiveness.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in the relevance to a Midwestern university's on-going diversity efforts for its *Southern @ 150* initiative. With diversity as its core value, it aims to be in the top 75 research universities nationwide by 2019 and commits to maintaining responsive curricula in facilitating

student diversity (SIUC, 2005a). Moreover, with a priority on research, excellence in teaching is being side-tracked (SIUC, 2009c), resulting in less attention given to the cultural plurality of constituents in a program. Its WED program's top-10 national ranking (Southern Spotlight, 2007a) will definitely enhance future enrollment, which will reflect U.S. campuses' growing diversity. Already, this Midwestern university has the highest population of African American students among the big five national Illinois universities (U.S. News & World Report, 2007b) and hosts a large number of international students for any university its size (SIUC, 2005c).

In keeping with the vision for *Southern @ 150*, the results of this study can give an indication of the cultural and international responsiveness of WED curriculum and delivery from a student's perspective at this Midwestern university. Study conclusions can also help to inform faculty and WED curricular committees on any ineffective educational practices for culturally and internationally diverse students and identify faculty training needs accordingly.

The study results can also be valuable to the University's institutional self-study committee in assessing its responsiveness to diverse students' curriculum needs in preparation for future accreditation reviews (Southern Spotlight, 2007b). Policy makers can use the empirical evidence to influence decision-making regarding cultural and international diversity issues for the University's curriculum, faculty, and students. Moreover, the study results will help to fill gaps in the literature for facilitating culturally and internationally diverse graduate students in higher education. This addition to the existing body knowledge will

also provide other workforce educators facing similar diversity challenges with relatable information.

Purpose of the Study

The intent of this mixed methods study was to examine students' perceptions on WED curriculum responsiveness to culturally and internationally diverse graduate students on the following four dimensions:

1. *Teaching strategies* (to include delivery): Techniques and methods used in teaching delivery that promote learning in all students by accommodating their variant learning styles and cultural differences (Miller & Miller, 2002; Hurtado, Fall 1996);
2. *Curriculum inclusiveness*: A concerted effort for eliminating cultural bias in higher education curriculum (Diamond, 1998);
3. *International responsiveness*: Adequately providing international perspectives (to include developing countries) on WED course topics; and
4. *Curriculum improvements*: Upgrades in curriculum content and delivery that adequately accommodate students' culturally and internationally diverse backgrounds.

The Explanatory Design: Follow-up Explanations Model (QUAN emphasized) (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007) complemented by the Within-Stage Mixed Model Design (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004) were used for the study design. One single design was inadequate for effectively answering the research questions (quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods) (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). As such, a double mixed method design was needed because of the type

and timing of the data collected for answering the study questions. In the first complementary phase of the Within-Stage model, quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed concurrently to answer different quantitative and qualitative research questions on WED curriculum responsiveness to culturally and internationally diverse graduate students at a Midwestern university. After analysis, these qualitative data (open-ended responses) were quantified and merged with the larger quantitative survey data (closed-ended responses) before moving to the next phase.

The Follow-up Explanations Model (QUAN emphasized) could not be used in the first complementary phase because it does not allow for both quantitative and qualitative data to be collected concurrently. As such, it was mostly used in the second phase in which significant or non-significant results from the first phase were identified as needing further explanation in follow-up focus groups. These additional qualitative data were collected to address quantitative results like differences in students' perceptions on study dimensions. The reason for the follow-up focus groups was to help explain and build on the initial quantitative results of the first phase (Creswell, 2005).

Research Questions

In seeking to describe and interpret the broad issues regarding the central phenomenon (WED refers to the Midwestern university's program) in this mixed methods study, the following combination of quantitative (1-3), qualitative (4), and mixed methods (5) questions are asked specific to this study:

1. To what extent are WED teaching strategies (to include delivery) responsive to culturally and internationally diverse graduate students?
2. To what extent does WED graduate curriculum content reflect the cultural plurality of the U.S. society?
3. To what extent does WED graduate curriculum content give international perspectives (to include developing countries) on course topics?
4. What improvements, if any, can be made to WED curriculum responsiveness in facilitating culturally and internationally diverse graduate students?
5. In what ways do the qualitative data help to explain the quantitative results?

Delimitations

In order to allow for adequate exposure to the curriculum as delivered mainly in seated classes, the study population included only WED graduate students at a Midwestern university with one or more years of current continuous enrollment in the WED program. Students with less than one year WED enrollment would not have had adequate exposure to the WED graduate curriculum for responding to the study questions. Focused solely on the WED graduate program at a Midwestern university in keeping with its on-going diversity thrust, study conclusions drawn cannot be generalized to other populations in the U.S. or worldwide. However, the study findings "... may be relatable in a way that will enable members of similar groups to recognize

problems and, possibly, to see ways of solving similar problems in their own group” (Bell, 1992, p. 8).

Philosophical Foundations

According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007, p. 22), four main philosophical assumptions or paradigms guide research praxis: *postpositivism*, *constructivism*, *advocacy and participatory*, and *pragmatism*. In addition, all four paradigms have common elements that “represent different views on the nature of reality (ontology), how we gain knowledge of what we know (epistemology), the role values play in research (axiology), the process of research (methodology), and the language of research (rhetoric)” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 23).

However, mixed methods authors hold varying views on how these paradigms should be applied to mixed methods research. Howe (1988) argued that the one-way relationship of requiring a linkage between paradigm and research method is unnecessary; rather, the approach should be given to a “two-way relationship between methods and paradigms, ... [in which paradigms] are evaluated in terms of how well they square with the demands of research practice ...” (p. 10). Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) supported this view in presenting mixed methods as the third paradigm, having the flexibility to choose a mixture of paradigm and research method that best answers study research questions. In contrast, Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) made such a link and posited that postpositivism applies mostly to quantitative research, including a

focus on empirical measurement, theory verification, objective reality; and suitable for the mixed methods Explanatory Design.

The constructivism paradigm leans towards qualitative research in understanding participant view of the world forged through interactions with them (e.g., focus groups) and suits mixed methods like Triangulation and Embedded Designs. Advocacy/participatory is also suited to qualitative research but addresses burning social issues such as hegemony, inequality, and marginalization in an effort to bring reform to participants' lives (Creswell, 2003) and is best suited to the Exploratory Design. Pragmatism involves multiple methods of data collection with emphasis on the study research questions; the consequences of conducting the research; and what works in practice; it is considered the overarching paradigm for mixed methods (Rescher, 2000).

Pragmatism guides the current study because its purpose aligns with the work of pragmatic researchers, who address culturally sensitive issues like “finding effective teaching techniques for different kinds of students, ... [and] helping to reduce discrimination in society, ” (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17). Moreover, its general characteristics (ontology, epistemology, axiology, methodology, and rhetoric) suit the nature of the current research. As the overarching paradigm for mixed methods research, pragmatism allows the researcher the flexibility to combine models and methods in finding an appropriate design that will answer the research questions (Howe, 1988). Its nature of reality (ontology) includes singular and multiple perspectives like that of students from different cultural backgrounds. Notably, pragmatism supports the

fallibilist perspective in viewing theories as tentative or instrumental because reality constantly changes (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Rescher, 2000). In collecting data by what works best for addressing research questions, its epistemology (knowledge claims) allows for practical solutions (Creswell, 2005) like asking students at the heartbeat of the WED curriculum delivery for their input on suggestions for curriculum improvements.

The axiology (the role values play in research) for Pragmatism is founded on cultural values that uphold equality and reporting of biased and unbiased views. The latter mirrors the current study that advocates for equality in facilitating students' cultural differences in curriculum. Its research methodology promotes pluralism in the use of multiple methods of data collection and mixing of data (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003), which is in keeping with Within-Stage and Explanatory Design: Follow-up Explanations Models (QUAN emphasized) chosen for this research study.

The rhetoric of pragmatism affords the use of both formal and informal styles of writing (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007), which allows the researcher to include informal quotes from students, the personal view of her voice in the research, and also formally report study results. Using a mixed designs and methods approach usually results in a more superior product than a single-method study (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Creswell, 2005). In retrospect, pragmatism as the chosen philosophical foundation for guiding the current study reflects the view of two late scholarly champions of vocational education (now

called workforce education) in the U.S. - John Dewey and Booker T. Washington (both pragmatists).

Definition of Terms

African American: An American citizen of African origin or decent (Oxford University Press, 2002).

Asian: A person of Asian descent (Oxford University Press, 2002) (e.g., example, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, or Vietnamese) (McKeachie & Svinicki, 2006).

Caucasian: One of European American origin or descent and light-skinned (McKeachie & Svinicki, 2006; Oxford University Press, 2002).

Chicano/a: One of Mexican origin or descent living in the U.S. irrespective of immigration status (Yoso, 2002).

Culturally Diverse: Of different races with differences in language, values, customs, attitudes, and sub-cultures such as ethnic, geographic, and religion of a society (Sahin, 2003).

Cultural Plurality: Mix of both minority and majority cultures of a society (Gay, 2004).

Culturally Responsive Teaching. Teachers demonstrating the knowledge of the cultural characteristics of different groups, how these cultural differences affect the teaching-learning process, and how to accommodate for such differences in using different teaching strategies and experiences that promote learning in all students (Gay, 2000).

Curriculum Content. The knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be delivered through instruction (Gray & Herr, 1998).

Curriculum Improvements. Upgrades in curriculum content and delivery that adequately accommodate students' culturally and internationally diverse backgrounds.

Curriculum Inclusiveness. A concerted effort for eliminating cultural bias in higher education curriculum (Diamond, 1998).

Curriculum Responsiveness. (1) the equitable representation of ethnic groups and international perspectives in curriculum content whenever possible and (2) incorporation of different teaching strategies that promote learning in the culturally and internationally diverse groups served by the curriculum (Gay, 2000; Hurtado, Fall 1996; Mehra & Bishop, 2007).

Ethnic Group. A group of people who identify with and share a common history, culture, and ancestry in a community (Wolff, 2006).

Hispanic: A person of Latin-American (parts of North, Central, and South America where Spanish or Portuguese is the main language) or Iberian descent in the U.S. (Oxford University Press, 2002).

Internationally Diverse: Of different geographic regions outside of the U.S. (Mehra & Bishop, 2007).

International Perspectives: Incorporation of issues and facts from Non-U.S. countries (to include developing countries) relevant to a course of study (Mehra & Bishop, 2007).

International Responsiveness. Adequately providing international perspectives (to include developing countries) on WED course topics.

Latino/a: A native or inhabitant of Latin America (Oxford University Press, 2002).

Mixed Methods Research: Includes methodology involving philosophical assumptions (e.g., post-positivism or constructivism) that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases in the research process. (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Perceptions: Regard mentally in a specified manner such as study participants' beliefs or feelings on specific survey items (closed- or open-ended) (Best & Kahn, 2003; Oxford University Press, 2002).

Pragmatism: Worldview used in mixed methods research employing “what works,” using diverse approaches, and valuing both objective and subjective knowledge.” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 26).

Teaching Strategies: Techniques and methods used in teaching delivery that promote learning in all students by accommodating their variant learning styles and cultural differences (Miller & Miller, 2002; Hurtado, Fall 1996).

Vocational Education: Traditionally, education that prepares students for the workplace (Gordon, 2003).

Workforce Education: Education that is usually offered at a two-year post-secondary institution leading to a certificate and/or associate degree and also

includes human resource development (HRD) initiatives in the workplace (Gray & Herr, 1998).

Acronyms

AAU – Association of American Universities

ACE - American Council on Education

ACTE - Association of Career and Technical Education

ASSURE - Analyze, Select, Utilize, Require, and Evaluate

AUCC - Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada

AVA - American Vocational Association

CE - Cultural-Ecological

CET- Critical Education Theory

CTE - Career and Technical Education

CRT - Critical Race Theory

CULTURES - Center for Urban Learning/Teaching and Urban Research

DE - Distance Education

EMT - Emergency Medical Transfer

ESL - English as a second language

EUA - European University Association

HRD - Human Resource Development

ICE - Instructor and Course Evaluation

LEP - Limited-English-Proficient

LIS – Library Information Science

ME - Multicultural Education

NCATE - National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education

PFF - Preparing Future Faculty

SLT - Social Learning Theory

SIUC - Southern Illinois University Carbondale

TOEFL - Test of English as a Foreign Language

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

UNESCO-UNEVOC - UNESCO's specialized international centre for

Technical and Vocational Education and Training

VE - Vocational Education

TVET – Technical and Vocational Education and Training

WED - Workforce Education and Development

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

The intent of this descriptive mixed methods study was to examine the WED graduate students' perceptions of WED curriculum responsiveness to culturally and internationally diverse students. Research and literature on diversity in U.S. education is rich and extensive, spanning more than four decades, since the racial desegregation of its schools in the late 1950s. In narrowing the literature review focus for this study, research studies and scholarly sources were reviewed relating to the theory and practice of teaching culturally and internationally diverse students in education, with an interest in vocational or workforce education. In this context, studies that focused on race/ethnicity, language, and cultural differences in education were emphasized. Relevant studies using a mixed methods approach were specifically included in the review as these represented the main approach employed in the methodology for the current study.

Ebsco Host Research on-line databases like Eric, Academic Search Premier, and Proquest (to include the Midwestern university's Theses and Dissertations and Dissertation Abstracts International) were searched mainly using descriptors that included the following: *cultural diversity, internationalization, multicultural education, culturally responsive teaching, vocational education, workforce education, mixed methods, ethnocentrism, critical education theory, higher education, and critical race theory*. From this

search, relevant peer-reviewed journals and scholarly works were retrieved, covering a timeframe from the 1900s to 2000s.

Both local and international publications coupled with works from other relevant disciplines outside of vocational or workforce education were included in the review: management, psychology, evaluation, and law. Websites of reputable professional bodies, governmental educational bodies, and universities were also used to glean pertinent current information. A discussion and summary critique of issues and resolutions in the literature relating to this study are contained in the following sections: Review of Theoretical Literature: Philosophies and Theories, and Review of the Empirical Literature: Culturally Unresponsive Teaching, Learning Challenges of International Students, and Curriculum Improvements for Culturally Diverse Groups.

Review of Theoretical Literature

The theoretical underpinnings that inform the critical intersection between racial diversity and U.S. education range from simple concepts to complex philosophies, theories, and methods. However, this theoretical framework emphasizes those that have strongly influenced race/ethnicity in schooling and vocational education in the U.S. and include the following: ethnocentrism, critical education theory, critical race theory, and multicultural education. This theoretical analysis uses an integrated approach in applying theory to practice including how it affects not only students and teachers but also how philosophical debate influenced the changing names of the vocational education (VE) field.

Philosophies

Continuing the initial discussion from the overview of WED foundation, this section further elaborates on how philosophy allowed VE to rise above its social stigma and find equal status with its rival – the academic curriculum. Ensuing philosophical debate on the integration of vocational education into the general school curriculum in U.S. public education followed the passing of the Morrill Acts of the latter 1800s. Among the more prominent scholars and philosophers were Booker T. Washington, W.E. B. DuBois, David Snedden, Charles Prosser, and John Dewey. Their combined philosophies on education helped to usher in much reform in vocational education, and by extension, the secondary school and college (post-secondary level) curricula (Gordon, 2003).

According to Moore (1993), Booker T. Washington, an African American scholar and educator, felt that a truly educated person, especially one of African descent leaping out of slavery, should possess knowledge in the arts as well as a viable skill. Both should be applied in a practical way to improve one's quality of life in the service of others. He founded the Tuskegee Institute in 1881, and its curriculum was structured on the principle of learning by doing, requiring students to do some manual labor. Washington's educational philosophy inspired Senator Walter F. George of Georgia in his sponsorship of vocational education Acts during six terms in office (Gordon, 2003).

In contrast, W.E.B. Du Bois, African American scholar, author, and historian, objected to Washington's view of emphasizing vocational education for the advancement of African Americans. Du Bois believed that the latter

philosophy led to sub-standard living for them. Instead, he was in favor of a more traditional academic curriculum that would educate African Americans to compete for high level management and executive positions in the labor market. These varying views resulted in the infamous Washington-Du Bois debates of the 1800s, which significantly influenced the African American involvement in vocational education and the critical intersection between racial diversity and education (Friedenberg & Fields, 1993).

Like Washington, David Snedden, an educational administrator, believed in social efficiency. He was appointed commissioner for education for Massachusetts in 1910 and used his political clout to promote the ideal that education should prepare youths to be productive citizens. Thus, Snedden stressed occupational experience as an integral part of education for work. Snedden's student, Charles Prosser, upheld the view of his mentor and firmly believed in the pragmatic approach to education for work, integrating theory and practice (Snedden, 1910).

Prosser developed 16 theorems of vocational education that included the following elements: vocational teachers must have both knowledge and practical competence in their crafts, and the students' learning environment must replicate the work environment in which they would subsequently use their skills. Both Snedden and Prosser also advocated a dual system of education with two separate curricula within the public school system: one academic and the other vocational, meeting the likes of industrialists (Gordon, 2003; Wonacott, 2003).

However, John Dewey, philosopher and educator, objected to the job-specific model and dual system articulated by his contemporaries. Critically, in Dewey's work, he opted for a broader vocational curriculum that provided students with intellectual knowledge and skills for their livelihood, problem solving, and social efficiency in an age of science and democracy (Dewey, 1916). Dewey, a contemporary of Du Bois, also favored placing the control of vocational education under professional educators and school boards rather than industrialists, whom he felt had dubious motives. The federal government endorsed this position in passing the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917, placing vocational education programs for the first time within the U.S. public school system (Gray & Herr, 1998).

Gordon (2003) gave a comprehensive historical review of Du Bois' and Washington's significant contributions to U.S. vocational education. In contrast, Gray and Herr (1998) historical review of WED, whose text is used in the WED program at a Midwestern university, merely indicated that workforce education was associated with African Americans in the South and was promoted by Booker T. Washington after the Civil War. This view would equate to culturally unresponsive curriculum content without any further additional material or elaboration in teaching delivery to include the African Americans' significant contributions.

Moreover, Gray and Herr's historical perspective on WED is analogous to *hegemony*. McLaren (2003) likened hegemony to be when "the dominant culture tries to "fix" the meaning of signs, symbols, and representations to provide a

“common” worldview, disguising relations of power and privilege through the organs of mass media and state apparatus such as schools, government institutions, ...” (p. 203). Conversely, a fuller understanding of the struggle involved in the passing of the Smith Hughes Act of 1917 is achieved after reading Gordon’s (2003) historical discourse on U.S. workforce education, which gives an equitable representation of the ethnic groups involved in this endeavor.

For the purposes of funding under the Smith Hughes Act, vocational education was defined as “preparation for occupations requiring other than a baccalaureate or advanced degree” (Gordon, 2003, p. 15). The Act indirectly isolated vocational education from the academic school curriculum by requiring a separate state board, funding, teacher preparation, and curriculum within the regular school system. The latter only helped to perpetuate the initial bias that vocational education did not require academic work and was for students (mostly minorities including the majority of African Americans) from the lower social class, who could not handle “book work” (Gray & Herr, 1998; Gordon, 2003). In this instance, the work-based curriculum was unresponsive to the minority students in serving to further marginalize them, whereas the academic curriculum was responsive to the majority culture in preparing those exposed to it for higher-paying jobs in an agricultural society.

Now, almost a century later, vocational education or workforce education struggles for consensus on philosophy and name. Gray and Herr (1998) affirmed that workforce education still lacks a unifying philosophy as a field because “some see the role of workforce education as promoting economic growth and

thereby serving industry [industrialists]; and others view it as providing individual opportunity and thereby serving individuals [educators]” (p. 20). Regarding name changes, findings from an American Vocational Association (AVA) survey revealed that the term “vocational” was perceived by its members as negative, outdated, and non-academic. Consequently, in 1998, the AVA (flagship organisation for VE) agreed to change its name to Association of Career and Technical Education (ACTE) in keeping with the changing times (Gordon, 2003).

The reauthorization of the Perkins Act known as Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 showed an apparent absence of the former term “vocational” throughout the Act (U. S. Department of Education, 2006). Reflecting the philosophy of W. E. B. Du Bois, Dewey, and others, the Act placed “increased focus on the academic achievement of career and technical education students, strengthen connections between secondary and post-secondary education and improve state and local accountability” (U.S. Department of Education, 2006, p. 1). This integration of CTE and academic curricula, critical to educating a highly skilled competitive workforce, marks how far the field of VE or WED has evolved since its inception in the 17th Century with a content free curriculum linked to marginalized minorities.

Still, the Caribbean, European Union, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Australia use “vocational” in their vocational program titles (International Labour Office, 2007). Resembling the Snedden-Prosser philosophy, most school systems in African countries lead to two separate tracks: general education, allowing access to higher education or technical; and vocational education, focusing on

immediate employment while limiting access to continuing higher education (Oketch, 2007). As such, vocational education is still seen through the traditional lens and “is primarily regarded as occupational education, terminal in nature and initially associated with colonial educational administration and therefore undesirable in post-independence Africa” (Oketch, 2007, p. 222).

According to UNESCO UNEVOC (2007), “participants at the world congress on TVET, held in Seoul in 1999, decided that the best, most comprehensive term to use is Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)” (p. 1), which it officially adopted in 2000. More recently, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) members embarked on modernizing its provision of TVET by creating the Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQs) oriented from the renowned system of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) in the United Kingdom (CINTERFOR, 2007). While inclusion of the term “vocational” may be culturally inappropriate for the U.S. WED curriculum, it is quite acceptable for some non-U.S. countries, making curriculum cultural responsiveness situational in this instance.

The U.S. News & World Report (2007a) also uses “Technical and Vocational Education” in listing its top 10 graduate schools for workforce education programs. Frequently occurring names in this list include Workforce Education and Development, Work and Human Resource Development, and Career and Technical Education. Consensus on a single name replacement for VE among workforce educators in the U.S seems to be distant. To illustrate, human resource development (HRD) efforts for current workers and

professionals in the workplace are also characterized as workforce education and development (Gray & Herr, 1998). The Midwestern university's WED department was among the first in the 1990s to change its name from Vocational Education Studies (combined previous occupational, agriculture, business, and home economics education departments) to Workforce Education and Development (Waugh & Ruppel, 2004).

In short, the underlying philosophies of vocational education have evolved from being purely pragmatic, focusing on occupational learning or technical and academic learning, to integrating these two curricula in preparing students for both gainful employment and higher education. The latter integration has helped to elevate CTE in the eyes of stakeholders, especially employers who see its significance in providing a competently trained workforce and workforce educators who prepare future WED faculty. Nevertheless, there is still some indecision on whether WED U.S. philosophy: should it be either to increase individual opportunity in the labor market or increase the competitiveness of the organisation/employer in an expanding global market, or both? (Gray & Herr, 1998).

In addition, the move away from the name VE seems permanent in the U.S. in overcoming the social stigma associated with that term. But, consensus on a single name replacement is still forthcoming as WED, CTE, and HRD are all used to refer to the field of workforce education (U.S. News & World Report, 2007a). In other regions like the Caribbean, Europe, and especially Africa, the term "technical and vocational education" (TVET) is still widely used and in some

instances more specific to some regions (International Labour Office, 2007; Oketch, 2007). With an understanding of how philosophical debates have helped to remove the social stigma associated with VE that plagued those served by this curriculum, the remaining sections of this literature review focus on the theoretical and empirical research that addresses cultural and international diversity responsiveness in the context of student, teacher, and curriculum.

Theories

Ethnocentrism. According to Walker-Tileston (2004), *ethnocentrism* “is the belief that one’s own ethnicity is superior to others” (p. 70). For the instructor, this is one of the biggest barriers to culturally responsive teaching, especially for minority students like African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, and Asians (Gay, 2000). The treatment of Native Americans in their early vocational education certainly held true to such a belief. As Moore (1993) pointed out, the early mission schools mirrored this ethnocentric approach in their educational efforts, *indoctrinating* the Native Americans with Christianity and western culture and ignoring their cultural traditions.

Likewise, the dominant Euro-American curricula in U.S. schools and colleges that promote a U.S. Caucasian hierarchy of knowledge are also reflective of the superiority of the western Caucasian culture to that of culturally and internationally diverse students (Gay, 2000; Mehra & Bishop, 2007; Yoso, 2002). Guiffrida (2005) found empirical evidence to affirm that “faculty have also been perceived by students of color as culturally insensitive when they fail to acknowledge or incorporate culturally diverse perspectives into their curricula” (p.

18). In the application of theory to practice, ethnocentrism is not conducive to teaching culturally and internationally diverse students or building responsive curricula for them.

Melting-Pot Theory. Similarly, the *melting-pot theory* is based on the assumption that American immigrants from diverse cultures should assimilate and blend into the dominant Western European culture (Walker-Tileston, 2004). These immigrants are mostly Spanish speaking but also include Asians, Europeans, Africans, and Middle Easterners. The factory mass production system of the 1800s was reflective of this melting-pot metaphor. Workers were all placed in a single location utilizing a standardized curriculum (usually for a specific task) without any consideration for their cultural differences or learning styles (e.g., auditory, visual, or kinesthetic) (Gray & Herr, 1998; Gordon, 2003). In practice, the *melting pot theory* stifles the cultural identity of minority students, making them somewhat invisible in the class or training room and creates an anti-social environment that is unhealthy for learning.

Social Learning Theory (SLT). A predecessor to Social Cognitive Theory, SLT was developed by clinical psychologist, Albert Bandura in the early 1960s. He posits that much learning takes place in a social context, affecting the student's motivation to learn and develop self-efficacy. Bandura describes self-efficacy as one's judgement about the ability to learn or perform a task in keeping with prescribed criteria (Schunk, 2004). Thus, where ethnocentric attitudes are modeled in a learning environment, the social learning process can result in "the modeling of inappropriate behaviors such as ethnocentricity" (Black &

Mendenhall, 1990, p. 124). Even worse, as SLT purports, if such attitudes are consistently reinforced or rewarded in the learning environment, this can motivate other students to do the same in developing self-efficacy for ethnocentricity; a very detrimental characteristic for culturally responsive teaching and an ineffective use of SLT.

Critical Education Theory. Further, *critical education theory* (CET) places the curriculum beyond a mere program of study, course text, or syllabus. Mostly inspired by the work of the Frankfurt School of critical theory in Europe before World War II, CET has only emerged in the U.S. over the last twenty years. Critical education theorists raise awareness to the hidden curriculum, which is the unintended outcomes of the schooling process such as acceptable mediocrity for minorities (McLaren, 2003). They are also concerned with “how descriptions, discussions, and representations in textbooks, curriculum materials, course content, and social relations embodied in classroom practices benefit dominant groups and exclude subordinate ones” (McLaren, 2003, p. 212).

An application of CET is likened to African Americans’ and Hispanics’ experiences in VE in the late 1800s. Vocational education research has shown that *stereotyping* these ethnic groups to lower-level occupational skills initially restricted their access to and exploration of a range of occupations (Gordon, 2003; Walker-Tileston 2004). Dewey’s work promoted a philosophy of vocational education that reflected the concepts of CET. He was critical of separating vocational and academic curricula and advocated for an inclusion of both intellectual knowledge as well as occupational skills in preparing youth for their

multiple roles in a democratic society as worker, family member, friend, and citizen (Gordon, 2003; Wonacott, 2003).

Cultural-Ecological Theory. Arguably, *cultural-ecological (CE) theory*, developed by the late educational anthropologist John Ogbu, has been one of more influential yet controversial works in research on race and schooling in the U.S. over the last three decades (Bartlett & Brayboy, 2006). Cultural ecology was defined as “a study of institutionalized patterns of behavior interdependent with features of the environment” (Ogbu, 1990, p. 122). Ogbu claimed that minority responses to schooling were influenced by the following factors: system forces, i.e., the treatment of minorities by society and school, and community forces, i.e., their response to those treatments. He distinguished the minority groups in two ways:

Voluntary minorities--those who immigrate to a host country “more-or-less by choice”--were said to have an “instrumental” approach to their host society and its institutions, while involuntary minorities--those whose position is a result of historic subjugation after conquest or forced migration (enslavement) were said to have an “oppositional” approach to society and its institutions. (Foster, 2004, p. 370)

Therefore, African American youths, who were segregated by the system in separate training schools from Caucasians in the 1930s and relegated to lower-level vocational education curricula, were less likely to be equipped for college education or aspire to advance degrees (Gordon, 2003). Ogbu’s theory illustrated somewhat that African Americans’ academic achievement was in

response to the consistent historical discrimination they faced by the school system and society.

Still, critics have taken Ogbu to task in pointing out weaknesses in his CE theory. According to Bartlett and Brayboy (2006), CE assumes that race is a fixed notion rather than a sociopolitical construction in supporting the consistently good academic performance of voluntary immigrants and apparent low academic achievements of involuntary immigrants. Similarly, Foster (2004) alluded to the fact that Ogbu's work did not consider "an analysis of racial uplift, a talented tenth of racial responsibility as community-based concepts which facilitate academic success among African-Americans, despite the fact that these are deeply rooted community forces in the African-American community" (p. 377). These critiques, while valid, do not necessarily oppose the underlying tenets of CE tenets but rather expand the body of theoretical knowledge on the study of minority student performance.

Critical Race Theory. By the mid 1970s (decade of Civil Rights Movement), Derrick Bell and Alan Freeman (legal scholars) developed *critical legal theory* out of concern for the slow pace of racial transformation in American society and were critical of its portrayal as one of meritocracy. However, failure to include racism in their critique led to the development of *critical race theory* (CRT) (Ladson-Billings, 1999). Yoso (2002) explored the purpose of CRT in education and reported that it accounts for the existence of racism in education and also attempts to eliminate it in all its varied forms from the curriculum. The

five tenets of CTR comprise (a) *counter-storytelling*, (b) *permanence of racism*, (c) *interest convergence*, (d) *critique of liberalism*, and (e) *whiteness as property*.

One tenet that can inform African Americans' limited access to high-quality vocational education curricula is *whiteness as property* (Yoso, 2002). Gordon (2003) found evidence to suggest that the low participation of African Americans in trade and industry programs (16% African American vs 30% Caucasians) in the 1930s was due to their denial of access to such programs. DeCuir & Dixson (2004) theorized on similar inequity in U.S. education in stating that it serves "to reify this notion of Whiteness as property whereby the rights to possession, use and enjoyment, and disposition, have been enjoyed almost exclusively by Whites" (p. 28). DeCuir and Dixson also unmasked "Whiteness" as a standard of normalcy in reference to the "Others" as people of color because "... white is considered normal" (p. 29), a phenomenon that only further stereotype minority students in predominantly White schools.

Asher (2007) used CRT to highlight the growing cultural gap between pre-service teachers and diverse students in illuminating the need for teacher education programs to pay more attention to the issues of "queerness", gender bias, and racial stereotyping. She reiterated the urgency to prepare teachers for teaching in an increasingly global context of interdependence, which highlights the importance of the current study in examining the cultural and international responsiveness of WED teaching strategies from a student's perspective.

Bartlett and Brayboy (2006) went further to unveil the increasing use of CRT in a socio-cultural context for analyzing the experiences of specific

racial/ethnic groups in U.S. schooling. For example, Latino critical race theory (LatCrit) highlights the Latina/o and Chicana/o issues affecting this ethnic group such as immigration, language, and identity; Asian critical race theory (AsianCrit) emphasizes such issues as stereotyping and language affecting Asians; and TribalCrit focuses on educational issues “resulting not only from the contemporary, liminal positioning of American Indians but also from hundreds of years of abusive relationships between mainstream educational institutions and American Indian communities” (Bartlett & Brayboy, 2005, p. 367). The multiple use of CRT, in this instance, brings balance to the previous overemphasis of the black-white paradigm lamented by some scholars over the past three decades.

Multicultural Education (ME). Emerging in the 1960s (in the wake of the Civil Rights Movement), ME’s purpose was to facilitate assimilation among diverse groups in multicultural classrooms (Piland, Piland, & Hess 1999). In 1979, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) had revised its standards for accrediting teacher education programs. These standards included that Institutions must provide evidence to prove that plans existed for multicultural education in curricula. By 1981, NCATE expected institutions to implement such plans (Ladson-Billings, 1999). Educators and curriculum designers have proposed different ways to achieve this end.

Diamond (1998), an expert in curriculum design and assessment, cited typical questions that teachers can ask themselves in beginning to plan for accommodating diverse students in curricula include the following: “... , Whose voices are you listening to? What authorities? Are they only white? Are they only

male and European? Or are they multicultural and diverse?” (pp. 209 – 210). Piland, Piland, and Hess (1999) went further in identifying a four-level approach for infusing multicultural content into the college curriculum. At Level 1- the contributions approach- the instructor pays attention to e.g., heroes and holidays; Level 2- the additive approach- includes adding e.g., multicultural themes and materials; Level 3 incorporates the viewpoints and perspectives of diverse groups in subject matter; and Level 4- the social action approach- requires students to apply multicultural perspectives to situations requiring social change. From a pragmatic standpoint, the latter approach would be the more impacting as it requires application and not just knowledge for ME.

Cross-Cultural Instructional Design. Theoretical research is also on-going for enhancing *instructional design* for international students. Lianbin and Ferdinand (2006) proposed two models in this regard: one for integrating cross-cultural elements into workforce education instructional design and the other for ensuring learning effectiveness of the integrated cross-cultural elements. Cross-cultural elements found to be most beneficial for this integration included analyzing international students' entry characteristics (e.g., cultural history) and selecting cross-cultural learning materials. In the effective learning model, social learning theory was adapted to account for individual differences affecting motivation to learn such as language competence and value differences. The latter are intended to improve cognitive skills, affective adjustment, and learning performance for the international student.

Research on instructional design for higher education on-line courses also

placed emphasis on considering the cultural diversity of the rapidly growing number of on-line learners. Parsons (2008) asked the study question: What are the cultural barriers that should be considered when designing effective on-line instruction in Malaysia higher education? Applying the Delphi technique to engage a panel of 12 on-line learning experts, from five Malaysian universities, Parsons' (2008) answer to the latter question included the following: "Design challenges-sensitivity of language, graphics and topics of discussion due to race, and religious backgrounds." (p. 105). This finding is relevant to the Midwestern university's diversity thrust in maintaining culturally responsive on-line curricula for its diverse students to include WED graduates students.

In summary, the theoretical framework that informs the critical intersection between racial diversity and education comprises a growing body of knowledge that analyzes the issues concerning educational inequity for culturally and internationally diverse students. The use of CRT, CET, and ME have dominated current research discourses as analytic frameworks in mainly unmasking the role of racism in U.S. education, multicultural education in preparing teachers for multicultural classrooms, and attempting to bridge the gap between teachers and culturally diverse students in applying theory to practice. Theoretical research is ongoing for cultural diversity in instructional design. Cross-cultural elements integrated into WED curricular content help to enhance learning effectiveness for international students. Consideration is also given to cultural learning barriers for the growing number of on-line learners.

Review of Empirical Literature

Culturally Unresponsive Teaching

According to Gay (2000), culturally responsive teaching is characterized by teachers demonstrating knowledge of the cultural characteristics of different groups, how these cultural differences affect the teaching-learning process, and how to accommodate for such differences in using different teaching strategies and experiences that promote learning in all students. When teachers lack such knowledge and skills, their teaching becomes culturally unresponsive for racially diverse learners. Traditionally, culturally responsive teaching has been a challenge for many teachers (majority Caucasian and few minorities) in the U.S. due to its history of racially segregated schools prior to the 1960s (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1999). Three factors contributing to this challenge are cultural communication differences, cultural learning differences, and curriculum culture bias.

Cultural Communication Differences. In their text chapter on *Teaching Culturally Diverse Students*, renowned authors McKeachie and Svinicki (2006) explicitly illustrated how a faculty member with a Caucasian European American background can be unresponsive in teaching culturally diverse students. An example of a student not making eye contact with the teacher during lecture and continually looking down was used to demonstrate cultural difference in non-verbal communication. The latter behavior is interpreted in a Western perspective (referring to the U.S.) as disinterest, boredom, or distractedness, which may lead

the teacher to talk louder to capture the student's attention or call a teacher's conference with the student on the issue.

On the other hand, looking away may indicate interest and attentiveness among some ethnic groups like Asian Americans, African Americans, and Native Americans. Further, staring one of higher status in the eye is considered rude among Asian cultures (to include Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese). Nonetheless, African Americans tend to make more eye contact when speaking and less when listening (McKeachie & Svinicki, 2006).

Cautiously, Watkins and Butler (1999) pointed out the danger of over-generalizing in similar situations involving diverse learners in a qualitative study for in-service and pre-service teachers. The 10 teachers were required to assume a new cultural identity (to include African American, Native American, Mexican American, and Japanese American) in role plays aimed at creating multicultural classrooms. A significant finding from the study indicated the following: over-generalizing can lead to stereotyping and may cause a teacher to forget that there will always be those individuals who think, learn, and feel differently from their majority group, who should each be respected as an individual.

Research discourses on stereotyping suggest that it may result in stigmatization and false assumptions about diverse students' academic ability. Consequently, teachers are inclined to present them with less challenging curriculum, which limits their academic potential and employment opportunities (Capella-Santana, 2003; Gay, 2000; Shalom 1996; University of Michigan

Admissions Lawsuits, 1999). The psychological phenomenon of “stereotype threat”, when internalized, can negatively affect African American students’ performance on tests as University of Michigan Admissions Lawsuits (1999) discovered from the following experiment by Dr. Claude Steele, Chair of the Department of Psychology at Stanford University:

... randomly assigning two groups of black and white students who were statistically equated on ability level, and giving each group a difficult 30-minute verbal test. The first group was told that the test measured ability; in this instance, black students performed much worse than white students. A second group of black and white students were given the same test, but told that it was a problem-solving task and had nothing to do with ability. In that instance, the performance of black students matched that of white. (p. 8)

This finding is not isolated and provides compelling evidence that stereotyping, as a derivative of culturally unresponsive teaching, has crippling effects on some minority students’ academic performance. Durbin’s (2002) findings from his dissertation on cultural capital and high stakes testing resonated specifically with the previous study. He found that minority students at an Illinois high school, renowned for high-stakes testing, felt that among other factors, internalized racism (e.g., self doubt on academic ability) and unfair negative messages within the testing system contributed to their low test scores. These findings have practical significance for verifying testing practices both at the high

school and college level in creating a more equitable testing ground for minority students.

Lack of awareness of a preference for circularity rather than linearity in communication style among some ethnic groups can also result in unresponsive teaching. McKeachie and Svinicki (2006) observed that storytelling as an oral medium for education is passed on through cultural traditions for some ethnic students. Thus, they may respond to a teacher's question in an indirect roundabout way. The teacher of a Western background in the U.S. may think that the student is being evasive and mistrusting of his or her direct question, which places the student in a negative light. In analyzing the problem, Gay (2004) gave the following explanation:

Teachers function in a communicative framework that emphasizes conciseness, directness, objectivity, rationality, and linear thinking, speaking, and writing. In comparison, many students of color think, talk, and write in a storytelling mode, with circular organizational structure, subjectivity, generality, emotionality, and the passionate and personal involvement of the speaker. (p. 210).

Cultural Learning Differences. Research has also highlighted the problems that can arise from differences in learning styles for ethnically diverse students. Aldridge, Fraser, and Huang (1999) used a mixed methods approach, like that used in the current study (Explanatory Design: Follow-up Explanations Model (QUAN emphasized), to investigate differences in classroom learning environments in Australia and Taiwan and the socio-cultural factors influencing

these differences. Fifty classes in each country were administered the English and Mandarin versions of the established What's Happening In The Classroom (WHIC) instrument for collecting data on students' perceptions of their classroom learning environments on seven dimensions to include *equity*, *teacher support*, and *cooperation*. Results of the first quantitative phase indicated that students in Australia generally viewed their learning environment more favorably (e.g., more teacher support and student involvement) than Taiwanese students.

Significant results from the first quantitative phase led to the second qualitative phase, which included follow-up student interviews to generate contextual explanations for the quantitative results. A telling discovery was made from the student interviews. Taiwanese students interpreted the questionnaire item under Involvement – *I discuss ideas in class* – as questioning because they were not traditionally involved in classroom discussion in the Western sense. This finding is consistent with McKeachie and Svinicki's (2006) discourse on teaching culturally diverse students. Moreover, this finding supports the need for using a mixed methods approach in studies involving culturally diverse students as their perceptions may differ depending on their culture. Such cultural difference cannot be easily explained or interpreted with only a questionnaire but rather in hearing their voices in cultural context through qualitative interview data (Aldridge, Fraser, & Huang, 1999).

In the U.S., Capella-Santana (2003) found that Mexican students were accused of cheating by their Caucasian teacher when they shared their work with classmates. The teacher further discouraged them from using this learning

strategy in class. Yet collaboration among Mexican students for school work is an accepted cultural behavior that enhances group performance. In this instance, the teacher's lack of cultural awareness affected the students' academic performance negatively. This collaboration is only in the context of group work/projects. In a formal testing situation involving individual students, they are made aware that such collaboration would constitute to cheating and is not allowed.

Shrinking individualism for the group's sake is also common among other minority students such as Asians, Hispanics, and Native Americans in a classroom setting. In contrast, competition among individuals and groups is commonplace for American students in their learning environment (Gay, 2004; McKeachie & Svinicki, 2006). These cultural learning differences can inform effective practice, especially for workforce educators, who are responsible for preparing future WED faculty and trainers for the diverse classrooms and training rooms of the 21st Century.

On the other hand, teaching effectiveness may lie in the use of varying teaching strategies to suit observed student learning preferences without an emphasis on ethnicity. A research study conducted in Australia (high diversity among its population) on learning preferences of vocational education and training (VET) students by Smith (2006) provided interesting insight on teaching for individual learning preferences. Smith argued that traditional learning style inventories and theories tended to stereotype learners, and teachers seldom had the luxury of administering such instruments before teaching new diverse groups.

He further cited two empirical studies that showed instructor sensitivity to students' differing learning styles led to positive effects in their learning receptiveness. This approach shows an alternative approach to not knowing the differing cultural backgrounds of a large diverse class but would cater to students' learning style and cultural differences with some measure of success.

Smith (2006) investigated whether VET teachers identified individual student learning preferences through naturalistic observation, if identification was done through learning context (degree of student-centered learning) and delivery (use of verbal or non-verbal presentations), and how VET teachers identified individual student learning preferences. Data were collected from six VET sites in three Australian States - Victoria, South Australia, and Western Australia - comprising 160 VET teachers of whom 13 (2 from each site and 1 extra) were interviewed.

The questionnaire consisted of 22 questions aligned to the study's investigation, using a 5-point Likert scale with 1 being "hardly ever" and 5, "nearly always" (Smith, 2006). The use of the mixed methods approach in this study is appropriate for allowing a more in-depth interpretation of the quantitative data collected, adding validity and reliability to the study results (Creswell, 2003; Stake, 2004; Best & Khan, 2003; and Worthen, Sanders, & Fitzpatrick, 1997).

Analysis of data from both the questionnaires and interviews were consistent and included the following: teachers in their natural learning settings observed that some students had a preference for information delivered in short bursts rather than printed self-paced materials. Others preferred a multi-sensory

approach to learning involving watching, listening, touching, and talking about the learning material. Still, some students liked working alone, in groups, or with close instructor guidance, while others responded differently to delivery formats like computer-based learning, face-to-face, or reading and library study. The teachers admitted that their teaching experiences and observations helped them to adjust their teaching strategies to students' individual learning styles, depending on the context and delivery modes (Smith, 2006). These findings were not linked to any specific ethnic group, gender, or geographic region in Australia.

The researcher's conclusions included that vocational teachers recognized individual learning preferences as legitimate and accounted for these differences in striving for teaching effectiveness. These conclusions have practical significance for teachers' naturalistic assessment of individual learning styles and their said interventionist response in effectively teaching VET students (Smith, 2006). However, the researchers did not include the learning preferences of specific ethnic groups, which show that there is scope for further research to include student ethnicity along with individual learning preferences, especially here in the U.S where diversity is on every university's "agenda." The current study helps to bridge this research gap by examining racially diverse graduate students' perceptions on cultural and international curriculum responsiveness.

Culture Bias. Failing to critically evaluate and improve curricular materials in preparation for diverse classrooms also contributes to culturally unresponsive teaching both at the secondary and post-secondary levels. Textbooks reviews for school curricula were found to either misrepresent or avoid perspectives of

minority groups (Gay, 2000). In an empirical study involving black students' experiences in the Toronto school system, Gumbs-Fleming (2001) reported that "they prefer to see characters that are heroes and victors instead of the usual image of Blacks as slaves, servants and "bad people" (p. 10).

Misrepresentation and at other times irrelevance of the school curriculum to minorities' diverse cultural backgrounds affect their motivation to learn and ultimately their academic performance. The historical data on their low achievement on standardized tests and high dropout rates are evidence of this debilitating effect (Capella-Santana, 2003; Gay, 2000). Still, Ladson-Billings (2006) strongly contended that the trend to focus on the "achievement gap" between minority and majority students is misplaced. Instead, this focus should be on the accumulation of an "education debt" due to historical, economic, sociopolitical, and moral factors. On the other hand, efforts to add multicultural perspectives to course texts occasionally resulted in an over-representation of the African American Diaspora at the expense of other ethnic minorities, placing them at a disadvantage in realizing their full learning potential (Gay, 2000).

The problem of cultural bias has been a common practice in the past in other countries particularly by the controlling power. An historical review (early 17th to 20th centuries) of British colonial school curricula and its effects on the learning experiences of students in West Africa revealed that African learners were not "learning or acquiring skills of immediate relevance to the community, and curricula were aligned with the interests of missionaries and British colonial

government as in all colonies in Africa, North and South America, Asia, or the Caribbean” (Ofori-Attah, 2006, p. 412).

However, cultural bias has not always been intentional in school curricular. Sahin (2003) in Turkey investigated the relationship between the dominant culture emphasized in the curriculum and failure of students in the minority cultures. Sahin explained that there was no intentional segregation inherent in this practice but instead a mentality that “all people living in Turkey are Turks, not ethnically but nationally” (p. 390). In parts of southern and eastern regions of Turkey, the majority of the population comprises different ethnic origins (Kurdish, Arabic, and Mixed origins). The latter perspective is slightly different to that of the U.S. where the legacy of racism directly impacted the culture bias in its school and higher education curricula in most instances.

Study findings by Sahin (2003) included that the curriculum was more appropriate for the majority of Turkish students and irrelevant to the ethnically diverse minority students, hindering their performance. Recommendations based on study findings included that either a new curriculum be developed or the current one be revised accordingly to meet the varied “ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and economical needs of the sub-cultures” (p. 417). The latter echoes findings of similar studies on teaching culturally and internationally diverse students both at the secondary and tertiary levels in the U.S. (Hudgens, 1992; Khafagi, 1990; Mehra & Bishop, 2007).

Given the growing diversity of their student populations, culture bias has also gained the attention of researchers in higher education, especially within

their specific disciplines. Powell and Collier (1990) examined the limitations of public speaking instruction in light of growing student diversity on U.S. campuses. In an extensive review of over 30 scholarly sources on public speaking instruction, the researchers found evidence to suggest that the traditional communication college course had the following limitations: (a) culturally ethnocentric, (b) unequal opportunity for public speaking success, and (c) lack of generalization to varied communication events.

Public speaking instruction limitations were partly characterized by instruction presented in the mainstream communication style-ethnocentric and linear-ignoring the cultural communication patterns of ethnic groups like Asians and African Americans that may be more indirect and emotionally expressive. As a result, non-European-American students faced challenges in succeeding in public speaking courses. Results from two empirical studies conducted at the California State University on student achievement in public speaking courses showed the following: "... White students received significantly higher oral performances scores than Latino, Asian, and African American students." (Powell & Collier, 1990, p. 243). Conclusions drawn from these results included that White students' communication style resembled what was considered to be standard speech and thus they were perceived as being more competent than their minority counterparts.

Piland, Piland, and Hess (1999) commented on culture bias within the multicultural educational (ME) curriculum, which provides students with courses in ethnic and women studies as part of the general community college

curriculum. These studies are either mandatory or optional at some community colleges. The researchers highlighted the weakening support for the future of ME in the community college context by some scholars due to the misrepresentation of the following: "... multicultural curriculum ignores European history, atrocities committed by minority cultures, and the fact that Europeans were also treated poorly" (p. 81).

Morey (2000) shared a similar view on U.S. higher education history curriculum that characterized the 1890s Western frontier, in the eyes of Frederick Jackson Turner, as a sparsely settled wilderness with little civilization. No mention was made of the large number of indigenous inhabitants previously living in the West with their deep cultural traditions and civilizations. Omission of such historical facts promotes culture bias and defeats the purpose of ME, which is "... designed to empower all students to become knowledgeable, caring, and active citizens in a deeply troubled and ethnically polarized nation and world" (Banks, 1993, p. 88).

In a more panoramic view, Quinnan (1997) examined culture bias in the context of non-traditional students returning to higher education and asked the overarching research question: "Are colleges and universities actually meeting the social and cultural expectations they claim to address?" (p. 10). Critical and postmodern theories shaped the study design, which insist on "... giving voice to the oppressed" (p. 69). Data were collected at a university with a large pool of non-traditional students using an open-ended survey consisting of three

questions that allowed adult students to share negative and positive campus experiences.

A key finding from this study showed that “almost all [students] acknowledged some feeling of “Otherness,” or alienation, from mainstream campus culture... [especially] those who have been away from the classroom for a number of years” (Quinnan, 1997, p. 83). In discussing the study findings, Quinnan implied that universities’ dominant mainstream culture with its cultural prohibitions (like not taking more time for some older students to clinch learning) further serve to marginalize non-traditional adult students. Thus, higher education does not fully meet the social and cultural expectations they claim to address.

The gap between research and practice for a more pluralistic approach to higher education curricula in light of increasing student diversity appears to be widening. Yoso (2002) acknowledged cultural bias in research on critical race curriculum and confirmed that some graduate sociology departments did not incorporate the scholarly work of people of color. In effect, a U.S. Caucasian hierarchy of knowledge was deliberately promoted; a clear demonstration of hegemony. In a comparative view, an acclaimed U.S. author of a text frequently used in graduate studies for College Teaching courses also admitted: “My increased interaction with colleagues in other countries who are concerned about improving teaching strategies makes me aware of the *cultural bias* of much of my writing” (McKeachie & Svinicki, 2006, p. xix). The openness of the author shows much integrity in his work, but it signals an urgent call for more plurality and equity in presenting perspectives on teaching culturally diverse students. This

over-representation of westernized perspectives in higher education curricular content is also common outside of the U.S.

De Vita and Case (2003) advocated for internationalization of U.K higher education curricula due to its prevailing culture bias. Their argument for curricular transformation was based on findings from related studies that showed westernized ideologies being promoted as universal across educational disciplines and suitable for solving global problems. However, many of the international students studying in the U.K. complained that this westernized ideology in most instances did not fit their home context, placing limited value on their already expensive foreign education. Studies involving international students' learning needs and experiences on U.S. campuses reflect similar findings (Khafagi, 1990; Kim, 1999; Mehra & Bishop, 2007; Pitt, Berthon, & Robson, 1997; Green, 2000; Zhao, Kuh, & Carini, 2005) and will be discussed in the following section: Learning Challenges of International Students.

In summary, factors giving rise to culturally unresponsive teaching typically overlooks the importance of diverse cultural communication patterns and perspectives in course material and classroom delivery for minority students' (local and foreign) learning effectiveness. This trend negatively impacts their academic performance and, by extension, opportunities for exploring advanced degrees and high-skill, high-paying jobs locally and globally. Highlighting these misunderstandings in cultural differences between teachers and their diverse students help to raise awareness of the critical need for reducing cultural learning barriers, which the current study will address.

Learning Challenges of International Students

Language Barrier. While the research on teaching culturally diverse students overlaps in most instances in theory and practice for that of international students, a separate discussion is done to add illumination to some of their unique learning challenges as students coming from foreign countries. Among the key cultural barriers to learning identified in research studies for international students, language appeared to be the most significant (Khafagi, 1990; Rehm, 2008; Selvadurai, 1992; Zhao, Kuh, & Carini, 2005). The issue of language barrier for non-English speakers in vocational education gained much attention in the 1960s and 1970s with the passage of equal access legislation (e.g., Education Amendments of 1974 for the needs of LEP students) and the establishment of bilingual vocational programs by educational administrators (Gordon, 2003).

Nevertheless, mastering the English language continues to be a major challenge to some international students in reaching their full academic potential. Khafagi (1990) noted that while many international students were required to pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), it did not test their ability to speak the English language. As a result, they experienced difficulty understanding their U.S. instructors as well as being able to develop a rapport with U.S. students (Selvadurai, 1992). Cushner and Brislin (1997) and Kim (1999) endorsed this view in their research on cross-cultural training issues in the U.S.

Selvadurai (1992) further emphasized that the language barrier along with evaluation strategies were real challenges in stating that “international students are often not accustomed to frequent testing and have more experience taking essay-oriented examinations. The quick thinking required by multiple choice and short answer examinations has been reported to often create psychological barriers and tension among students” (p. 3). In citing findings of four empirical studies conducted during the 1970s and 1980s, Selvadurai (1992) disclosed that course structure, content, and standards all too often contributed to international students not fully realizing their academic goals in U.S. higher education.

Zhao, Kuh, and Carini (2005) reported on the social effect of the language barrier on the international student. In their national study of international and U.S. student engagement with a random sample of 175, 000 students from 317 U.S. tertiary institutions, Zhao et al. (2005) found that international students resorted to using the computer to avoid embarrassing communication and social exchanges with their U.S. peers and instructors due to their language barrier. Parr and Others (1992) drew a similar conclusion in finding that technology contributes to social isolation as a substitute for face-to-face interaction.

Such social isolation can also lead to failure in academic performance as found by Rehm (2008) in a survey of 41 Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers who taught students from 30 cultural backgrounds. The survey included open-ended questions that asked for CTE teachers’ greatest challenges, rewards, and most useful teaching techniques in diverse classrooms. A content analysis of the teachers’ comments verified the survey finding that the language

barrier was a major challenge for CTE teachers. Their comments revealed that limited English proficiency (LEP) students put up barriers when they perceive their teachers as not understanding them; they also shut down when they did not understand their CTE teachers and ultimately fail in their school work.

Student-Centered Learning. International students also experience difficulties in adjusting to the student-centered approach to learning in American classrooms. Among the many changes in U.S. higher education in the 1990s was the move from an instructional to a learning paradigm. This resulted in a shift from a content- to student-centered syllabus, changing the instructor's role from that of knowledge disseminator to learning facilitator with students being more actively involved in learning (Grunert, 1997; Diamond, 1998).

However, Selvadurai (1992) explained that most international students came from British or French systems of education in which the instructor is a highly respected expert and authoritative figure. As such, they do more listening than talking in class following a teacher-centered approach to learning. This makes the collegial rapport between U.S. instructors and students that immediately brings the academic space alive somewhat distracting for international students and can impede their learning. In their humility and custom of teacher-centered learning, Asian students may appear non-participatory in the classroom and may even freeze up if a teacher placed them in the spotlight for response to a question (McKeachie & Svinicki, 2006).

Kim (1999) reported on specific learning styles of Asian students who preferred more structured-type instruction with less discussion and peer group

interaction. This teacher-centered approach to instruction in a higher education classroom would mean the use of mainly lecture and other instructive methods (e.g., question and answer) with the instructor in the role of knowledge disseminator. Student-teacher interaction would be limited to question and answer, and learning outcomes assessed through objective or subjective written tests (Kitano, 1997). Morey (2000) noted similar findings in confirming that mainstream Anglo-European higher education institutions promote student-centered approaches like competition and individual reward.

Reading between the lines of discourses on student-centered learning, one can find the international student struggling to singly overcome the mismatch between the teacher- and student centered approach to learning. Unstated is the lack of recognition by host institutions to address this cultural learning challenge to help the international student learn more effectively.

Host-Country Curriculum. Another issue of contention for international students is the debate on curriculum diversification. Some argue that universities with high enrollment for international students were obligated to modify their curriculum accordingly, while others with limited numbers were not obligated to do so (Selvadurai, 1992). In his informal survey among faculty for restructuring the engineering program to facilitate the large number of international students, Khafagi (1990) found that 86% disagreed with the suggestion. Nevertheless, they were open to including examples from developing countries and entertaining the possibility of such integration for graduate-level research projects in the engineering curriculum.

On the other hand, Li (1992) contended that resistance to curricular modification by faculty may be valid. Li argued that the perception existed that cultural issues were not consistent from one semester to another, since international students came from different countries and changed every semester. Yet, research on the “benefits of diversity” convincingly proves that curriculum diversification has numerous benefits (e.g. increased intercultural competence) for U.S. students and instructors and not just international students (Adelman, 1997; Clark, 2002; Smith & Schonfeld, 2000), which weakens Li’s argument.

Pitt, Berthon, and Robson (1997) were critical of just adding international examples to a host-country curriculum for business management education. They felt that the latter was merely a formality, since such material was not likely to be included in an examination question for students. Instead, they argued for a separate course on international business management or a specialization within the major field. As an alternative approach, the researchers highlighted the use of a global rather than an ethnocentric domestic approach in offering the course. As such, a concerted effort was required in convening a globally representative class so that students could learn of world cultures and business from each other.

In a comparative view, Green (2002) asserted that the U.S. should join the world in internationalizing its undergraduate education and declared “... American college graduates will live and work in a world where national borders are permeable; information and ideas flow at lightning speed; and communities

and workplaces reflect a growing diversity of cultures, languages, attitudes, and values” (p. 1). In like manner, De Vita and Case (2003) in the United Kingdom (UK) strongly supported internationalization of UK higher education. They contended that curriculum internationalization quality should match the high prices charged by universities and be responsive to the cross-cultural and international exchanges fuelled by advancements in today’s communication and information technologies.

Results from Mehra and Bishop’s (2007) case study of international doctoral students in a library and information science (LIS) program on a U.S. campus revealed their invisibility in curriculum content. Significant findings from this qualitative study included that LIS international students (10) found the U.S. literature was too “US-centric”, ignoring international perspectives; and that the nature of LIS called for more collaboration with international counterparts in learning global perspectives, which did not form an integral part of their learning experiences. Consequently, these international students experienced intellectual bondage in a costly U.S. higher education system that did not prepare them for the global job market of LIS. The latter gives relevance to the current study that includes curriculum responsiveness to internationally diverse graduate students.

Limited Learning Transfer. Gray and Herr (1998) stated that one of the ethical foundations of WED is to promote the effective transfer of learning to the workplace. But this has proven to be problematic for students graduating from foreign institutions in some instances. Powell (2001) revealed that an internal review, by the United States Agency for International Development, of 212

educational projects implemented in developing countries showed 90% being unsustainable or unsuccessful. Factors contributing to the failure of these aid-funded educational projects included poor project management and failure to understand the local cultural context in which technical and vocational education and training (TVET) was delivered.

Powell (2001) research study assessed 19 such technical and vocational education and training (TVET) projects implemented over the period 1980 to 1996 in Jamaica and Gambia. The projects, funded by international aid agencies, included providing overseas scholarships for the management staff at TVET institutions, setting-up of training academies, and providing income-generating skills training for villagers in rural areas. A qualitative approach was used in conducting semi-structured interviews with stakeholders to include key government officials, international aid agencies, instructors, and consultants. These semi-structured interviews were quite appropriate for this qualitative study and proven effective in gaining insights that were of central significance to the key informants as well as specific to data gathering for the assessment of the funded projects (Easton, 1997).

A key finding of Powell (2001) from one of the Jamaican projects revealed that the overseas training received by senior Jamaican management had an undesirable effect on the home project. The Jamaican management tried to implement a rigid system of quality assurance using a first-world model. The Jamaican trainees objected to these bodily searches since their culture was not tolerant of such an authoritarian management style. Consequently, the Jamaican

training academy had difficulty conforming to the human resource requirements of foreign garment construction companies, which eventually made the project unsustainable. De Vita and Case (2003) found similar occurrences for U.K. higher education when exported to other countries. British accreditation criteria for offering U.K. academic programs in other countries were found to be culturally incompatible with local education systems and customs, making compliance with such criteria difficult for the importing countries.

Powell (2001) concluded that “despite the good intentions of donor agencies, a large number of projects in the present study failed to achieve their stated objectives, were unsustainable and had what could be regarded as distorted effects on the institutions where they were implemented” (p.14). The unsuccessful outcome of trying to fit a first world model of TEVT into a third world country is congruent with previous research on technology transfer for TVET programs in developing countries.

Lauglo (1996) reported that revised policies on vocational education by the World Bank envisaged naturally occurring tasks in the work environment becoming more automated, involving less manual input. The latter then influences the type of TVET curriculum promoted in internationally funded projects by the Bank for third world countries. This causes a learning transfer problem for developing countries where the greater majority of the workforce has a livelihood in informal agricultural and economic sectors, without much automation. Watson (1994) also noted this disconnect with transfer of technology for developing countries in recognizing the following:

The problem facing many developing countries is that Western paradigms have shaped and influenced their educational systems ... and the best use of technology.... Unfortunately, like much Western technology, TVET has proved to be expensive and frequently irrelevant or unsuitable for individual LDC (Less Developed Country) needs. (p. 2)

This failed outcome of internationally funded projects in third world countries has scholarly significance in linking research to practice. As an illustration, U.S. trainers and faculty (to include WED) should be mindful that research and techniques used in the U.S cannot be applied wholesale to developing countries as their systems for politics, education, economy, and culture are different. Furthermore, much of the U.S. educational research is conducted with a U.S. population and in a U.S. context that are different to the Diaspora for developing countries. Therefore consideration for modifying U.S. techniques in enhancing learning transfer for international students should inform practice.

In conclusion, international students experience major learning challenges different from other ethnic minorities (e.g., African American, Asian American, Native American, and Hispanics) in U.S. higher education. The language barrier appears to be the biggest challenge for ESL students in successfully achieving their educational goals. A dominant host-country or first-world curriculum does not allow for effective learning transfer neither promotes learning in all students but rather allow some to have an *unearned advantage*. Johnson (2001) likened an unearned advantage to “when an unearned entitlement [e.g., feeling safe in

public spaces] is restricted to certain groups” (p. 25). The consequences of ineffective educational practices for international students are costly for them and limit their intellectual development for a terminal degree as a Ph.D. Such far-reaching effects call for a sense of urgency for effecting initiatives such as *Southern @ 150* that includes maintaining responsive curricular for culturally and internationally diverse learners, which the current study aims to explore.

Curriculum Improvements for Culturally Diverse Groups

Multicultural Education (ME)

Since ME was previously discussed in detail from its inception and role in teacher preparation programs for culturally diverse classrooms (see pp. 13, 51), only ME trends are addressed in this section. In exploring how ME evolved over four decades since *Brown vs The Board of Education*, prolific author, Gay (2004) observed that multicultural curriculum has been given greater breadth and depth. Curriculum content has gone beyond the race specific issue of African Americans to include other minority groups such as Mexicans, Native Americans, Latinos, and Asians. A wider range of issues now exists and not just race in the multicultural curriculum and includes sexual orientation, social class, gender, language, and national origin. This pluralistic approach redounds to the benefit of all culturally diverse students served by the curriculum when applied.

In addition, more emphasis is now given to instructional quality and equity pedagogy than ME curriculum content. A paradigm shift to instructional quality causes the teacher to recognize that because learners have different cultural backgrounds, the teacher must be equipped to use different teaching strategies

in meeting their diverse learning styles equitably. An increase in the work of educators of color in multicultural education now exists, which previously was done by mainstream Caucasian scholars. A future challenge of ME is “to keep pace with the changing demographic demands of the society and schools it was created to represent and serve” (Gay, 2004, p. 215). This challenge is addressed in the current study as it relates to the culturally and internationally diverse students served by the WED graduate curriculum at a Midwestern university.

Curriculum Inclusiveness

A concerted effort for eliminating cultural bias in higher education curriculum characterizes curriculum inclusiveness in R. M. Diamond's highly recommended text - *Designing & Assessing Courses & Curricula: A Practical Guide*. In a case study at the University of Massachusetts at Boston, the faculty won approval for a campus-wide initiative on diversity after a disturbing discovery by one history professor, who found that her students were of the belief that Africans had not made any contributions to civilization (Diamond, 1998).

In giving the approval for the diversity initiative, the University of Massachusetts' administrators mandated that diversity was a major curriculum goal in its higher education. All faculties were required to present multicultural perspectives in all courses (e.g., literature, art, nursing, business, and economics). Diversity issues included gender, age, social class, race, ethnicity, and disability in the curriculum to help bridge gaps in understanding between students and faculty of diverse backgrounds. This all inclusive approach had a positive impact on curriculum transformation and, by extension, students'

readiness for working in today's diverse workplace (Diamond, 1998). Similar success stories are well documented in the New Jersey Project of the 1980s that created an all inclusive college curriculum for the growing diversity in the student population (Friedman, Kolmar, Flint, & Rothenberg, 1996).

The language barrier issue was addressed successfully at CUNY Bronx Community College, New York. The strategy used for helping English as second language (ESL) students with learning transfer to their academic courses was as follows: instead of using the traditional ESL content for tutoring, ESL instructors collaborated with the academic instructors and incorporated subject matter material from these academic courses in teaching ESL students. This approach helped to increase ESL students' understanding of the language in the context in which they would be using it for their academic courses. Contextualizing the ESL content can also be effective in distance education (DE) ESL courses particularly for community colleges in California, which have a high level of student diversity (Kuo, 1999). Selvadurai (1992) shared a similar view in recommending that intensive English courses for ESL students should be offered just before or concurrently with their academic courses.

The issue of US-centric learning material can be handled by infusing curricular with international content. According to Mestenhauser and Ellingboe (1998), one popular approach to such infusion involves three ways. For example, the instructor can include journal articles from both developed and developing countries so that students can relate to the study findings in cases where the

culture, economy, and education system are similar to their own. Banks (1993) suggested similar strategies in promoting multicultural perspectives in curriculum.

A second way to infuse with international content would be to assign flexible class projects, where international students can focus on issues from their home countries. A third way would be to use examples from different countries (to include developing countries) to stimulate interest and keep motivation among international students. However, a pitfall some American instructors make in this regard is not to choose material by international authors, so that you may have a U.S. version of the international content (Mestenhauser & Ellingboe, 1998).

Other initiatives for increasing inclusiveness in the curriculum for international students include international exchanges, hiring foreign faculty, and networking. Engaging in research projects with international students for their home countries will help faculty to gain a deeper understanding of foreign cultures and education systems. Similarly, study abroad programs and faculty exchanges have also proven beneficial. One U.S. professor remarked, "I became aware of a wide variety of quality global education materials being produced in Great Britain to which I had absolutely no access in the United States due to copyright conventions or lack of an American partner publishing house" (Mestenhauser & Ellingboe, 1998, p. 108). These proven curriculum inclusiveness strategies hold practical significance for effectively teaching culturally and internationally diverse students; especially at this University, which

formed an International Recruitment Advisory Council “to focus on international student enrollment to enhance the diversity of the campus” (SIUC, 2007d, p. 15).

Additionally, conference discussions on pluralism in higher education reflect an encouraging openness to student diversity among university administrators internationally. Green and Barblan (2004) reported on the eighth session of the Transatlantic Dialogue under the aegis of the European University Association (EUA), American Council on Education (ACE) and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC). The theme of the session was “Higher Education in a Pluralist World: A Transatlantic View”. Participants comprised 30 university leaders from countries in Europe, Canada, and the United States and were asked to define pluralism. Of paramount importance to Europeans, Canadians, and U.S. participants was that pluralism be characterized as being open to different intellectual perspectives as a higher education institution. Second in the ranking among participants was that pluralistic institutions must maintain diversity of race, gender, and ethnicity. The U.S. university leaders placed more importance on the latter than their European counterparts as one reiterated that race was a defining characteristic of U.S. culture and nothing else was on this level.

Notably, the Pennsylvania State University (Midwestern university’s No. 1 competitor in WED) defined pluralism in relation to its 4000 international students, who help to promote intellectual pluralism at its institution. Also, the Europeans insisted that internationalization was a significant dimension of pluralism for them in allowing the free movement of students in Europe and

around world to attend European universities. In the final analysis, it was recognized that “the challenge to higher education institutions in a pluralistic society is both to be responsive to the needs of society while also anticipating those needs and to create a path to new ways of being, doing, and thinking” (Green & Barblan, 2004, p. 30). Indeed, these new ways of being, doing, and thinking include creating culturally and internationally responsive curricula that promoting intellectual pluralism, which current study advocates.

Instructor Quality

In keeping with the trend of focusing on instructor quality, much research is on-going for evaluating instructor quality and teacher preparation initiatives. For instance, Russ-Eft, Dickson, and Levine (2007) are conducting an on-going study for the effect of instructor quality on Emergency Medical Transfer (EMT) examination results. The 1999 survey sample consisted of over 1500 registered (in U.S.) EMT- Basics and Paramedics from different ethnic backgrounds like Caucasians (majority group), African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans.

The major study questions focused on instructor quality such as enthusiasm, teaching ability, and technical knowledge. The items for quality of instructor materials included textbook, audiovisual materials, and course equipment. Respondents were asked to rate these items on a 4-point scale with 4 being excellent and 1 being poor. Significant findings included the following: unlike instructor material “... ratings of instructor quality (specifically, practical knowledge and enthusiasm) are significantly correlated with both [passing] exam

scores and with a smaller number of attempts needed to pass” (Russ-Eft, Dickson, & Levine, 2007, p. 6).

But one shortcoming of the study methodology was that the researchers did not separate the responses by the diverse ethnicities of the students, so it is assumed that the majority (Caucasians) response was the standard for judging instructor and course material qualities. This oversight is in keeping with DeCuir and Dixon (2004) use of CRT to unmask the pervasiveness of “Whiteness” as a standard of normalcy. The minority students may have had different responses to the majority group, especially those who are ESL speakers, but this would not be known, since their responses were not reported separately in the study. This is but one example of what researchers must try to avoid less they erroneously represent the diverse students involved in such studies, resulting in false assumptions on improvements for culturally responsive teaching.

One noteworthy study conducted in 2000 by Lane, Hertog, and Waldhart (2003, May) to evaluate the effectiveness of a graduate seminar for preparing future faculty (PFF) for diverse classrooms. Primarily, the objective of the seminar was “to create a special topics course which would better prepare future communication faculty for facilitating and dealing with diverse student learning in an increasingly multicultural context” (Lane et al., 2003, p. 6). Members of partner PFF institutions collaborated in designing the course with input from foreign partners in England and Costa Rica.

Course topics included addressing diverse learning styles, diverse learners’ background, and instructor self-examination. Employing a mixed

method to data collection, the researchers conducted pre- and post-tests with participants relating to dimensions of multicultural teaching (e.g., knowledge of classroom diversity issues) and interviewed using the open-ended questions (e.g., knowledge competence on multicultural/diversity topics). A paired sample t-test was used to compare pre- and post-test results (Lane et al., 2003).

Significant findings include an increase in self-rated knowledge of classroom diversity from 5.5 to 8.5 over the 15-week period for the course participants. Confidence in the ability to teach diverse students increased to 8.2 from 6.0 on a 10-point scale. The qualitative feedback included that more classroom experience was necessary in addition to theory in order to learn how to deal effectively with diversity issues that would arise in practice (Lane et al., 2003).

Pruitt-Logan and Gaff (1999, fall) shared a success story on a PFF initiative for improving instructor quality for culturally diverse learners. Their PFF initiative addresses two issues: teaching diverse students and recruiting diverse faculty. The PFF program engages graduate students, with higher education career pursuits, in a program of activities designed to prepare them for their various roles including that of researcher, teacher, and academic professional. Involvement of the Midwestern university's faculty and graduate students in these PFF initiatives can have a positive impact on their commitment to diversity in achieving its educational mission.

One PFF doctoral student commented on the benefit of the PFF experience and acknowledged "how valuable it was for her to have had the

opportunity to examine curricula, syllabi, and text materials with her teaching mentor and revise these materials to eliminate biases” (Pruitt-Logan & Gaff, Fall, 1999, p. 2). Attesting to this view, Rehm (2008) findings of practicing CTE teachers in diverse classrooms of more than 25 different cultures included the following: among the most useful teaching strategies in diverse classrooms were to include content examples representative of diverse student cultures and assign small group tasks to build a sense of community in allowing students from different backgrounds to work together.

Of paramount importance to teacher preparation initiatives for culturally diverse learners are two approaches to methodology: (1) An integration of the issues of diversity throughout the curriculum supported by experiences in the field, and (2) an understanding of communication patterns among diverse learners in developing intercultural competence. The use of storytelling as an underlying principle of *critical race theory* should be used to familiarize the teacher with the effectiveness of narratives as a communication pattern. Such narratives, common among African American, Asian, and Latino students, help teachers to truly understand stories and how they confirm or oppose the reality of students’ lived experiences in society (Ladson-Billings, 1999).

Ladson-Billings also used CRT to analyze the work in some exemplary teacher education programs. One such program was CULTURES (Center for Urban Learning/Teaching and Urban Research) at Emory University directed by Professor Jacqueline Jordon Irvine, which uses “cultural synchronization” as an integral part of bridging the gap between home and school for diverse learners.

CULTURES aim to provide teachers with “cultural immersion experiences, opportunities for reflective practice, visits to the classrooms of exemplary teachers, and a chance to develop action research projects” (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p. 228). From a CRT perspective, Professor Irvine’s underlying principles and methodologies for CULTURES reflect the CRT tenet of *interest convergence*. To illustrate, the teacher’s desire for success in teaching converges with that of the student who wants to be successful in school, but which depends on effective instruction for diverse learners.

In concluding, Ladson-Billings (1999) sounded a call to teacher educators for a commitment to ensuring that teachers are competently prepared for their practice in serving diverse learners. Brown (1998) endorsed this perspective in her dissertation research on the influence of self-concept and instructional design in transforming Caucasian pre-service teachers’ monocultured worldviews. Brown recommended that highly interactive cross-cultural field experiences be an integral part of teacher preparation. Theories such as CRT, CET, ME, and culturally responsive teaching will be mainly used in the final interpretation for theoretical validity of this study’s findings.

Benefits

Moreover, attending to the cultural and international plurality of the students in a program derive many benefits for both the faculty and students on U.S. campuses. For example, hiring international faculty would help to build an appreciation for other non-U.S. educational systems as well as better facilitate the learning styles and cultural differences of international students. There is

increased education and scholarship among faculty, as they are inclined to engage in more complex and analytical discussions for course topics and develop global perspectives in research (Helton, 2000; Pitt, Berthon, & Robson, 1997; University of Michigan Lawsuits, 1999).

When students are exposed to a diverse student body, they also develop high levels of creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving skills in their cognitive development. Acquiring these skills also places them at an advantage for entering a job market that is increasingly becoming more ethnically and geographically diverse. Especially for new workforce educators and trainers, they will be able to relate to their diverse students and trainees in creating a more inclusive environment for learning and training (Association of American Universities, 1998; Judy & D' Amico, 1997; Nyquist, 2002; Smith & Schonfeld, 2000).

Still, international students will have an equal opportunity to excel in courses as a modified curriculum allows for assessment of knowledge and skills in diverse settings. Their intellectual development for a terminal degree such as a Ph.D. would be enhanced, and they would have a fair knowledge of current issues in their own and similar countries on return home. In particular, doctoral students will be better equipped to undertake diverse roles, teach diverse learners, and present a global perspective in their scholarly contributions to leadership, research, and teaching (Adelman, 1997; Green, 2002; Nyquist, 2002; Smith & Schonfeld, 2000).

Being more satisfied with the quality of higher education in the U.S, international students will be more inclined to encourage other international students to pursue U.S. higher education. An increase in international students on U.S. campuses will result in increased tuition revenue. For instance, at the Midwestern university, their tuition costs are more than twice that of a U.S. student for seated classes (SIUC, 2009a). Overall, the benefits mentioned of increasing international student enrollment and perspectives will help to realize the University's aim of providing students and faculty with a global view in their learning experiences.

In conclusion, the literature on improving curriculum responsiveness for culturally diverse groups shows on-going efforts for closing the cultural gap between students and teachers. Administrators of teacher preparation programs and PFF initiatives have adapted some of the theory on CRT, CET, multicultural education (ME), and culturally responsive teaching to improve curriculum inclusiveness and instructor quality for diverse learners. Nevertheless, a need exists for more aggressive promotion of PFF initiatives to minority doctoral students in addressing the issue of under-representation of diverse faculty in U.S. higher education. Research on the benefits of student cultural and internationally diversity and conference discussions illustrate an awareness of its cultural currency to higher education institutions.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The intent of this mixed methods study was to examine graduate students' perceptions of WED curriculum responsiveness to culturally and internationally diverse students on the following dimensions: *teaching strategies, curriculum inclusiveness, international responsiveness, and curriculum improvements*. The use of WED refers to the Midwestern university's WED department in the following sub-sections: Research Questions, Research Design; Study Population, Instrumentation, Data Collection, and Data Analysis.

Research Questions

1. To what extent are WED teaching strategies (to include delivery) responsive to culturally and internationally diverse graduate students?
2. To what extent does WED graduate curriculum content reflect the cultural plurality of the U.S. society?
3. To what extent does WED graduate curriculum content give international perspectives (to include developing countries) on course topics?
4. What improvements, if any, can be made to WED graduate curriculum responsiveness in facilitating culturally and internationally diverse graduate students?
5. In what ways do the qualitative data help to explain the quantitative results?

Using the pragmatic approach in developing the research questions meant emphasizing teaching strategies to include teaching delivery in question one. In practice, more emphasis is given to instructional techniques, whereas facilitating student diversity is treated as an add-on, although this is not desirable (Ladson-Billings, 1999; Cain, 2003). Further, "... institutions interested in improving student learning outcomes are devoting greater attention to helping faculty and teaching assistants develop a repertoire of instructional methods that foster respect for cultural differences and address variant learning styles" (Hurtado, 1996, p. 1).

Hypotheses were not used because such use involved predicting the results for relating variables in studies for population sampling and tested by employing "statistical procedures in which the investigator draws inferences about the population from a study sample" (Creswell 2003, p.108). This study did not involve sampling as the minority population groups were too small for it. Therefore, a census survey was conducted without any manipulation of dependent and independent variables. When the population is too large as a whole, then sampling is necessary (Krippendorff, 2004).

Research Design

The research design used in this study was descriptive and employed a mixed methods research design. A descriptive study is primarily concerned with the present in describing and interpreting what *is*, which includes held opinions and existing conditions or relationships (Best & Khan, 2003). According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007):

Mixed methods research is a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases in the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone. (p. 5)

The primary mixed methods research design selected for this research study was the Explanatory Design: Follow-up Explanations Model (QUAN emphasized) (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). The Follow-up Explanations Model is so categorized because it consists of two distinct phases: an initial quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase. A variant of the explanatory design, this model is used “when a researcher needs qualitative data to explain or expand on quantitative results” (p. 72). This mixed method model was used because quantitative survey results alone give a general understanding of WED curriculum responsiveness to culturally and internationally diverse students, but without context. The qualitative data in the form of focus groups add cultural context to the survey findings in helping to explain significant/non-significant survey results. The model is easy for the researcher to implement as data collection and analysis are done sequentially in two distinct phases with one

building on the other (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

An example of the Explanatory Design: Follow-up Explanations Model (Quan emphasized) in an educational setting is Aldridge et al. (1999) cross-national study on differences in learning environments for students in Taiwan and Australia. Design implementation included the following :“They started with a quantitative survey study and identified statistically significant differences and anomalous results. They then followed up these results with an in-depth qualitative study to explain why these results occurred” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 72).

However, the Follow-Up Explanations model only allows for quantitative data collection in the first phase, so it was complemented with the Within-Stage Mixed Method Model design to facilitate concurrent collection of quantitative (closed-ended survey questions) and qualitative (open-ended survey questions) data in phase one. An example of this Within-Stage Mixed Method model “would be the use of a questionnaire that includes a summated rating scale (quantitative data collection) and one or more open-ended questions (qualitative data collection)” (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 20). In phase two, the Follow-Up Explanations model was continued for collecting qualitative data in the form of focus groups to further explain significant and non-significant quantitative results. The latter illustrates mixing of data sets, but the quantitative rather than the qualitative data analysis was given greater emphasis in the final interpretation of the findings.

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) endorsed such combining of models in stating, "... one can also design a study that includes both mixed-model and mixed method design features ... a tenet of mixed methods research is that researchers should mindfully create designs that effectively answer their research questions ..." (p. 20). The pluralism of pragmatism also supports combination of models used for this study. Nevertheless, permission was only granted to use and adapt models from Creswell and Plano Clark's (2007) mixed methods designs, so only the main Follow-Up Explanations Model (QUAN emphasized) is illustrated in Figure 1. Further, the qualitative data (open-ended questions) when analyzed become quantitative data through content analysis, so ultimately, the quantitative emphasis of the Follow-Up Explanations Model was maintained.

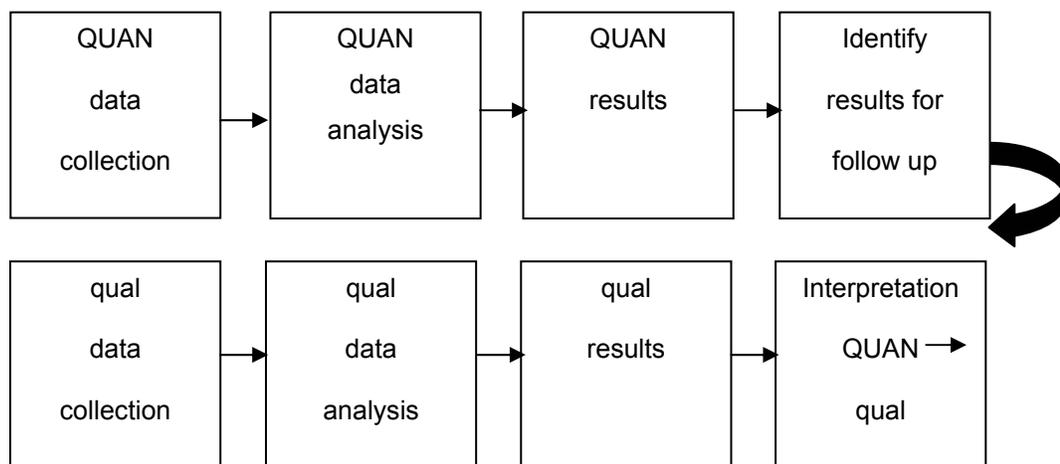


Figure 1. Explanatory Design: Follow-up Explanations Model (QUAN emphasized).
(Source: Creswell & Plano Clark (2007) used with permission)

The QUAN notation in Figure 1 denotes the primary method used or emphasized, whereas the "qual" notation indicates the secondary method used.

When used, the plus sign (+) indicates methods occur simultaneously, whereas the arrows (→) indicate methods used in sequence. The boxes illustrate steps in the research process (Creswell, 2003; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Each mixed method design comes with challenges. For the complementary Within-Stage Mixed Model design, which is likened to Creswell and Plano Clark's Embedded design, two typical challenges are as follows: (a) The purpose for collecting qualitative data as part of a larger quantitative study, and (b) how to integrate the results when the quantitative and qualitative methods are used to answer different research questions. In addressing the latter, the purpose for collecting qualitative data was to answer a different research question on suggestions for curriculum improvements from participants. Being at the heartbeat of curriculum delivery in the classroom, WED students were best suited to suggest such improvements. This approach mirrors the pragmatic characteristic of practical epistemology. For integration, analysis of the two data sets occurred separately for answering different research questions then merged in the final analysis of the survey results. In keeping with the Follow-up Explanations Model, the quantitative and qualitative approaches were weighted unequally, with the transformed qualitative results playing a secondary role to the quantitative results in the overall design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

For the Follow-up Explanations Model – three key challenges are as follows: (a) the substantial time needed to conduct the research; (b) whether to

use the same individuals for both phases and draw them either from the same sample or the population; and (c) deciding which quantitative results need further explanation. In addressing these challenges, the researcher budgeted adequate time for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data and obtained permission to use video-taping facilities at the University, instead of using a tape recorder in collecting qualitative data, which could take a longer time in transcription, especially when words are unclear.

In addition, targeting a small number of volunteers who participated in the first phase also saved time in conducting follow-up focus groups and served the purpose of giving more weight to the quantitative data in the final interpretation of the study results. The second qualitative phase targeted the same participants who completed the survey because the intention was to use the qualitative results to gain deeper insight into significant quantitative results; for instance, like when participants' perceptions on study dimensions vary substantially (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Study Population

By definition, a *population* "... is any group of individuals who have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher" (Best & Khan, 2003, p. 12). In this study, WED graduate students (master's and doctoral) with at least one year of continuous WED enrollment within the period from fall 2004 (August to December) to spring 2008 (January to May) characterized the study population. All the population received the study survey rather than a sample of it in order to allow for the best opportunity to capture most of the represented and

under-represented culturally diverse groups (e.g., internationals vastly under-represented) in the WED program. In light of the Midwestern university's initiative to boost its diversity responsiveness to students, the culturally diverse student groups were of key interest in the study. A comparison of the dominant and minority groups was done in gauging curriculum responsiveness to WED students. This served the purpose of the comparison groups option used in the mixed methods Follow-up Explanation Model.

The population characteristics allowed for students' adequate exposure to the WED program at a time the *Southern @ 150* initiative began gaining momentum at a Midwestern university. Being at the heartbeat of WED curricular activities, graduate students were able to provide informative responses to the survey questions as well as give rich insights in focus groups on their reactions to WED curriculum responsiveness. These students numbered 163 according to a list meeting the stated participant criteria supplied with permission from the University's WED department and Student Information System (SIS). Six deductions from this list accounted for one exemption (the researcher) and five students used in pilot testing the study instrument, bringing the final total of the study population to 157. The following is the study population's ethnic/racial breakdown: 30 African Americans (19.1%), 11 international students (7%), 3 unknowns (1.9%), 5 Hispanics (3.18%), 1 Asian American (.64%), and 107 Caucasians (68%).

Instrumentation

Survey. Related studies discussed in the literature review used qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-method approaches to instrumentation. Those using questionnaires (gather facts) or surveys (gather opinions, attitudes, or perceptions) measured related but different constructs to the current study such as learning styles, instructor quality, internationalization, and cultural responsiveness. These studies targeted culturally and internationally diverse students separately at secondary and university levels to include vocational education and training, and human resource development settings (Mehra & Bishop, 2007; Sahin, 2003; Smith, 2006; Russ-Eft, Dickson, & Levine, 2007). No one instrument measured the exact (at the time of conducting the study) constructs of interests in the current study such as culturally responsive teaching, curriculum inclusiveness, international perspectives, and improvements.

Consequently, the researcher designed a self-reported survey (WED Curriculum Responsiveness Survey) specifically for the study, drawing from the literature review studies that focused mostly on culturally responsive teaching, critical race theory, critical education theory, multicultural education, ethnocentrism, internationalization, learning transfer, curriculum inclusiveness, and teaching strategies. A fillable portable document format (PDF) of the self-reported survey served the purpose of sending it as an e-mail attachment to the study population. The WED students use aspects of information technology in their courses, so completing an e-mail survey was doable for them. An initial survey was used for flexibility in collecting a wide range of information on broad

issues surrounding students' perceptions on WED cultural and international responsiveness in a short amount of time; also allowing for expeditious data analysis (Aleck & Settle, 1995).

Accompanied by a cover letter for introducing its purpose and other instructions, the survey (completely anonymous) addressed *curriculum responsiveness*, which is defined as follows: (a) The equitable representation of ethnic groups and international perspectives in curriculum content whenever possible, and (b) incorporation of different teaching strategies that promote learning in the culturally and internationally diverse groups served by the curriculum.

The WED Curriculum Responsiveness Survey used in this study consists of 26 items divided into five sections that measure the following four study dimensions for curriculum responsiveness:

Teaching Strategies. Techniques and methods used in teaching delivery that promote learning in all students by accommodating their variant learning styles and cultural differences.

Curriculum inclusiveness. A concerted effort for eliminating cultural bias in higher education curriculum.

International Responsiveness. Adequate provision of international perspectives (to include developing countries) on course topics.

Curriculum Improvements. Upgrades in curriculum content and delivery that adequately accommodate students' culturally and internationally diverse backgrounds.

Section 1 of the survey consisted of five demographic questions on gender, graduate status, geographic/ethnic origin, length of time in the WED program, and length of time in the U.S as an international student. Section 2 on culturally responsive teaching consisted of two parts. Part one contained 10 valid teaching strategies which participants were asked to rank using *forced ranking scales*: “degree of use” (1 least used -10 most used) and “degree of responsiveness” (1 least responsive -10 most responsive).

Part two of Section 2 contained 7 culturally responsive teaching elements that require students to rank WED teaching delivery for cultural responsiveness using a 5-point *verbal frequency scale* with 1 being “don’t know” to 5 being “nearly always”. The 5-point scale was used in contrast to the usual 4-point scale to allow respondents the “don’t know” option as this was a possible response for some of the survey items, given the sensitivity of the central phenomenon measured. The choice of the *verbal frequency scale* over the *Likert scale*, which is used mostly for agreement and strength (Alreck & Settle, 1995), is more practical because students’ can gauge over the period of time in the WED program the frequency with which curriculum responsiveness occurred. Similarly, Sections 3 and 4 consisted of 9 forced-choice statements that asked students to rank WED curriculum inclusiveness using the same verbal frequency scale. Section 5 consisted of three open-ended questions on suggestions for WED curriculum improvements regarding culturally and internationally diverse graduate students (see Appendix B).

Three subject matter experts (African American, Asian, and Hispanic) on diversity issues for U.S. higher education at a Midwestern university reviewed the draft survey. They checked the survey items for correct grammar, clarity, and content validity, which ensures that the "... various items collectively cover the material that the instrument is supposed to cover" (Huck, 2008, p. 89). Both assistant professors from the Department of Psychology and Black American Studies had good survey reviews with recommendations for minor changes, like using U.S. instead of American, which includes all of North, Central, and South America. However, the Director for the Office of Diversity and Equity felt that two separate surveys should be done for U.S. and international students because their diversity issues were different.

In deciding whether to use one or two different surveys for the study as suggested, the researcher referred to the literature for further understanding. Notably, a reputable U.S. campus diversity report does not include international students in calculating the campus diversity index (US News & World Report (2007b)). Related studies were sometimes done separately for U.S. minority, majority, or international students. Others studies compared the results of these individual studies. Through a pragmatic lens, the researcher recognized that the international and U.S. students are taught together for both the core and general curricula at this Midwestern university; meaning that U.S. students are impacted by the international student diversity in their classrooms. The researcher recalls the surprise of U.S. students in learning from her that words like "learnt" and

“organisation” are not misspelled and that “college” refers to a secondary school and not a university in the British system of education.

After careful consideration of what happens in the real world (pragmatic stance), the option to use a single survey that accommodated both U.S. and international students seemed functional; survey revisions reflected the expert panel’s recommendations for improvements. Further, the University’s Statistical Consulting Unit gave support for the nominal, ordinal, and qualitative data collected for answering the research questions. The Midwestern university’s Human Subjects Committee gave the final approval for using the two-page WED Curriculum Responsiveness Survey for the study, indicating that participants’ rights and safety were not threatened in any way by the survey.

An initial pilot test of this e-mail survey occurred in mid November, 2007 with a small volunteer group ($N=8$) of WED students (representative of the study population) for establishing reliability. Students’ responses and suggestions for curriculum improvements in the first pilot test resonated with findings in the literature review to include the “language barrier” as a major learning challenge for international students, which help to validate the pilot test results.

This sample response from a male Caucasian doctoral student echoed the views of other pilot test participants:

I think that we need to be more understanding of people who speak english [*sic*] as a second language. I had an instructor once who couldn’t understand a student’s dialect, so I repeated her question to him, and when he answered it, he completely ignored her and answered it to me.

I've had other instructors intimidate those students to the point where they will not tell the instructor they do not understand him/her. I think we also need to include more international assignments in course work, not just things going on in the United States. Very few of my courses did.

Nonetheless, the item for ranking teaching strategies on "degree of use" in the University's WED program seemed unclear, as participants inadvertently used the same ranking at times for different teaching strategies. A revised survey included clearer instructions so that respondents would not repeat rankings for different teaching strategies.

A second pilot test of the revised WED Curriculum Responsiveness Survey with another small representative group ($N=5$) showed more consistency in student responses compared to the first pilot test group. Still, the previous error of repeated rankings for different teaching strategies appeared in two students' responses. The latter may have resulted from students not taking time to read the instructions to the question carefully, as the other students filled in this particular question correctly. Thus, a further rewording of the instructions asked students to choose a different number in ranking each teaching strategy. These pilot-testing efforts, as recommended by Best and Khan (2003), helped to increase the reliability of the final survey for distribution.

Focus Group. In keeping with the Follow-Up Explanations mixed methods model, a preliminary analysis of the survey data revealed distinguishing quantitative results requiring further explanation. Focus group research shows that participants are more inclined to open up about sensitive issues in a group

(Patton, 2002; Thomas & Taylor, 2002). Given the sensitivity of “diversity” as a poignant issue in the U.S. society, follow-up focus groups helped to further capture deeper contextual information regarding the central phenomenon that might be veiled in the study’s forced-choice survey.

The researcher developed five trigger questions from the preliminary survey results and piloted tested these in late March 2008. A WED instructor and his group of eight graduate students of culturally diverse backgrounds volunteered to participate in the pilot test. The instructor ended his class twenty minutes earlier to allow the students to remain and participate in the pilot test. An inducement of light snacks brought smiles to students’ faces as they willingly answered the five trigger questions.

In sounding out the questions for clarity and appropriateness, the students advised that the abbreviation “WED” should be spelled out when asking the questions. They also suggested slight rewording of one other question for clarity. Their feedback improved the final list of questions for the live focus groups. These procedures follow set guidelines for conducting focus groups (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). Face-to-face interaction with the pilot test group gave the researcher an idea of what to expect and how to read participants’ body language in answering the focus group questions. One such observation was that students’ smiles do not always indicate that they are pleased with a point made by someone else or even in sharing one their own.

Data Collection

Procedures

Quantitative. Following the Human Subjects Committee's approval and initial pilot testing of the survey, the study population received a standard pre-contact e-mail (see Appendix A) from the researcher in late November, 2007. The pre-contact e-mail introduced the study to WED graduate students (having at least a one-year continuous enrollment from fall 2004 to spring 2008) and included the following: the purpose of the study, Human Subjects Approval, voluntary participation, assurance of confidentiality/anonymity, WED Curriculum Responsiveness Survey completion deadline, and an offer for a summary of the study results as an inducement for completing the survey. Not personalizing the e-mail assured participants of privacy and confidentiality. These procedures mirror standard ethical guidelines associated with quantitative data collection in ensuring that that no harm will come to human subjects as a consequence of their participation in the research study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

A similar e-mail cover letter accompanied the actual e-mail survey sent on December 14, 2007 (see Appendix B), giving a two-week turnaround deadline and bearing the researcher's scanned signature. Three subsequent reminders to participants not responding after one or two weeks followed after the first e-mail survey in order to encourage those participants to return the survey by the deadline date (December 30, 2007). This seemed very critical especially because of the busy holiday season.

Nevertheless, dissemination of the e-mail survey two weeks before the

end of the fall semester 2007, when students are busy preparing final projects and studying for final exams, resulted in a low response rate ($N=26$ or 16.5%). The latter prompted its switch from an e-mail survey to a paper survey without any modification, with permission from the University's Human Subjects Committee. Hand distribution of the paper survey occurred in spring 2008 in 14 seated classes: all 10 WED seated classes for spring semester 2008 plus four other Non-WED classes (two Inferential Statistics and two doctoral seminars), which WED graduate students are required to complete in accordance with the policy of the University's College of Education and Human Services. In order to avoid other non-WED students' participation in the survey, the researcher inquired of the students' program enrollment to ensure that they were WED graduate students with at least one year enrollment in the Midwestern university's WED program before survey distribution.

Upon receiving permission from professors to conduct the survey at an agreed time in their seated classes, volunteer students agreeing to participate, who had at least one year continuous enrollment in the WED program beginning from fall 2004, completed the paper survey. Students had already received the previous e-mail cover letter and survey sent in December, 2007. Thus, the researcher only briefly explained the study purpose and advised on remaining anonymous, invited volunteer participation for follow-up focus groups, and then distributed the survey to students. Some overlapping occurred in the 14 classes surveyed with the same students being present in different classes or who previously completed the e-mail or paper survey; thus, a breakdown of the

number of students by each class is omitted. These procedures uphold ethical guidelines (Best & Khan, 2003) for quantitative data collection.

Qualitative. The volunteer list of focus group participants contained too few international students. Of the 11 international students completing the survey, only one international volunteer was on focus group list. Thus, international students received a special e-mail invitation (see Appendix C) to participate in the focus groups to allow for their adequate representation in the focus group. Volunteers for the focus groups came from the same participant pool for the survey and were of diverse backgrounds (e.g., European, Asian, African, Caucasian Americans, and African Americans), totaling 13. A minimum for four persons is required for conducting a focus group (Stokes, 2003); hence, the composition of the three groups consisted of four, four, and five participants. The collection of focus group data served the purpose of building on the quantitative results, which requires only a small number of participants for the qualitative dataset (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

The Midwestern university permitted the use of a campus conference room for conducting the three focus groups. Doctoral students composed focus groups distinct from master's students to allow for homogeneity and interaction among group members as suggested by Worthen, Sanders, and Fitzpatrick (1997). The researcher moderated the focus groups, having a solid WED background. Opening remarks for each focus group on the moderator's role, respecting individual views, and confidentiality help to build trust and respect between the moderator and participants before disseminating consent forms for

their signatures (see Appendix D). The latter included a focus group consent statement, purpose of the focus group, assurance of confidentiality/anonymity, and other instructions. The researcher followed an interview protocol using the five trigger questions each lasting approximately 20 minutes to organize the flow of the discussion.

Focus group discussions were video-taped with participants' permission. Over-engaging vocal members were monitored, while quiet members were encouraged to give their input as recommended by Worthen, Sanders, and Fitzpatrick (1997). The focus groups lasted ninety minutes each. Recorded field notes from three observers and verbatim transcription of the video-taped focus groups (each placed in separate folders) reflected pseudo names (e.g., Speaker 1) for participants to maintain anonymity and confidentiality. These procedures meet ethical guidelines required for conducting focus groups (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002).

Concurrent and Sequential Data Collections

Stage 1. The survey allowed for the collection of both quantitative (closed-ended survey questions) and qualitative (open-ended survey questions) concurrently from participants (see Figure 2). However, the two datasets answer different research questions. The qualitative dataset when analyzed was transformed into a quantitative dataset but played a secondary role within the entire study design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

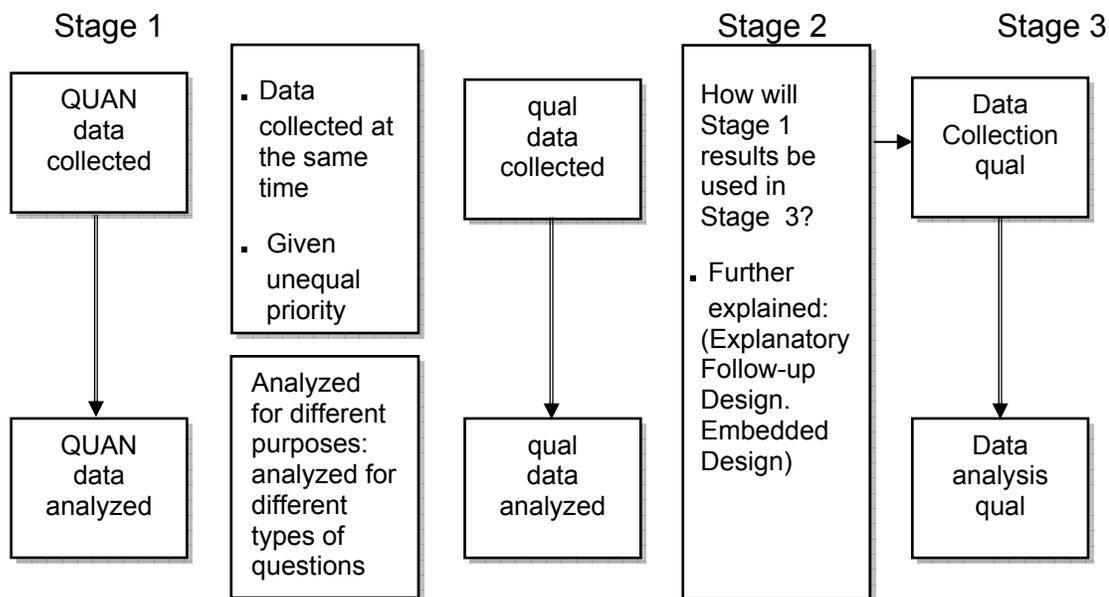


Figure 2. Concurrent and Sequential Forms of Mixed Methods Data Collection.

(Adapted from Creswell & Plano Clark (2007) with permission.)

However, collecting the two datasets on the same survey introduces potential bias as participants may be influenced by the closed-ended questions in responding, which came before the open-ended ones (at the very end). In addressing this issue, separate qualitative data were collected on curriculum improvements in follow-up focus groups two months after the survey. This helped to cross-check the survey qualitative data for bias to minimize threats to validity of these study results.

Stage 2. The results from the first stage illuminated quantitative findings that required further explanation. These results included variables that distinguished among groups like differences in students' perceptions on aspects of WED curriculum responsiveness. The latter was used as the basis for creating trigger questions for the follow-up focus groups in mixing the data for Stage 3 (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Stage 3. As shown in Figure 2, the intent was to follow-up distinguishing quantitative results from Stage 2, so the same participants were used in Stage 3 as the qualitative data collected helped to explain such results. Stage 3 involved a small number of participants in order to build on the quantitative data for a deeper understanding and interpretation of survey results. The latter focus guided the analysis of the qualitative data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Data Analysis

Procedures

Quantitative. Preparing quantitative survey data for data entry meant "... scoring the data by assigning numeric values to each response ..." (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 130). A review of survey item 4 on "geographic/ethnic origin" showed a small representation of international ethnic groups and Asian Americans. This resulted in the recoding of the item into three groups: U.S. majority (Caucasians), U.S. minority (Non-Caucasians), and international (Non-U.S.) students to allow for expedient data analysis. The researcher used the SPSS Version 17.0 to achieve this recoding and overall data analysis.

A review of the "other" category in survey items 6 and 7 on teaching strategies showed the vast majority of responses as blank or not applicable. This suggested that the list of the nine valid teaching strategies sufficed for the options given. In fact, only a handful (4) of responses showed filled-in teaching strategies like problem-based learning and case studies which could be incorporated into the existing list. Because of its apparent irrelevance to the vast majority of students, eliminating the "other" category from the quantitative dataset

seemed logical for improving the survey's internal consistency. This deletion of "Other" survey data required recoding all teaching strategies with a "10" ranking to "9" to allow for a nine-point scale for the new list of nine teaching strategies. Because very few respondents used a rank of "1", the decision to recode the higher rank of "10" to "9" seemed reasonable.

According to Huck (2008), "to the extent that these parts [of the instrument] "hang together" and measure the same thing, the full instrument is said to possess high internal consistency reliability" (p. 79). The Cronbach's alpha is a reliability coefficient that measures the internal consistency of instruments with Likert-type scales (Huck, 2008), similar to the study survey. The Cronbach's alpha for the survey's three curriculum responsiveness scales (Culturally Responsive Teaching, Curriculum Inclusiveness, and International Responsiveness) resulted in a high internal consistency rating (see Appendix E).

Data exploration involved using descriptive statistics to determine general trends in the data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). In its application, descriptive statistical analysis confines study results and conclusions drawn to the study participants only (Best & Khan, 2003), making it suitable for this descriptive study using census data. Still, workforce educators in similar situations can relate to the study findings. This characteristic of relatability of the study results compensates for its lack of generalizability (Bell, 1992).

The survey quantitative data consisted of two types: nominal (e.g., gender = male or female) and ordinal/ranked data (e.g., verbal frequency scale with 1 being "don't know" to 5 being "nearly always"). These data types are categorized

as nonparametric because there is no normality in their distribution and require the use of non-parametric or distribution-free tests. The appropriate statistical analysis for the study's non-parametric data is descriptive and include *frequency distributions, measures of central tendencies (median) and measures of relationship (Spearman's rho)* (Best & Khan, 2003; Salkind, 2008).

The use of univariate techniques for producing frequency distributions and percentages provide a summary of the distribution of data for each of the variables in the survey. The measures of central tendencies suitable for nominal and ordinal data are median and mode, which provide a picture typical of their distributions. The median is not affected by extreme values or outliers, so it's the better average to use for ordinal data (Alreck & Settle, 1995) in this study. As recommended by Alreck and Settle (1995), the median is used as the single indicator of the level of frequency for the curriculum responsiveness scales in comparing student group responses. No further *significance* tests were done for the survey verbal frequency scales because the survey data were not normally distributed (i.e., no random sampling of the population).

The bivariate technique appropriate for measures of relationships in this study is *Spearman's rho*: a rank correlation used when two variables measured from ordinal scales produce ranks (Huck, 2008; Alreck & Settle, 1995) such as the ordinal data in the study survey. However, the resulting correlation only tells "the degree to which the two are related, or tend to move together, but there's no assumption that one is causing or affecting the other" (Alreck & Settle, 1995, p. 296).

To record the statistical significance of the relationship between paired variables in this study alpha is set at 0.05. Statistical significance "... simply means it signifies or signals there's a good chance the two items are actually related to one another in the population, just as they are in the sample" (Alreck & Settle, 1995, p. 322). When this relationship is found to be insignificant, it indicates "there's too high a chance this much of a relationship could result only from sampling error, even if it didn't exist in the population at large" (Aleck & Settle, 1995, p. 322).

The descriptive measures, theoretical analyses, and qualitative techniques used in analyzing the study data for answering specific research questions, in relation to survey items, are presented in a summary table in Appendix G. A more detailed explanation of the analysis for the open-ended survey questions can be found in the next section for qualitative analysis that relate to research question five. A brief narrative of the data analysis matrix for Appendix G is presented here for continuity:

Demographics and Background Information. Analysis of data for survey items 1-5 (close-ended) involved descriptive statistics: frequency distributions and percentages.

Research Question 1: To what extent are WED teaching strategies (to include delivery) responsive to culturally and internationally diverse graduate students?

Analysis of data for survey items 6-14 relating to this question required the use of descriptive statistics for frequency distributions and percentages;

Spearman's rho for correlating the two sets of ranks for most used and most

responsive (“9” ranking) teaching strategies (items 6-7, closed-ended); and critical race theory and ethnocentrism to determine theoretical validity.

Research Question 2: To what extent does the WED graduate curriculum content represent the cultural plurality of the U.S. society?

Analysis of data for survey items 15-19 (close-ended) relating to this question required the use of descriptive statistics: frequency distributions and percentages; and critical race theory, critical education theory, and multicultural education to determine theoretical validity.

Research Question 3. To what extent does the WED graduate curriculum provide international perspectives (to include developing countries) for course topics?

Analysis of data for survey items 20-23 (closed-ended) involved the use of descriptive statistics: frequency distributions and percentages; and critical race theory, multicultural education, and ethnocentrism to determine theoretical validity.

Research Question 4. What improvements, if any, can be made in facilitating culturally and internationally diverse graduate students?

Analysis of data for survey items 24-26 (open-ended) required the use of content analysis for the open-ended responses and descriptive statistics: frequency distributions for quantifying the qualitative results; and critical race theory, multicultural education, and ethnocentrism to determine theoretical validity.

Qualitative. The process of preparing the open-ended survey responses (see Appendix H) involved first reviewing the data to identify any peculiarities. For instance, most participants gave combined responses for the first open-ended

question: *How can WED teaching strategies be improved to facilitate culturally and internationally diverse students?* As such, many participants indicated that their responses were the same for the remaining two open-ended questions: *How can WED curriculum content be improved to reflect the cultural diversity of the population in the U.S.? How can WED curriculum content be improved to accommodate international perspectives?* Consequently, the open-ended responses were analyzed all together rather than by each question but the emerging themes and patterns were organized by the variable of interest addressed in each of the three open-ended questions. In addition, the researcher compared the e-mail and paper open-ended responses to determine if differences in response length existed in the two forms of the survey.

Analysing these qualitative data involved using content analysis for coding and summarizing trends or divergences in the data by student ethnicity/geographic origin. Stokes (2003) advised, “whenever you need quantitative values relating to the occurrence of particular phenomena in texts, content analysis is the best method to adopt” (p. 23). The latter is also referred to as the *manifest* content, i.e., the elements of the text that are physically present and countable. A deeper underlying interpretation of the symbolism of this manifest content can extend into *latent* content (Berg, 2001). Babbie (1998) suggested that both the manifest and latent content should be used whenever possible to aid the reliability and validity of qualitative results. However, for the purposes of this study, only manifest content is used because the study is weighted more quantitatively than qualitatively.

Through an inductive process, coding the open-ended responses involved two types commonly used in content analysis: *open coding* and *in-vivo coding*. Open coding is “the analytic process through which concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in data” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 101). In vivo codes are grounded in what respondents or actors involved in the research inquiry actually say and are assigned concurrently in the process of open coding to arrive at patterns, themes, and categorical labels for text (Charmaz, 2000; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Patton (2002) refers to a pattern in content analysis as “a descriptive finding” and a theme as a “categorical or topical form” (p. 453). Berg (2001) recommended counting the theme as an element in content analysis because it’s simple and useful to apply. Lindlof and Taylor (2002) defined a category as “... a covering term for an array of general phenomena: concepts, constructs, themes, and other types of “bins” in which to put items that are similar” (p. 214).

Miles and Huberman (1994) advised that in assigning codes to chunks of data in the coding process, a code name should be “... closest to the concept it is describing. If you have the term *motivation*, the code should be MOT ...” (p. 64). This method of naming codes was used as it allowed for quick cross-checking of codes for overlapping and maintaining boundaries for already marked chunks of data. The entire process of content analysis of the open-ended responses consisted of the following combined series of steps in a bottom-up approach, drawing from the discussions by Berge (2001), Corbin and Strauss (1998), Miles and Huberman (1994), and Stokes (2003):

1. Define the objectives of the content analysis as the three open-ended questions asked on the study survey (see previous sub-heading, *Qualitative*, in this sub-section).
2. Copy survey open-ended responses along with survey number and ethnicity/national origin from each survey to an index card, using a different color card for each question for ease of locating the data.
3. Decide to count emerging themes in the qualitative data for the three open-ended questions as these are simple to apply to data.
4. Use open coding initially in reading and underlining chunks of text that show coherent meaning relevant to the open-ended questions. An example of an underlined chunk was the following: include more class discussion.
5. Simultaneously affix in vivo codes grounded in “what was said” in the underlined text to arrive at emerging patterns, themes, and/or categories in the data.
6. Ensure in vivo codes are mutually exclusive (constantly compare to previous ones to avoid overlapping). For example, more than one student suggested “include more class discussion” and this was coded as “MCD” (shorthand or code name for underlined text), annotated in the nearby margin representing a pattern, which emerged into the theme “Include more class discussion” (see Table 8 for an illustration).

7. Further examine the different themes emerging on suggestions for improvements for different categories to refine interpretation of the data. For example, “Diversifying Teaching Styles” emerged as a separate category for suggestions on different ways for diversifying teaching strategies (see Table 8 for an illustration).
8. List these descriptive codes and names (shorthand labels) on a separate sheet as they arise and revise as necessary to fit new emerging patterns, themes, and categories.
9. Assign codes accordingly to all data and record these on a separate coding sheet using check marks (✓) or vertical and horizontal strokes (≡) in groups of five as needed for noting the occurrence of themes and categories. Design the coding sheet to show a grid consisting of the open-ended question, index card survey number, student group (i.e., majority, minority, and international), theme, category, and frequency (place check marks or strokes in this column).
10. Verify patterns, themes, and categorical labels with university “qualitative” professor and revise these accordingly (no changes were needed).
11. Calculate frequencies by summing occurrences (check marks or strokes) of emerging themes and/or categories for each student group to depict the greater or lesser extent to which they appear in

the data. Present these results in separate summary tables in the study document (see Table 8. for an illustration).

12. Interpret the summed data for meaning in light of the questions asked and/or required literature and theory validation for content analysis findings (see page 151 Results sub-section *Research Question Four* and page 195 Conclusion sections for an illustration).

Similarly, preparing the focus group data for analysis involved gathering observers' notes and transcribing the taped data (on DVDs) verbatim via the computer, including all idiosyncratic utterances (uh, um etc.). In the few instances when the audio was unclear, this was noted with three ellipsis marks and noted in parentheses to avoid any misinterpretation of the data (see Appendix I for illustration). These transcripts were double-spaced, contained wide margins and pseudo names in all instances for confidentiality, and printed on white paper. Students' ethnic/national origins were noted but omitted from Appendix I for confidentiality. The same steps used in the content analysis of the open-ended questions were again repeated accordingly:

1. Define the objectives of the analysis as the five trigger questions used in the focus group with emphasis on the identified survey results needing follow-up explanation (see RESULTS section, sub-section Follow-up Focus Groups page 165).
2. Decide to count emerging themes in qualitative data relating to the five trigger questions used in the focus group with emphasis on the

identified survey results needing follow-up explanation for the three focus groups.

3. Use open coding initially in reading and underlining chunks of text in transcripts that show coherent meaning relevant to trigger questions and identified follow-up results. An example of an underlined chunk was the following: Face-to-Face Instruction.
4. Simultaneously affix in vivo codes grounded in “what was said” in the underlined text to arrive at emerging patterns, themes, and/or categories in the data.
5. Ensure in vivo codes are mutually exclusive (constantly compare to previous ones to avoid overlapping). For example, more than one student indicated a preference for “Face-to-Face Instruction”, and this was coded as “FTF” (shorthand or code name for underlined text), annotated in the nearby margin representing a pattern, which emerged into the theme “Face-to-Face Instruction preferred” (see page 169, Table 11 for an illustration).
6. Further examine the different themes emerging for smaller categories to refine interpretation of the data (No smaller categories emerged).
7. List these descriptive codes and names (shorthand labels) on a separate sheet as they arise and revise as necessary to fit new emerging patterns and themes.

8. Assign codes accordingly to all data and record these on a separate coding sheet using check marks (√) or vertical and horizontal strokes (≡) in groups of five as needed for noting the occurrence of themes. Design the coding sheet to show a grid consisting of the focus group number, trigger question/follow-up results, student group (i.e., majority, minority, and international), theme, category, and frequency (place check marks or strokes in this column).
9. Calculate frequencies by summing occurrences of emerging themes and/or categories for each student group to depict the greater or lesser extent to which they appear in the data. Present these results in separate summary tables with descriptions (see page 169, Table 11. for an illustration).
10. Send focus group summaries and descriptions to focus group participants via e-mail for member-checking (see Appendix J) and make any needed changes (none were needed).
11. Interpret the summed data for meaning in light of the trigger questions and results needing follow-up explanations and required theory validation for content analysis findings (see page 166, Results sub-section *Research Question Five* and Conclusion sections page 195 for illustration).

Mixed Methods. Initially, the complementary Within-Stage analysis involved separating quantitative (closed-ended survey items) and qualitative data

(open-ended survey items) analysis. The researcher performed the content analysis of the open-ended responses first to avoid any influence of the quantitative results. Content analysis resulted in the quantification of the qualitative data (emerging themes and categories). These results answered the qualitative study question: *What improvements, if any, can be made in facilitating culturally and internationally diverse graduate students?* The latter was subdivided into the three following questions:

1. *How can WED teaching strategies be improved to facilitate culturally and internationally diverse students?*
2. *How can WED curriculum content be improved to reflect the cultural diversity of the in the U.S.?*
3. *How can WED curriculum content be improved to accommodate international perspectives?*

Subsequently, the follow-up sequential method (following the Follow-up Explanations Model) was used for the analysis of the quantitative survey data and the follow-up focus group qualitative data in answering the remaining quantitative and qualitative research questions. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) endorsed the combining of models in positing, “taking a ... mixed position allows researchers to mix and match design components that offer the best chance of answering their specific research questions” (p. 15).

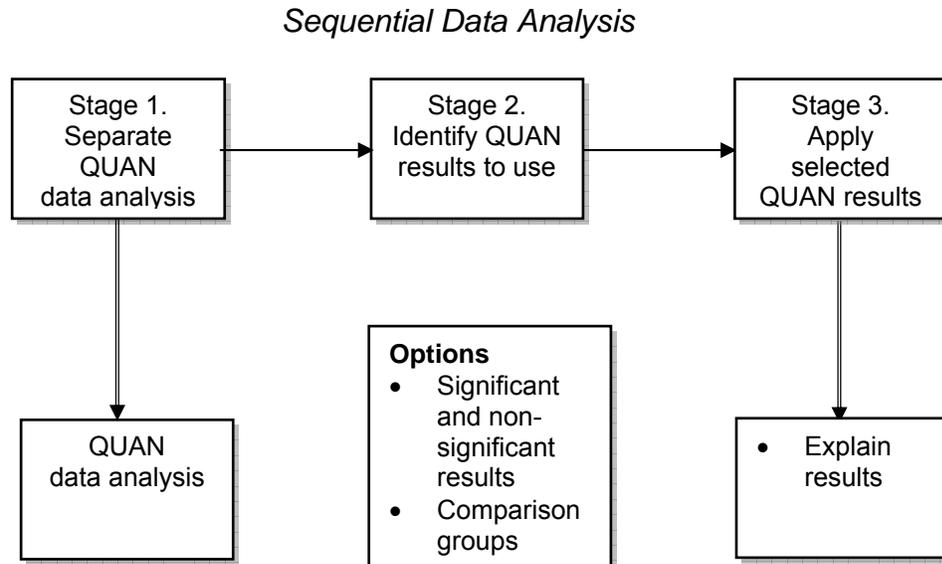


Figure 3. Sequential Data Analysis Procedures in Sequential Embedded and Explanatory Designs

(Adapted from Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) with permission)

Stage 1. The quantitative data were analyzed separately as shown in Figure 3. Results from this database were used to make decisions on what should be considered in Stage 2 to find answers to the following quantitative study questions:

1. *To what extent are WED teaching strategies (to include delivery) responsive to culturally and internationally diverse graduate students?*
2. *To what extent does WED graduate curriculum content reflect the cultural plurality of the U.S. society?*
3. *To what extent does WED graduate curriculum content provide international perspectives (to include developing countries) on course topics?*

Stage 2. The decision on what to follow-up in Stage 3 was based on both significant and non-significant results in comparing dominant and minority groups from Stage 1. Both results warranted follow-up because of the importance of knowing what distinguishing and non-distinguishing characteristics the three ethnic groups share or differ in regarding most responsive teaching strategies to their learning style preferences and other curriculum responsiveness aspects. Likewise, results that ran contrary to the theoretical underpinnings discussed in the literature for this study also warranted follow-up.

Stage 3. The significant and non-significant results from Stage 2 were applied to this qualitative phase in developing trigger questions for follow-up focus groups. Volunteers for the focus groups came from the survey participant pool and represented diverse cultural backgrounds to avoid bias and muster as many different perspectives to focus group questions. These questions aimed at answering the mixed method study question: *In what ways do the qualitative data help to explain the quantitative data?*

As a consequence of conducting the focus groups, participants' voices added cultural context to give a deeper understanding of the heavily weighted quantitative findings. This addition, many mixed methods writers affirm, results in a more superior product than a mono-method study. Considering the poignant nature of the central phenomenon, a pseudo name is used in writing to avoid attention to the real study location. The inquiry into curriculum responsiveness that includes teaching strategies and curriculum improvements will help to contribute to the Midwestern university's on-going diversity effort in identifying

curriculum improvements for culturally and internationally diverse groups. These strategies demonstrate a pragmatic approach in seriously considering some of the key consequences of conducting this research study (Creswell, 2003; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Rescher, 2000).

Reliability and Validity

Quantitative. By meaning, “*validity* is that quality of a data-gathering instrument or procedure that enables it to measure what it is supposed to measure” (Best & Khan, 2003, p. 277). Internal validity refers to the ability to draw accurate inferences (cause-and-effect) or conclusions from data analyzed to the study sample or population, taking into account any threats to validity (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). External validity refers to the ability to generalize findings to other populations or settings (Best & Khan, 2003). Findings from the current study cannot be generalized to other settings or population as no random sampling occurred. On the other hand, reliability refers to the consistency with which instruments or procedures used to collect data from participants show stable results over time (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Having an expert panel review the survey for content validity (i.e., measures what it’s intended to measure) and making needed survey revisions improved the content validity of the instrument and by extension, the validity of the study results. The Cronbach’s alpha for all three curriculum responsiveness scales in the survey showed a very good score (see Appendix E), indicating that the instrument is reliable. The fact that the survey’s closed- and open-ended

questions drew from the same population also minimized threats to validity in using the qualitative data to support the quantitative data.

Controlling for non-response bias by comparing demographics on geographic/ethnic origin for respondents and non-respondents informed the researcher about threats to reliability and validity of the study results, but no serious threats appeared. Also, the content analysis of the open-ended survey questions remained at the manifest level (what is physically present and countable) in keeping the patterns and themes straight forward. Further latent analysis of these data may have introduced some risk of subjectivity into the process, thus creating a threat to validity. Theoretical validity involved comparing related theories in the literature with study results to validate findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

Qualitative. Pilot testing the focus group questions for clarity and suitability helped to reduce threats to validity because unclear questions may lead to invalid answers. Drawing from the same population for participation in the focus groups minimized threats to validity because the qualitative data were used to explain the quantitative results. Member-checking, cross-checking, and triangulation reduced threats to the internal validity of the focus group data. Consistency in these data indicates more authenticity and credibility of study findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

Member-checking (see Appendix J) of the focus group summaries and descriptions by participants confirmed the accuracy of the focus group findings, thereby improving the validity and reliability of the study results. Establishing

trustworthiness of the focus group data meant keeping thick descriptions of participants' contributions to maintain transparency, should the need arise to query the results. Cross-checking the focus group data on suggestions for improvements with the same in the survey open-ended helped to determine if any bias occurred for this survey result, as the data were collected on one survey at the same time. Collecting both quantitative and qualitative data on the same constructs help to strengthen interpretation (triangulation) of study results (Worthen, Sanders, & Fitzpatrick, 1997).

Mixed Methods. In the context of mixed methods, validity is defined as “the ability of the researcher to draw meaningful and accurate conclusions from all of the data in the study” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007), p. 146). Choosing to follow-up significant and non-significant quantitative results with additional qualitative data helped to explain these results in more detail. Therefore, the potential for drawing more meaningful and accurate conclusions is enhanced. Reporting bias and unbiased views also help to reduce threats to validity because in the real world, it is expected that people would have divergent views. The latter is a tenet of the pragmatic paradigm (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Like other cross-cultural studies using the Follow-Up Explanations Model, “the present study led to a multi-method approach to allow triangulation of the methods and cross-validation of the data” (Aldridge, et al, 1999, p.220). Finally, the researcher is conversant with mixed methods research, which also helps to bring a measure of confidence in the ability to apply her knowledge and skills to

this mixed methods study, thus minimizing threats to validity and reliability of the study findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Survey

This mixed methods study served to examine students' perceptions on WED curriculum responsiveness to culturally and internationally diverse graduate students at a Midwestern university on four dimensions: *teaching strategies*, *curriculum inclusiveness*, *international responsiveness*, and *curriculum improvements*. All WED graduate students with at least one year of continuous enrollment from fall 2004 to spring 2008 comprised the population ($N=157$). The survey's curriculum responsiveness scales show a Cronbach's alpha index of .850 (see Appendix E). Of the 157 surveys sent to all the population, one student requested a withdrawal, resulting in a final population total of 156. Of the 156 surveys distributed, one was undeliverable, one e-mail survey returned blank, and 85 were not returned. In all, 69 (44%) students completed the survey, which is an acceptable response rate for a survey (Best & Khan, 2003; Dillman, 1978).

Demographics

As shown in Table 1 results, 11 (100%) international, 41 (38%) U.S. majority, and 17 (44%) U.S. minority students responded to the survey from their population groups. A further breakdown of those responding from the U.S. minority student population group comprised 15 (50%) African Americans, one (100%) Asian American, and one "Other" or Unknown (33%), which falls under the category of Unknown or Other as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Graduate Student Group Population and Survey Return Rates

Graduate Student Group	Population (N=156)		Respondents (N=69)	
	Group <i>n</i>	No. and % of Group Responding		Survey ^b Return Rate %
U.S. Majority (Caucasian)	107	41 38%		59%
U.S. Minority:	38	17 ^a 44%		25%
African American (<i>n</i> =30)				
Asian American (<i>n</i> = 1)				
Hispanic (<i>n</i> = 4)				
Unknown (<i>n</i> = 3)				
International Students:	11	11 100%		16%
Asian (<i>n</i> = 4)				
African (<i>n</i> = 3)				
African				
European (<i>n</i> = 1)				
Middle Eastern (<i>n</i> =1)				
Latin American (<i>n</i> = 1)				
West Indian (<i>n</i> =1)				

^aEthnic Breakdown of 17 U.S. Minority: 15 (50%) out of the 30 African American population group, 1 (100%) Asian American, and 1(33%) out of the 3 Unknown

^bSurvey Return Rate = # of Group Responding /Respondents (N=69) x 100.

The minority group response rates were well above the overall group representation in the study population: African Americans (19%); Asian American (6%); and Other (2%). The U.S. majority comparison group was more than twice the size of the other smaller population groups, representative of its overall group proportion in the study population as shown in Table 1.

In controlling for non-response error, a comparison of the demographic ethnic/geographic origin for respondents and non-respondents showed one substantial difference: no international students were among non-respondents. Thus, no non-response error existed for the international group. No substantial differences appeared among U.S. majority and minority respondents and non-respondents for this demographic, thus controlling for non-response error.

The total 69 respondents comprised 39 (56%) females and 30 (44%) males and their graduate status showed 41 (59%) master's and 28 (41%) doctoral students. They all had one or more years of continuous enrollment at the Midwestern university's WED program. The mean number of years in the U.S. for the international student group was four. Of the 10 responses to survey item 5 on "No. of years in the U.S.", four students had a length of stay in the U.S. from one to three years (short stay) and six students from four to seven years (long stay).

Research Question One

This primary question asked: *To what extent are WED teaching strategies (to include delivery) responsive to culturally and internationally graduate diverse students?* Table 2 presents results on the most used/responsive ("9" ranking on survey) TS in WED for the U.S. majority group.

Table 2

*Rankings of Most Used Teaching Strategies (TS) vs. U.S. Majority Group**Perception of Most Responsive TS in WED Program*

Teaching Strategy (TS)	All Groups ^a		U.S. Majority Group ^b	
	MU TS Rank	<i>n</i>	MR TS Rank	<i>n</i>
Face-to-Face Instruction	1	42	1	17
Multi-Media Presentation & Discussion	2	30	3	9
Group Work/Projects	3	21	6	4
Demonstration & Practice	4	10	2	11
Computer-Based Learning	5	6	4	7
Field Trip	6	4	7	3
Individualized Instruction	7	1	5	6
Simulation/Role Play/ Case Study	0	0	6	4
Guest Speaker	0	0	8	2

Note. Each TS ranked individually on an adjusted 9-point scale and not as a single list, so totals and percentages for *n* are omitted (would not equal 100%).

MU = Most Used MR = Most Responsive

^aAll Groups: Approximately 67 valid and 2 missing cases

^bU.S. Majority Group: Approximately 38 valid and 3 missing cases.

Survey items 6 -14 relating to question one asked respondents to do the following: (a) rank teaching strategies (TS) for their degree of use in the WED

program and responsiveness to their learning styles preferences, and (b) rank the frequency of culturally responsive teaching delivery in the WED program as a function of teaching strategies.

Overall, graduate students' perceived seven teaching strategies (TS) to be most used in the WED program with the top three being (a) Face-to-Face Instruction, (b) Multi-Media Presentation and Discussion, and (c) Group Work/Projects as shown in Table 2. Those used to a moderate extent include Demonstration and Practice and Computer-Based Learning. Simulation/Role Play/ Case Study and Guest Speaker are not ranked as most used and by default are the least used TS in WED. These results do not pertain to TS used in the WED program for any one class or by any one instructor.

Table 2 shows that Face-to-Face Instruction as the most responsive TS to the U.S. majority group's individual learning style preference and also being the top most used TS in the WED program. Demonstration and Practice, and Multi-Media Presentation and Discussion respectively were the next two most responsive for this group with Group Work/Projects, Simulation/Role Play/Case Study, and Guest Speaker among the less responsive TS.

A *Spearman's rho* correlation of the two sets of TS ranks in Table 2 (most used and responsive) resulted in a very weak negative relationship ($r_s = -.088$), indicating as the most used TS increased the most responsive TS decreased and vice versa. Thus, the seven most used TS in WED were not the most responsive to the majority group's learning style preferences, a somewhat unexpected result based on the literature review for the majority group and would be discussed

further in Chapter Five. A two-tailed test of significance for $r_s = -.088$ showed $p = .821$, a non-significant result ($p > .05$); i.e, it is highly likely that this degree of relationship only exists for those responding to the survey and not for the remaining 66 (62%) U.S. majority students in their population group.

However, based on study results, the survey appealed mostly to the U.S. minority group and international students. The 41 (38%) out of the 107 (100%) majority group population participating in the survey did not represent its majority but this number served the purpose of having a real life non-diverse comparison group representative of its overall proportion in the study population. Therefore, the very weak negative relationship ($r_s = -.088$) between the most used and most responsive TS for the U.S. majority group was deemed important to this pragmatic researcher.

Table 3 presents related results for the U.S. minority group. The top TS most used in WED, Face-to-Face Instruction, was also the most responsive to the U.S. minority group's individual learning style preferences. The other two most responsive TS for this group were Multi-Media Presentation and Discussion, and Demonstration and Practice respectively, similar to the U.S. majority group. Guest Speaker was not ranked among the most responsive TS for this group like the majority group, and Simulation/Role Play/Case Study appeared to be responsive to a lesser extent to the U.S. minority group.

Table 3

*Rankings of Most Used Teaching Strategies (TS) vs. U.S. Minority Group**Perception of Most Responsive TS in WED Program*

Teaching Strategy (TS)	All Groups ^a		U.S. Minority Group ^b	
	MU Rank	<i>n</i>	MR Rank	<i>n</i>
Face-to-Face Instruction	1	42	1	9
Multi-Media Presentation & Discussion	2	30	2	6
Group Work/Projects	3	21	5	2
Demonstration & Practice	4	10	3	5
Computer-Based Learning	5	6	5	2
Field Trip	6	4	0	0
Individualized Instruction	7	1	4	3
Simulation/Role Play/ Case Study	0	0	6	1
Guest Speaker	0	0	0	0

Note. Each TS ranked individually on an adjusted 9-point scale and not as a single list, so totals and percentages for *n* are omitted (would not equal 100%).

MU = Most Used MR = Most Responsive

^aAll Groups: Approximately 67 valid and 2 missing cases

^bU.S. Minority Group: Approximately 16 valid and 1 missing case.

A correlation of the two sets of TS ranks, using *Spearman's rho*, resulted in a weak positive relationship ($r_s = .030$), indicating that the most used TS were

most responsive to the U.S. minority group learning style preference only to a low or negligible degree as shown in Table 3. Significance testing was omitted for this result because of the under-representation of the other ethnic groups (Hispanics and Unknowns) in those responding from the minority group, which may bias the result. A *Spearman's rho* correlation of the U.S. majority and minority groups most responsive TS rankings resulted in a weak negative relationship ($r_s = -.122$). This result indicated that as TS became more responsive for one group its less responsive for the other and vice versa. The latter further validated the prior results of weak positive correlation and weak negative correlation for the TS rankings for the U.S. minority and majority groups respectively.

Table 4 presents the ranking results for the most used TS in WED vs. the most responsive TS for the international student group's individual learning style preference by length of stay in the U.S. The most responsive TS for international students (with 1-7 yrs U.S. stay) was Face-to-Face Instruction, the most used TS in the WED program; followed by Multi-Media Presentation and Discussion, and Demonstration and Practice, similar to the other minority and majority groups. Likewise, Group Work/Projects and Field Trip were not ranked as most responsive TS for the international group but Simulation/Role Play/Case Study and Guest Speaker were among the fourth responsive for them unlike the other two groups. Students with a shorter U.S. stay (1 – 3 yrs.) found Face-to-Face Instruction, Demonstration and Practice or Individualized Instruction most responsive, which suggest more interaction with the instructor.

Table 4

Rankings of Most Used Teaching Strategies (TS) vs. International Group Perception of Most Responsive TS in WED Program by Length of U.S. Stay

Teaching Strategy (TS)	Internationals ^b MR TS Rank by Length of U.S. Stay in Years					
	All Groups ^a		of U.S. Stay in Years			
	MU Rank	<i>n</i>	1-7 yrs. Rank	<i>n</i>	1-3 yrs. Rank	4-7 yrs. Rank
Face-to-Face Instruction	1	42	1	6	1	2
Multi-Media Presentation & Discussion	2	30	2	5	0	1
Group Work/Projects	3	21	0	0	0	0
Demonstration & Practice	4	10	3	2	2	3
Computer-Based Learning	5	6	4	1	0	3
Field Trip	6	4	0	0	0	0
Individualized Instruction	7	1	4	1	2	0
Simulation/Role Play/Case Study	0	0	4	1	0	3
Guest Speaker	0	0	4	1	0	3

Note. Each TS ranked individually on an adjusted 9-point scale and not as a single list, so totals and percentages for *n* are omitted (would not equal 100%).

MU = Most Used MR = Most Responsive

^aAll Groups – Approximately 67 valid and 2 missing cases.

^bInternationals – Approximately 10 valid and 1 missing case(s).

Students with a longer U.S. stay (4 – 7 yrs.) found the most responsive TS to include Multi-Media Presentation and Discussion, Face-to-Face Instruction, and Computer-Based Learning, suggesting a slight shift away from the instructor to students. A *Spearman's rho* correlation of the two sets of TS ranks for the international student group resulted in a weak negative relationship ($r_s = -.140$). The weak negative correlation in the most used TS in WED and the most responsive TS to the international student group's learning style indicated that as one increased the other decreased and vice versa but only to a low degree.

The fact that Simulation/Role Play/Case Study and Guest Speaker were not ranked among the most used TS in WED but were among the most responsive to the international group could account for the inverse relationship in this instance. No significance test was required for "international" results because almost all (99%) of this population group responded to these related survey items. A correlation of the two sets of the most responsive TS ranks for the international students with short (1-3 yrs.) and long (4-7 yrs.) U.S. stays resulted in a moderately negative relationship ($r_s = -.534$) as shown in Table 4. This indicated that those of short and long U.S. stays differ to a moderate degree in the most responsive teaching strategies to their learning style preferences at the beginning and half-way through their studies.

Table 5 contains results for survey items 8 – 14 on culturally responsive teaching delivery ratings in WED, as a function of teaching strategies, using a five-point verbal frequency scale: 5 – Nearly Always; 4 – Quite Often; 3 –

Sometimes; 2 – Almost Never; and 1 – Don't Know. The median (*Mdn*) was used as a single indicator to compare student responses and to reduce results bias.

As Table 5 shows, students' perceptions differed in the occurrence of culturally responsive teaching demonstrated in the WED graduate program at a Midwestern university.

Table 5

Graduate Students' Frequency Ratings on Culturally Responsive Teaching Delivery in WED (N = 69)

		Frequency of Responses						
Culturally Responsive								
Teaching Delivery Aspects	Group	<i>n</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	NA	QO	ST	AN	DK
Students' cultural differences are considered	MAJ	40	4.0	16	13	6	2	3
	MIN	17	3.0	1	7	5	1	3
	INT	11	3.0	2	5	0	4	0
Students are treated equitably regardless of ethnic/national/geographic origin	MAJ	41	5.0	28	8	2	1	2
	MIN	17	4.0	5	10	1	0	1
	INT	11	5.0	6	4	1	0	0
Allowances are made, as needed, for students who speak English as a second language	MAJ	41	4.0	10	12	9	2	8
	MIN	17	3.0	4	3	3	2	5
	INT	11	2.0	1	0	1	4	5

Table 5 (continued)

Table 5 (continued)

		Frequency of Responses						
Culturally Responsive								
Teaching Delivery Aspects	Group	<i>N</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	NA	QO	ST	AN	DK
Ethnic stereotyping of students is avoided	MAJ	40	5.0	23	9	3	2	3
	MIN	17	4.0	4	5	5	1	2
	INT	11	4.0	4	4	2	0	1
Cultural insensitivity occurs in verbal and non-verbal communication with students	MAJ	41	2.0	3	3	10	18	7
	MIN	17	3.0	0	3	8	3	3
	INT	11	4.0	2	4	2	1	2
Potential for WED learning transfer to Non-U.S. settings is limited	MAJ	41	2.0	1	5	11	4	20
	MIN	17	2.0	-1	3	3	4	6
	INT	11	3.0	1	3	3	1	3
Opportunities for students to share cultural differences are limited.	MAJ	41	2.0	2	3	13	19	4
	MIN	17	2.0	1	3	1	11	1
	INT	11	3.0	1	1	4	4	1

Note. MAJ = U.S. Majority, MIN = U.S. Minority, INT = International;

NA = Nearly Always, QO = Quite Often, ST = Sometimes,

AN = Almost Never, DK = Don't Know

Approximately 40 (97%) U.S. majority students responded to items 8-14 with one non-response. For the U.S. minority students, 17 (100%) responded to these items with no invalid response. All 11 (100%) international students

responded to items 8-14. Overall, the U.S. majority students felt that *students' cultural differences are considered* quite often in WED teaching delivery ($Mdn = 4.0$), whereas U.S. minority and international students found this to happen sometimes ($Mdn = 3.0$) as shown in Table 5, indicating that students' cultural differences are not always considered in WED teaching delivery.

Student responses showed some convergence across student groups for the level of frequency with which *students are treated equitably regardless of their ethnic/national/geographic origin*. U.S. majority and international students found that the latter happened nearly always ($Mdn = 5.0$) in teaching delivery but the U.S. minority group felt this occurred quite often ($Mdn = 4.0$) as presented in Table 5, indicating that a small gap exists for consistency in the equitable treatment of students regardless of their ethnic/national/geographic origin.

In contrast, students showed more divergence in their responses across groups for the aspect of delivery: *allowances are made, as needed, for students who speak English as a second language*. Overall, international students felt this occurred almost never ($Mdn = 2.0$) in WED teaching delivery compared to U.S. majority and minority students, who found this to occur very often and sometimes ($Mdns = 4.0$ and 3.0), respectively. A more detailed presentation of results in Table 5 shows a slight majority (5 or 46%) of international students checked "Don't Know" for this item.

Responses to the occurrence of the delivery aspect: *ethnic stereotyping of students is avoided*, showed slight variations across student groups. U.S. majority students felt this happened nearly always ($Mdn = 5.0$) in WED teaching

delivery as indicated in Table 5. U.S. minority and international students found this, on the whole, happened quite often ($Mdn = 4.0$), indicating that such stereotyping exists to a low degree for these two groups. The ideal would be that this is always avoided in the WED program at a Midwestern university.

Much divergence in responses appeared across students groups for the level of frequency with which *cultural insensitivity occurred in verbal and non-verbal communication with students* (see Table 5). International students found this to happen very often ($Mdn = 4.0$) in WED teaching delivery, whereas U.S. majority students felt it almost never occurred ($Mdn = 2.0$) and minority student groups found this to occur sometimes ($Mdn = 3.0$). Noticeably, international students' ranking of this item showed some divergence from their early ranking of "nearly always" for the delivery aspect: *students are treated equitably regardless of their ethnic/national/geographic origin*. Nonetheless, the results suggest that cultural insensitivity invariably occurs, which contributes to culturally unresponsive teaching delivery in the WED program.

For the aspect of culturally responsive teaching delivery: *potential for WED learning transfer to Non-U.S. setting is limited*; international students found this to occur sometimes ($Mdn = 3.0$), whereas U.S. majority and minority students found this to generally almost never occur ($Mdn = 2.0$). Noticeably, Table 5 shows that nearly half of U.S. majority students (48%) checked "Don't Know" for this item, suggesting that learning transfer to Non-U.S. settings was not apparent in the WED teaching delivery for this group. Based on the

“sometimes” rating from the international students, a gap exists for not limiting learning transfer to Non-U.S. settings in WED teaching delivery more frequently.

U.S. majority and minority student groups found the delivery aspect: *opportunities for student to share cultural differences are limited*, almost never occurred (*Mdn* = 2.0), whereas international students found this to occur sometimes (*Mdn* = 3.0). These frequency ratings support all three student groups' earlier frequency ratings on *students' cultural differences are considered* in WED teaching delivery, validating their results on these two elements.

In summary, WED teaching strategies appeared to have a low degree of responsiveness to the U.S. minority group and barely responsive to the U.S. majority and international student groups. Evidence of this is shown in the *Spearman's rho* correlation of the most used and most responsive TS for all three groups: U.S. minority – weak positive relationship; and U.S. majority and internationals – weak negative relationship.

One common positive across all three groups was that the top most used teaching strategy (TS) in WED - Face-to-Face Instruction - was also the top most responsive to all students' learning style preferences. However, the third most used TS, Group Work/Projects, was among the lesser responsive TS to the learning style preferences of all three groups. Also, Demonstration and Practice was among the top three most responsive TS for all three groups but was the fourth most used TS in the WED program. In addition, results indicated that a reasonable cultural sensitivity gap exists in WED teaching delivery as a function of teaching strategies for the U.S. minority and international students. Evidence

of this was shown in their “sometimes” and “quite often” ratings for the occurrence of cultural insensitivity in WED teaching delivery.

Research Question Two

This primary question asked: *To what extent does WED graduate curriculum content reflect the cultural plurality of the U.S. society?* Survey items 15 -19 provided data for this research question. Table 6 presents results on students’ perceptions on the frequency with which WED curriculum content accommodates for the cultural plurality of the U.S. society in measuring curriculum inclusiveness. Overall, the U.S. majority and minority students felt that the inclusiveness aspect: *Ethnic groups are equitably represented as far as possible in WED content* occurred quite often (Mdn = 4.0).

International students generally felt this occurred sometimes (Mdn = 3.0) as depicted in Table 6, indicating a moderate gap exists for equal representation of ethnic groups relating to international students in WED content. The results in Table 6 show that all three student groups found the inclusiveness aspect: *Scholarly works of people of color are included*, occurred sometimes (Mdn = 3.0). However, a closer examination of these results indicated that slightly more (12 or 29%) U.S. majority students checked “Don’t Know” for this item, suggesting that authors of “color” may not be apparent in the WED curriculum. Further, this result contrasts remarkably with their previous one on equitable representation of ethnic groups in WED content in which only three (7%) U.S. majority students checked “Don’t Know.” Overall they found ethnic groups were equitably

represented quite often ($Mdn = 4.0$) in WED content, suggesting an anomaly in this result.

Table 6

Graduate Students' Frequency Ratings on WED Curriculum Inclusiveness

($N=69$)

		Frequency of Responses						
Cultural Plurality in								
WED Curriculum Aspects	Group	<i>N</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	NA	QO	ST	AN	DK
Ethnic groups are equitably represented as far as possible in WED content.	MAJ	41	4.0	6	18	10	4	3
	MIN	17	4.0	3	8	4	1	1
	INT	11	3.0	1	3	3	3	1
Scholarly works of people of color are included.	MAJ	41	3.0	8	12	9	0	12
	MIN	17	3.0	2	2	8	3	2
	INT	11	3.0	0	3	4	3	1
Perspectives of minority groups are fairly represented.	MAJ	41	4.0	10	15	9	3	4
	MIN	17	3.0	1	4	9	3	0
	INT	11	3.0	0	3	7	1	0
WED content is diversified, as needed, to facilitate learning transfer to Non-U.S. settings.	MAJ	41	3.0	4	11	9	5	12
	MIN	17	4.0	3	9	4	0	1
	INT	11	3.0	0	4	5	2	0

Table 6 (continued)

Table 6 (continued)

		Frequency of Responses						
Cultural Plurality in								
WED Curriculum Aspects	Group	<i>N</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	NA	QO	ST	AN	DK
WED content is aligned to	MAJ	41	3.0	5	8	8	10	10
the interests of the	MIN	17	4.0	4	8	2	1	2
dominant majority group	INT	11	4.0	3	6	1	0	1
(U.S. Caucasians).								

Note. MAJ = U.S. Majority, MIN = U.S. Minority, INT = International;

NA = Nearly Always, QO = Quite Often, ST = Sometimes,

AN = Almost Never, DK = Don't Know

The U.S. minority group also indicated previously that equitable representation of ethnic groups occurred quite often (*Mdn* = 4) in WED curriculum content but felt that works of the people of “color” are included sometimes (*Mdn* = 3), whereas the international students remained consistent in indicating that equity in representation of ethnic groups and inclusion of works of people of “color” occurred sometimes (*Mdn* = 3), validating their results on these two items. Responses to the occurrence of the curriculum inclusiveness aspect: *Perspectives of minority groups are fairly represented* differed slightly across student groups. As a whole, U.S. majority students found this occurred quite often (*Mdn* = 4) in WED content, whereas U.S. minority and international students found this to occur sometimes (*Mdn* = 3) as shown in Table 6, indicating

that sometimes perspectives of minority groups are not fairly represented in WED content.

Student responses showed some convergence for perceptions on the level of frequency with which *WED content is diversified, as needed, to facilitate learning transfer to Non-U.S. settings* as depicted in Table 6. Overall, International and U.S. majority students found this to occur sometimes (*Mdn* = 3.0), whereas U.S. minority students felt this happened quite often. These responses concurred with the international and U.S. minority rankings on the opposite statement of this aspect under WED teaching delivery but not for the U.S. majority group.

U.S. minority and international student groups found the inclusiveness aspect: *WED content is aligned to the interests of the dominant majority group (U.S. Caucasians)*, generally happens quite often (*Mdn* = 4.0), whereas U.S. majority students found this to occur sometimes (*Mdn* = 3.0). The divergence in students' perspectives for this inclusiveness aspect suggests that a gap exists for the equitable representation of interests of the U.S. minority and international students but not for the U.S. majority student group as shown in Table 6.

To sum up, students' culturally and internationally diverse backgrounds appeared, as a whole, to influence their responses. Notably, none of the student groups found that aspects of curriculum inclusiveness occurred nearly always ("5" ranking) in WED content as shown in Table 6. In gauging WED curriculum inclusiveness, the aspect that *WED content is aligned to the interests of the dominant majority group (U.S. Caucasians)* is found to occur quite often (*Mdn* =

4.0), according to the U.S. minority and international student groups. The latter is also supported by their strong pattern of “sometimes” rating in their frequency responses to other aspects of curriculum inclusiveness, indicating that WED curriculum was somewhat representative of the cultural plurality of the U.S. society. However, for the U.S. majority group, this dominant alignment to their group in WED curriculum content generally occurred sometimes, which suggests that they viewed WED curriculum content as being generally inclusive of other minority groups in reflecting the cultural plurality of the U.S. society.

Research Question Three

This primary question asked: *To what extent does the WED graduate curriculum provide international perspectives (to include developing countries) for course topics?* Survey items 20 -23 provided data for this research question, which required students to rate four aspects of international responsiveness in the WED curriculum content at a Midwestern university’s graduate program. Table 7 presents these related results for all three student groups with the median (*Mdn*) used as the single indicator for comparing student group responses.

Almost all 69 respondents comprising the three student groups completed items 20-23, with only one missing case. Collectively, students’ responses across groups reflected lower frequency ratings for the aspects of international responsiveness with no group giving a rating of “Nearly Always” (5). Noticeably, Table 7 shows a substantial number (approximately 33%) of U.S. majority students checked “Don’t Know” for the four international responsiveness

aspects, indicating a lack of international awareness regarding WED curriculum content or under-representation of international curriculum content.

Overall, as shown in Table 7, all student groups found that sometimes (*Mdn* = 3) *WED curricular materials adequately provide international perspectives on course topics*, which augured well for WED international curriculum responsiveness but suggested that at times such provision was inadequate. Similarly, U.S. majority and minority students found that sometimes (*Mdn* = 3) *works by international authors are selected in presenting global views in curriculum content*. In contrast, International students found this to almost never occur (*Mdn* = 2) in WED curriculum content, which suggested that to this group, global views in WED content were frequently represented by U.S. authors.

Regarding the aspect: *Global views on course topics in WED curriculum include those from developing countries*, U.S. majority and minority students found this to occur sometimes (*Mdn* = 3). In contrast, international students felt this almost never (*Mdn* = 2.0) occurred, indicating that a gap exists for more global perspectives from developing countries in WED curriculum content for this group. Similarly, students' responses to the aspect: *U.S. research is preferred to that from other international countries by faculty*, showed much convergence to the three previous aspects on international perspectives in WED. The U.S. majority group found this almost never (*Mdn* = 2.0) occurred, with nearly half (48%) of the group checking "Don't Know" (1) for this aspect.

Table 7

*Graduate Students' Frequency Ratings for WED Curriculum International
Responsiveness (N=69)*

		Frequency of Responses						
International Perspectives								
Aspects	Group	<i>N</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	NA	QO	ST	AN	DK
WED curricular materials	MAJ	41	3.0	2	12	9	7	10
adequately provide	MIN	17	3.0	1	5	5	3	2
international perspectives	INT	11	3.0	0	1	7	3	0
on course topics.								
Works by international	MAJ	41	3.0	2	8	14	4	13
authors are selected in	MIN	17	3.0	0	2	7	2	5
presenting global views in	INT	11	2.0	1	0	4	3	3
curriculum content.								
Global views on course	MAJ	41	3.0	0	8	13	9	11
topics in WED curriculum	MIN	17	3.0	0	2	9	2	3
include those from	INT	11	2.0	1	0	4	2	3
developing countries								
U.S. research is preferred to	MAJ	41	2.0	6	7	4	4	20
that from other interna-tional	MIN	17	3.0	3	3	5	1	4
countries by faculty.	INT	11	2.0	3	1	1	3	3

Table 7 (continued)

Table 7 (continued)

		Frequency of Responses						
International Perspectives								
Aspects	Group	<i>N</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	NA	QO	ST	AN	DK

Note. MAJ = U.S. Majority, MIN = U.S. Minority, INT = International;

NA = Nearly Always, QO = Quite Often, ST = Sometimes,

AN = Almost Never, DK = Don't Know

U.S. minority students felt preference for U.S. research was shown sometimes (*Mdn* = 3), validating their earlier rating that works by international authors were sometimes presented. International students found this to almost never (*Mdn* = 2) occur, which contrasts with their previous rating that international authors were almost never selected in presenting global views in WED content.

In summary, students' ratings on the international responsiveness of the WED curriculum content generally indicated that adequate provision of international perspectives on course topic occurred sometimes, suggesting that at times such provision was inadequate. However, the extent to which this inadequacy occurred differed among student groups. For the international students, a large deficit exists for inclusion of works by international authors and global views from developing countries in WED content. They found that the latter almost never (*Mdn* = 2) occurred in WED content as shown in Table 7.

The U.S. majority and minority students found WED curriculum content internationally responsive sometimes, which strongly support their overall

'sometimes" rating (*Mdn* = 3) for all four or three of these aspects as shown in Table 7. These results suggested a smaller global knowledge gap for these two groups in WED curriculum content than the international student group. However, U.S. majority students showed more convergence in their "Don't Know" frequency rating (approximately 33%) for all four aspects of international responsiveness in WED content as shown in Table 7. This lack of awareness of global knowledge in WED content indicated that it may not be apparent in the WED curriculum content for this group.

Research Question Four

This primary question asked: *What improvements, if any, can be made to WED graduate curriculum responsiveness in facilitating culturally and internationally diverse students?* Open-ended survey items 24 – 26 provided qualitative data for this research question, which is subdivided into the three following questions:

- a. *How can WED teaching strategies be improved to facilitate culturally and internationally diverse students?*
- b. *How can WED curriculum content be improved to reflect the cultural diversity of the population in the U.S.?*
- c. *How can WED curriculum content be improved to accommodate international perspectives?*

A total of 46 (67%) students responded to the open-ended questions out of the overall total of 69 (100%) completing the survey. Response rates to the survey open-ended questions were much higher for the U.S. minority (17 or 100%) and international student groups (9 or 82%) than the U.S. majority group

(20 or 49%), which indicated the level of interest in the topic. In general, student responses from the 26 (38%) e-mail surveys appeared to be longer than student responses to the 43 (62%) paper surveys. The limited time (5-10 minutes) in the classroom for completing the survey most likely accounted for this difference in length. Notably, 10 (21%) students responded with “Same as above” and 28 (61%) with “No Response” for questions 25 and 26, but most students responded to the question 25. In analysing the open-ended responses, quotes from several different students were used to reduce bias in reporting.

In some instances, responses indicated no needed improvements or students did not know the “how” regarding improvements to curriculum responsiveness for culturally and internationally diverse graduate WED students. For the U.S. minority students, three (15%) found this to be so as expressed in the following sample quotes: “... What WED has so far is working” and “I think they do a pretty good job already.” Similarly, 10 (50%) U.S. majority students expressed no needed improvements as illustrated by these abridged quotes from students: “... doing a good job”; “most courses encourage inclusiveness”; and “no obvious need for improvement.”

One international student found no needed improvement to cultural diversity in the WED curriculum as expressed in the following reduced quote: “... WED 581 Workforce Diversity (class) Does [*sic*] a good job in reflecting the cultural Diversity in the U.S.” Equal numbers of U.S. minority and majority students, totaling six (13%), felt they did not know of needed improvements. Overall, these results suggested that the WED graduate curriculum needs much

improvement for the majority (80%) of students responding but works for only 14 (20%) of the 46 (100%) students responding to the open-ended questions.

The suggestions for improvements from the remaining majority of students are presented separately in Tables 8, 9, and 10 for the following curriculum responsiveness aspects: teaching strategies (including delivery); cultural diversity in WED curriculum content; and international perspectives. Table 8 presents the content analysis results on the emerging themes and categories from students' open-ended responses to the survey question #24: *How can WED teaching strategies be improved to facilitate culturally and internationally diverse students?*

Altogether, students suggested three main areas of improvement, as shown in Table 8, regarding teaching strategies for facilitating culturally and internationally diverse students: *diversification of teaching styles*, *diverse faculty recruitment*, and *faculty diversity training* in that order. More responses came from the U.S. majority (11) and international students (6) than the U.S. minority students (5).

Diversifying teaching styles can be done in different ways to suit the preferences of each student group, according to Table 8. For all three groups, researching and planning to teach international students and inviting international guest speakers were needed to improve teaching strategies; more so among the U.S. majority and international students than the U.S. minority group. Of note, the international students' suggestion to revisit class participation appeared to have serious consequences on learning performance. Evidence of this was found in a student's sample quote: "I think the idea of participation points should be

revisited. It doesn't work for all culture [sic] especially those from Africa and Asia." This view was echoed somewhat by another U.S. majority student: "... The only problem I have noticed for them [i.e., international students,] is this is Workforce Ed and some have never worked hear [sic] so they are lost when talking about or [sic] ways."

Specific to the U.S. minority group in improving teaching strategies was the need to include more class discussion as shown in Table 8, evident by this sample student response: "By open discussion." This sentiment also resonated with the international students' need for revisiting their participation in class sessions. One international student remarked that "because there're not so many international students staying in WED, they're sometimes overlooked ..."

The call to *hire diverse/international faculty* as a second major improvement appeared to be stronger for the U.S. majority (30%) and international students (78%) than the U.S. minority students (6%) (see Table 8). As one international student stated, "... faculty from ... outside the US ... will help the students to have a less ethnocentric view of education and be more open to international perspectives." For one U.S. majority student, an alternative to hiring diverse/international faculty would be to "have WED faculty work in communities (cultural diversity)" and "have WED faculty teach in those [international] countries during the summer." A U.S. minority student also felt that "more diverse staff will impact this subject [i.e., issue]."

Table 8

Student Perceptions on Improving Teaching Strategies in a WED Program

Category and Theme	# in Group Responding		
	N = 46		
	MAJ	MIN	INT
	(n= 20)	(n = 17)	(n = 9)
Diversification of Teaching Styles			
Research/plan teaching for international students	4	1	2
Invite more diverse/international guest speakers	2	1	2
Study students' backgrounds	4	0	0
Include more class discussion	0	2	0
Revisit international student participation	0	0	2
Encourage student input in solving problems	0	1	0
Provide faculty teaching externships	1	0	0
Diverse Faculty Recruitment			
Hire more diverse faculty	3	1	4
Hire more international faculty	3	0	3
Faculty Diversity Training			
Give Prof. X (pseudo name) sensitivity training	2	0	0
Provide more diversity training for faculty	0	4	1

Note. MAJ = U.S. Majority; MIN = U.S. Minority; and INT = International;

Students gave multiple suggestions, and responses unrelated to question #24 are excluded here, so # responding is less than 46 or more per student group.

The third major improvement to teaching strategies in the WED program at a Midwestern university – *faculty diversity training* – echoed across all three groups but more so with the U. S. minority group as shown in Table 8. For the U.S. majority group, this suggestion was more localized as expressed in these two quotes: (a) “[Prof. X (pseudo name) ... needs sensitivity training to international students. [Prof. X] often uses slang to identify a specific ethnic group,” and (b) “[Prof. X] ... is entirely abrasive. Regardless of your race, gender, or nationality, [Prof x], and [Prof. X’s] style are an example of what’s wrong in education today ...”

The U.S. minority group gave the most contribution (23%) to the improvement suggestion: *faculty diversity training*, as Table 8 shows. Their comments on this issue included the following: (a) “... all instructors [should] complete courses in diversity”; (b) “The faculty must become more diverse with teaching styles and diversity inclusiveness”; and (c) one other quote which suggests that faculty should be trained in knowing how to “turn empathy into knowledge and understanding.” An international student’s view sums up the overall perception on this suggestion: “... providing more diversity training to faculty ... will help them to know how to deal with a diverse student population.”

Table 9 presents the content analysis results on the emerging themes and category from students’ open-ended responses to the survey question #25 : *How can WED curriculum content be improved to reflect the cultural diversity of the population in the U.S.?* Answers to this question were contained in one major improvement: *diversification of curriculum content*. Students suggested three

main ways in which curriculum diversification can be achieved: (a) include more inclusive/diverse content (23 students responding); (b) include more cultural diversity courses (7 students responding); and (c) include more HRD courses (3 students responding).

As Table 9 shows, the majority of the students in all three groups contributed to the major suggestion of diversifying curriculum content for improving cultural diversity in the WED curriculum. Sample responses shared much similarity across student groups, often described as “more diverse content.” Three students showed slight variations in their responses in linking such improvements to faculty diversity.

One U.S. majority student asked and answered the question: “... WHAT IS THE WHITE TO NON-WHITE RATIO FOR PROFESSORS? NO ASIANS, NO HISPANICS... AND MOSTLY OLD (60+). CURRICULUM IS DIRECTLY INFLUENCED BY THE INSTRUCTOR. DIVERSE FACULTY = DIVERSE CURRICULUM.” One U.S. minority student shared a similar view regarding WED professors: “... many have taught for years, are sit [*sic*] in their ways, and there is no incentive to try new or different strategies.”

Another U.S. majority student commented: “... [The University] has a bad habit of keeping in-house grads to teach here after graduation. Unfortunately, as you know this can keep perspectives limited....” These comments support the prior call by all three groups for hiring diverse faculty under improvements for teaching strategies for culturally and internationally diverse students. This call

also include international faculty as articulated mostly by U.S. majority and international students in Table 8.

Table 9

Student Perceptions on Improving Cultural Diversity in a WED Curriculum

Category and Theme	# in Group Responding		
	N = 46		
	MAJ	MIN	INT
	(n= 20)	(n = 17)	(n = 9)
Curriculum Diversification			
Include more inclusive/diverse content	9	8	5
Include more cultural diversity courses	2	3	2
Include more HRD courses	1	1	1

Note. MAJ = U.S. Majority; MIN = U.S. Minority; and INT = International;

Students gave multiple suggestions, and responses unrelated to question #25 are excluded here, so # responding is less than 46 or more per student group.

The second major improvement for diversifying curriculum content in order to reflect the cultural plurality of the population in the U.S. was to *include more cultural diversity courses* as outlined in Table 9. Total contributions to this improvement, although smaller in number (7), spread fairly evenly across the three student groups and described often by students as "... more diversity-related courses." One U.S. minority student highlighted the need for such courses in stating, "... to me Caucasians [*sic*] instructors only deal with safe topics and don't open up to discuss content that's prevalent to minority students."

An international student felt that "...the contributions of local Black, Asian, and Hispanic scholars among others should be given proper recognition."

The third major improvement – *include more HRD [Human Resource Development] courses* - showed an even but very small contribution (one student from each group) for all three groups. For the international student, this inclusion could be achieved if "they ... introduce cultural related topics specifically in the HR courses." The U.S. minority student felt offering "... HR Certificates" will be adequate. For the U.S. majority student, a more international context was taken and described as "... offer a course that discusses international perspectives on HRD." The reference to HRD in this instance appeared to be for updating the WED curriculum and enhancing cultural diversity in the WED curriculum.

Table 10 presents the content analysis results on the emerging themes and category from students' open-ended responses to the survey question #26: *How can WED curriculum content be improved to accommodate international perspectives?* Students suggested three main ways in which curriculum internationalization could be achieved: (a) include more international perspectives (19 students responding); (b) encourage more international research (7 students responding) and (c) include WED international courses (7 students responding). Inclusion of more international perspectives appeared to be the major improvement regarding curriculum internationalization across the three student groups, but more so among the U.S. majority students.

Shared common responses across student groups could be summed up in this U.S. majority student view: "SO MUCH OF WHAT WE HEAR IS SOLELY

GEARED TOWARD THE US [*sic*] ECONOMY, WORKFORCE, AND EDUCATION SYSTEM. [INCLUDING] MORE CASE STUDIES, PERHAPS FROM “OTHER COUNTRIES” WOULD BE HELPFUL.” Another counterpart felt “TRAVEL!!!” would help to improve international perspectives in the WED curriculum.

Table 10

Student Perceptions on Improving International Perspectives in WED curriculum content

Category and Theme	# in Group Responding		
	N = 46		
	MAJ	MIN	INT
Curriculum Internationalization	(n= 20)	(n = 17)	(n = 9)
Include more international perspectives	12	3	4
Encourage international research	3	0	4
Include WED international courses	4	0	3

Note. MAJ = U.S. Majority; MIN = U.S. Minority; and INT = International.

Student improvements related to other questions are not included here, so total student responding is less than 46; and students gave multiple responses, so # responding is sometimes more per student group.

Still, another group member recommended that the “Curriculum committee [for the WED program] could invite international students to share ideas fro [*sic*] broadening curriculum content.” Encouraging international research and including WED international courses as a second major improvement to curriculum

internationalization seemed to be of more importance to the U.S. majority and international student groups than the U.S. minority group as shown in Table 10. For the international student group, responses regarding international research reflected their national origin such as "... how does Workforce ... [Development] take place in Europe, Asia, [and] Africa for instance?" Similar responses from the U.S. majority group included "more from the Mexican perspective" and "possibly to explore not only how topics are viewed in the US [sic] but in all nationalities." These comments resonate with the current developments at this Midwestern university of a heightened awareness for becoming a top public research university by the year 2019 (SIUC, 2005a)."

Follow-Up Focus Groups

In keeping with the mixed methods Follow-up Explanations model used in the research design for this study, several distinguishing and non-distinguishing survey results were identified for follow-up in focus groups to gain a deeper insight into these results. In addition, the focus group data also help to cross-check the suggestions for improvements for bias as these were included on the same survey and not as a separate semi-structured one.

Teaching Strategies

Survey results on teaching strategies (TS) revealed that a correlation (*rho*) between the most used ones in the WED program and the most responsive TS to students' learning styles showed a weak positive relationship for the U.S. minority group but a weak negative relationship for the U.S. majority and international student groups. These results suggested that the Midwestern

university's diversity initiatives appeared to be having somewhat of a positive impact on U.S. minority students. However, it was not certain if this positive result was having any opposite impact among the U.S. majority and international students because theoretical and empirical literature revealed that the mainstream majority group was frequently used as a standard of normalcy in U.S. education (Asher, 2007; DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1999). While a reverse in the latter finding was desirable, further insight was needed on what in students' learning experiences could possibly contribute to this reversal, a phenomenon not revealed in the literature review for this study and thus warrants further explanation.

Likewise, students' suggestions for improvements across groups included more guest speakers (to include international ones), but Guest Speaker was not among the top most responsive TS for the U.S. majority and minority students learning styles from survey results. Thus, it was not clear if guest speakers were being used as a substitute for international content or just a diversion from unresponsive teaching styles and warranted further explanation.

Face-to-Face Instruction and Multimedia Presentation and Discussion were the first and second most used teaching strategies in the WED program, which required student input and participation. Yet, U.S. minority and international student groups called for more class discussion and revisiting international student participation as TS improvements. Additionally, results on the allowances made for students who speak English as a second language showed an almost never occurrence for international students, and sometimes

and nearly always for the U.S. minority and majority groups respectively. Therefore, the improvement for more class discussion suggested that although it was being used in WED teaching strategies, such discussion may not necessarily be enough or include some U.S. minority and international students and called for further explanation.

The third most used TS, Group Work/Projects, was among the lesser responsive TS to the learning style preferences of all three groups. Also, Demonstration and Practice was among the top three most responsive TS for all three groups, but was the fourth most used TS in the WED program. These differences in students' perceptions of the most used and most responsive TS needed further insight to better explain the quantitative survey results.

A call for hiring diverse faculty was a strong suggestion across all three groups for improving teaching strategies, but this suggested that the WED majority faculty was perceived as not adept at culturally responsive teaching, which could have negative consequences on diverse students' learning performance as highlighted in the literature (Capella-Santana, 2003; Gay, 2004). Further insight on what in students' learning experiences prompted their suggestion would help to better understand this perception.

Cultural Sensitivity

According to the survey results, WED graduate students' cultural differences were considered sometimes to quite often, which suggest a reasonable level of cultural sensitivity among faculty in the WED department at a Midwestern university; but cultural insensitivity occurred sometimes or quite often

for the U.S. minority and international students respectively. Related comments on suggestions for improvements appeared to be more localized and could influence students' rating of cultural sensitivity if faculty who teach a core curriculum course had most WED students at some point in their program. Therefore, more insight was needed through follow-up focus groups to understand the nature of such cultural insensitivity.

Curriculum Inclusiveness

WED content was found to be aligned to the interests of the dominant majority group (U.S. Caucasians) quite often (*Mdn* = 4.0), according to the U.S. minority and international student groups' survey results. Several comments on the open-ended survey responses suggested that diversifying the faculty would improve curriculum inclusiveness. These results indicated that students perceived diverse faculty as being more readily able to improve curriculum inclusiveness than U.S. majority faculty. Lack of inclusiveness in curriculum content affects culturally and internationally diverse students' motivation to learn as revealed in the literature (Asher, 2007; Gay, 2004; Mehra & Bishop, 2007). Further insight into students' learning experiences in this context can help to better understanding their need for more diverse faculty and curriculum.

International Responsiveness

Notably, unlike other student groups, several U.S. majority students checked "Don't Know" (approximately 33%) for the aspects of international responsiveness from the survey results. Yet, the majority of contributions (60%) for including international perspectives came from the U.S. majority students and

comments on related improvements strongly suggested that the WED curriculum content was very U.S.-centric. These findings indicated that a slight anomaly existed in the survey results for the U.S. majority students on international responsiveness and needed further explanation in understanding this anomaly.

Curriculum Improvements

Suggestions for improvements on the survey may have been influenced by the closed-ended questions as these were on the same survey and the survey data collected simultaneously. In order to cross-check if this bias actually occurred, follow-up focus group questions on suggestions for improvements on WED curriculum responsiveness helped to identify any major differences or similarities.

Given the sensitivity of the issues identified, the researcher created five broad trigger questions to kick-off focus group discussions in gaining a deeper insight into these distinguishing and non-distinguishing results. Through a pragmatic lens, these questions encouraged students to share the reality of their learning experiences in the WED program and were as follows:

1. What are the preferred teaching strategies that most promote learning for you and are these used in the WED classes?
2. Is awareness for students' cultural differences demonstrated in WED teaching delivery and what in your learning experience has influenced or shaped your view on this?
3. Judging from your exposure to the WED curriculum, how would you characterize or describe WED curriculum inclusiveness? Curriculum

inclusiveness means a concerted effort to eliminate cultural bias in higher education curriculum.

4. Do WED curriculum materials adequately address international perspectives and what in your learning experience has shaped your view or influenced your response on this?
5. Students feel more international workforce education perspectives are needed, they feel more diverse faculty, and this included international faculty should be hired; they also feel that culturally diverse content needs to be increased and that includes different guest speakers. How would these or other improvements you may suggest better serve your learning needs as students as this point or in the future for other students to come?

An exploration of the focus group data generally showed much consensus in students' contributions on suggestions for improving the WED curriculum across the three student groups ($N=13$) and allowed for expedient content analysis.

Research Question Five

This primary question asked: *In what ways do the qualitative data help to explain the quantitative data?* Table 11 (see page 168) presents the content analysis of focus group responses to the broad kick-off discussion question: *What are the preferred teaching strategies that most promote learning for you and are these used in the WED classes?* However, results are presented and discussed only in relation to teaching strategies results needing follow-up explanations as previously identified.

Teaching Strategies. Table 11 results suggested that the recently hired diverse WED faculty (around the time of data collection) were liked by students and had a positive impact on their learning experiences. A U.S. majority student commented on a diverse faculty's teaching style: "Dr. W. [pseudo name used] ... has a more ... interactive style ... and I love that, from day one I thought that's how I wanna [sic] teach because everybody stays awake and they're interested (gestures with hands and body movement in a confirming way) and asking questions." The new diverse faculty appeared to be more culturally responsive among students than some U.S. majority faculty, according to this international student's focus group comment: "I have felt that some of them are more open than other instructors (hand gesticulating in a forward motion) ... [in] trying to motivate people to talk about their background; ... knowing that the background may be difference [sic]. I think for me [this] is really positive [rather] than people [i.e., faculty] trying not to hear; they don't care if you have a different background."

In these instances where diverse faculty teaching motivated students to learn and considered their different cultural backgrounds, the focus group data helped to possibly explain the following suggestion for improvement for TS: hire diverse faculty. The latter also helped to possibly explain the positive correlation in the most used and responsive teaching strategies for U.S. minority students, which did not appear to have had a reverse effect for the other groups as they also benefitted from diverse faculty teaching.

According to Table 11, several students (approximately 46%) found Face-to-Face Instruction to promote learning effectiveness, especially discussion and interaction, whether as a whole class or in small groups. However, it appeared, from focus group feedback, some aspects of this teaching strategy were more favorable than others. This comment from an international student reflected the unanimous preference for Face-to-Face Instruction among all three groups: "... the face-to-face, that really help my performance; [you] have ... instructors there to deliver the instruction. I could ask questions and get feedback right on hand ..." Another international student explained: "I don't know the culture.... So I needed ... especially interaction with other classmates because ... it help [*sic*] me a lot to learn about the culture." Such discussion and student interaction were not enough for one U.S. majority student, who commented: "... I learn from the other students as well as just from the instructor; and I don't think we do that [i.e., in-class/group discussion] as often in WED as I would like to do it."

A U.S. minority student explained that being in the classroom interacting with students provided the structure needed to learn, and she felt that "... some of the instructors may not explain it [i.e., the topic,] where I can understand it, but then the other students would have some input, instead in a different way? It's like OK, I get it now!" (Head nodding). Not having enough class/group discussion and its overall benefit to students' learning effectiveness helped to explain the suggestion for improvement: Include more class discussion. Unfortunately, participation in class discussion was sometimes limited, according to some international students (23%) as shown in Table 11.

Table 11

Theme and Group Response Frequencies for Preferred Teaching Strategies

Emerging Themes	# in Group Responding ^a		
	N = 13		
	MAJ (n = 5)	MIN (n = 4)	INT (n = 4)
Diverse faculty teaching favored	1	0	1
Face-to-Face Instruction preferred	3	3	3
Class/Group discussion preferred	3	1	2
International student participation limited	1	1	1
Group projects resented	1	1	0
Mix of teaching styles preferred	3	2	4
Hands-on learning preferred	0	1	2
More technology integration	0	1	2
Same teaching style not motivating	2	1	1
Adapt to teaching style	1	2	1

Note. MAJ = U.S. Majority; MIN = U.S. Minority; and INT = International;

^a# in Group Responding: Members in each focus group most times contributed different theme responses , so # responding is less or equal per student group.

An international student perceived that some instructors deliberately limit her participation in class discussion and commented: "... in the classroom, am [sic] in a position to [sic] people would try to shut [you] down; this type of

situation. I don't know if it's part of the teaching strategy ...” A U.S. majority student related a similar observation:

... we do have one [WED] instructor, ... who is very ... less engaging with students from other cultures I think; ... not necessarily rude but ... less engaging ... I notice [these] students in that class not asking a lot of questions because they're a little bit afraid of ... [the instructor's] response.”

Another U.S. minority student actually articulated a hypothetical scenario (as if from recollection) to the group of how this less engaging instructor might respond to a possible question from an international student, which the speaker (U.S. majority student) validated one hundred per cent but then went on to further explain:

“I don't think they quite understood what ... [was] said, because I think some individuals with English as a second language, ..., need a little bit, a little more clarification to understand the concepts, and I don't see this particular instructor doing that (hands gesticulating accordingly).”

These verbal reports helped to possibly explain why participation in class discussion for international students, such as when Face-to-Face Instruction was used, was limited for them and their call to revisit participation points for international students. The latter also helped to explain the survey results of an “almost never” occurrence for allowances for students who speak English as a second language.

Group Projects, on the other hand, appeared to be resented judging from the emerging theme shown in Table 11 (see page 169). One U.S. minority student explained his reason for this resentment:

“ something I don't like about that is by the time the teacher starts with individual projects, the rest of the students get to see who is strong in one area (pointing for emphasis) and as soon as they get grouped together; everybody just relaxes and wait for that strong person to take over (other participants nod in agreement) ...”

A U.S. majority student concurred in stating: “I just don't like group projects (in a vexing tone) ... two people do all the work; and there's always a couple people who don't do anything ...” Because this topic appeared to arouse some negative emotions among participants, the researcher, as moderator, did not force the issue in other focus groups when it did not emerge in discussions. These findings of resentment because of low student participation/contribution in group projects helped to explain Group Projects, and not in-class group work, as a lesser responsive teaching strategy for students, which possibly contributed to the negative correlation in the most used and responsive TS for the U.S. majority and international students.

The majority (76%) of students felt using a mixture of teaching styles like lecturing, multimedia interaction, in-class discussion, and out-of-class assignments could have a positive impact on students' learning as shown in Table 11. An international expressed his view this way: “... I personally learn best (stressed) with opportunities given to me to conduct my own independent

studies ... and [have] multimedia interactions and everything [referring to other teaching styles].” A U.S. majority student shared her view of mixing TS: “I don’t mind lecturing for a while, they [i.e., instructors] can break it up with multimedia or they can break it up with some in-class discussion kinds of things....” One U.S. minority student was brief in his comment: “more [i.e., mix of teaching styles] is motivation for me.” The latter helped to possibly explain students’ call for diversifying teaching styles as a suggestion for improving teaching strategies.

Some (23%) students showed a preference for the hands-on learning that included Demonstration and Practice. An international doctoral student stressed, “... real application outside the classroom ... independent moments to conduct my own studies, those help my learning retention a great deal ...” Another counterpart preferred “... learning by doing, demonstration and practice; like for instance, a lot of these classes that have a project that you can actually see at the end of the class ...” A U.S. minority student agreed in stating, “... I prefer the hands-on project.” In these ways, the focus group data helped to possibly explain the result of Demonstration and Practice being among the top three most responsive teaching strategies for all student groups.

In using a mixture of teaching styles, students (23%) emphasized the need for technology integration in the classroom. A U.S. minority student reminded the group: “... some of our younger ones are so computer literate ... I think the trend is more going on-line ...because of all our budget cuts in terms of faculty ... a lot of it [i.e., learning] is going to be on-line.” An international student shifted the focus to faculty in recommending that the WED department “...

educate educators to teach ... those [e-learners,] ... usually research shows they're not comfortable with integration of technologies ...” A U.S. majority student commented on the on-line format: “I’m a visual learner, so that ... [on-line instruction] works for me.” Highlighting the need for more technology integration helped to explain students’ call for diversifying teaching strategies with an emphasis on computer-based learning taking into consideration faculty computer literacy levels.

However, when there was a lack of mixture, the sameness in TS could cause a fair number of students (41%) to become unmotivated as shown in Table 11. For example, a U.S. majority student explained the impact of such monotony: “... what I don’t like is for the instructor to use one strategy throughout the whole class because I think it’s tiring....” An international student described her boredom this way: “... I just go thru the motions ... I’m gonna [*sic*] make sure everything gets done, but I can’t tell you that I’m really enjoying the class or anything ...” For a U.S. minority student, “ ... just one simple way [i.e., the teaching style]; ...it’s dry ... I kinda [*sic*] get unmotivated.” These effects helped to possibly explain the negative correlation in the most used and responsive TS for the U.S. majority and international groups as well as the weak positive correlation for the U.S. minority group.

Nonetheless, this sameness in teaching style did not prevent graduate students from successfully completing their assignments. Students (31%) explained that the variety in teaching styles occurred across and not within classes. When asked how they coped with the mismatch in teaching and learning

styles within classes, doctoral students proudly shared their coping strategies. One U.S. majority student commented: "... I just adapt to whatever they're presenting ... then I'll ... read more and supplement what was shown in class ...". An international student stated, "... we all have to adapt to pass our classes and getting something out of it to use it in other areas." When asked whether his grades were affected by the sameness in teaching style, a master's U.S. minority student remarked: "Well my grades ..., they are pretty good." These coping strategies helped to give a deeper understanding of how students dealt with the lack of diversification in teaching styles, which they called for in their suggestions for improvements.

Cultural Sensitivity. Table 12 presents the focus group content analysis results for the kick-off discussion question: *Is awareness for students' cultural differences demonstrated in WED teaching delivery and what in your learning experience has influenced or shaped your view on this?* This question led into a discussion of when and how this awareness was demonstrated and not demonstrated. The results are presented and discussed in relation to survey results on cultural sensitivity or insensitivity identified as needing follow-up explanations.

According to Table 12, some U.S. minority and international students (50%) found that cultural sensitivity was common among WED faculty at a Midwestern university. A sample response from an international student explained it in this way: "... they [i.e., WED faculty] are not going to cite [an] example that may offend me as an Asian ..."

Table 12

Theme and Group Response Frequencies for Cultural Sensitivity

Emerging Themes	# in Group Responding ^a		
	N = 13		
	MAJ (n = 5)	MIN (n = 4)	INT (n = 4)
Cultural sensitivity common	1	2	2
Cultural insensitivity group-related	0	1	3
Cultural insensitivity invisible	2	0	0

Note. MAJ = U.S. Majority; MIN = U.S. Minority; and INT = International

^a# in Group Responding: Members in each focus group most times contributed similar and different theme responses , so # responding is less or more per student group.

A U.S. minority student noticed a similar sensitivity in stating: "... most of my professors, they try to make [a] conscious effort to be ... culturally sensitive." A U.S. majority student admitted: "I've never seen [in the WED department] any type of discrimination or bias, like consciously ..."

However, cultural insensitivity occurred in the WED department but more among two student groups as shown in Table 12. U.S. majority students (40%) explained that to them, identifying cultural insensitivity was somewhat difficult and explained their reasons for such difficulty in these ways: "I don't pick up on it because they're [i.e., WED faculty] teaching the way I was grown up to be taught

...” and “there may be little nuances [regarding cultural sensitivity] that are different that I don’t see because I don’t know them.”

As illustrated in Table 12, 75 percent of international students indicated experiencing cultural insensitivity as well as 25 percent of U.S. minority students. For a U.S. minority student, a professor’s surprise comment about her good writing skills led to a clash of feelings (negative and positive) as evident in her comment: “I’m a doctoral student. Why can’t I write well? Why is that so surprising?” An international student confirmed a similar situation and added: “I’ve heard that before (smiling and nodding in confirmation”). Granted professors may have been well intentioned in complementing these students on their writing skills; the surprising way in which this was done added a depth of meaning to their comments that was more negative than positive.

Another international student drew reference to a situation involving asking questions and getting feedback from professors. In one instance, the instructor did not understand her question and asked for a repeat for clarity. But in the other instance, she explained: “... someone [i.e., the instructor] would ask you to repeat not because they didn’t understand your sentence, but because they don’t want to answer you or I really felt that [they] try to ignore you ... because when you talk and then two or three times they ask you to repeat what you said ... so then you say you [*sic*] not going to ask any more questions ... or participate ...” The latter situation, this student reiterated, only happened on rare occasions.

Yet, in different scenarios, another international student, who spoke English as a second language and dressed in ethnic wear, shared perceptions of discrimination in the classroom due to a language difference. Her group had to do an oral presentation of a class project but was not given an option like the other students on their presentation spot. She explained: "... I mean, [the professor] didn't give us a choice ... [but instead stated:] "the three of you come forward and I will let you go at the end of the class"; and so ..., I guess we didn't feel comfortable with that; but otherwise ... the instructors ... treat us fairly." In a situation involving group work, this same student pointed out: "The instructor would assign you group work ... [;] immediately the Americans ... [would] pick their group and you'll be left out, unless you (hands making a forward movement), you jump in; I mean ... you [have to ask] to be placed in a group."

The focus group results on cultural sensitivity, as shown in Table 12, revealed that it was common in WED teaching delivery. Cultural insensitivity occurred but to a lesser extent among U.S. minority students and a greater extent among international students. For U.S. majority students, it was invisible, yet experienced by the international students as feelings of alienation in group work and inferiority in being given a last place for an oral presentation as well as intimidation due to English language differences in question and answer feedback. For a U.S. minority student, cultural insensitivity was experienced as suggested double meanings in surprise comments on good writing skills by a professor. In these ways, the focus group qualitative data helped to somewhat explain the survey quantitative results for cultural insensitivity occurring

sometimes to very often for U.S. minority and international students respectively and students' call for faculty diversity training as a suggestion for improving teaching strategies.

Curriculum Inclusiveness. The focus group discussions on curriculum inclusiveness overlapped into international responsiveness. As such, Table 13 presents focus group results for answering the following questions: *Judging from your exposure to the WED curriculum, how would you characterize or describe WED curriculum inclusiveness? Do WED curriculum materials adequately address international perspectives and what in your learning experience has shaped your view or influence your response on this?* In the context of the study, curriculum inclusiveness means a concerted effort to eliminate cultural bias in higher education curriculum. International responsiveness is the adequate provision of international perspectives (to include developing countries) on WED course topics.

Focus group discussions revealed that curriculum inclusiveness in the WED content had several related components. According to students (54%), it was course-related as shown in Table 13. This sample response from a U.S. minority student reflected the view of a few other students: "There's not much diversity in course content, except for the diversity class, The theorists are ... Caucasian. I don't remember any other ethnic theories in any other classes; outside the diversity class (nodding to emphasize the point)."

An international student shared a similar view but for a different class in this way: "I'm taking a different class but that's, I can say, the only class really

where there's a conscious effort to address ... [a Non-U.S.] perspective ...” A U.S. majority student drew reference to an organizational communications class in which she was required to “pick any culture or country ... and describe how you would go about ... [developing] a cultural presentation if you were to travel there on business...” She remarked:”I wish more classes could incorporate that type of [course work].” These comments helped to explain students’ need for a more inclusive/diverse curriculum in the survey results for curriculum improvements.

As shown in Table 13, many students (62%) found that curriculum inclusiveness was also instructor-related. They shared a range of views in this connection. A U.S. minority student argued that attending to diverse views in content may take up too much time by the instructor and prompt some students to ponder: “... if he or she [i.e., the student] is here to learn with everybody,... [why is] the [teacher] ... taking some ... precious time to focus on that particular student [i.e., a culturally diverse student].” In relation to the representation of ethnic authors in WED course content, an international student explained:”... the instructor did not point to ... [the students’] attention ... that there was [another view other] than the textbook ..., which has the dominant view...” Another international student felt that “... the ethnicity of the instructor is important because ... [the instructor] can share his or her own experience and even give us a little insight about what’s going on for this group of people ...”

Table 13

Theme and Group Response Frequencies for Curriculum Inclusiveness and International Responsiveness

Emerging Themes	# in Group Responding ^a		
	N = 13		
	MAJ (n= 5)	MIN (n = 4)	INT (n = 4)
Curriculum inclusiveness course-related	3	1	3
Curriculum inclusiveness instructor-related	5	1	3
Curriculum inclusiveness student-related	2	1	2
International perspectives limited	5	2	3
Limited curriculum inclusiveness impacting	3	1	4

Note. MAJ = U.S. Majority; MIN = U.S. Minority; and INT = International

^a# in Group Responding: Members in each focus group most times contributed similar and different theme responses , so # responding is less or more per student group.

A U.S. majority student commented: “I see ... an opportunity to learn from the other international students ... I don’t see the instructors ... utilizing that as much as they could ...” One U.S. majority student added:

I’m just theorizing here, it may be that the instructor is not capable of incorporating multiple cultures because they’ve [*sic*] never been exposed to it; they don’t know what questions to ask; ... if you’re relying on the instructor to deliver that kind of content; develop that kind of curriculum. I

just don't see that as [sic], as going to happen (shaking head in agreement).

Students' call for more diverse faculty to create diverse curriculum was somewhat illustrated in their verbal reports and views on this from the focus group discussions, giving a deeper understanding of their perception of U.S. majority faculty not being equipped to make curriculum diversification possible.

The U.S. majority and international students mostly found curriculum inclusiveness to be also student-related as shown in Table 13. To this end, an international student pointed out that "bringing up diversity is also related to the group [i.e., students] because if the ... [students] are not open to that even if you try as an instructor sometimes it's very difficult and you struggle ...". A U.S. minority student added that she learned "from other students [in the class] about the world." Yet another U.S. minority student shared a contrary opinion in indicating that students should not expect the instructor to talk about the topic in light of other countries or cultures but rather "wait after the class and then go and ask their own questions [in this regard]." A U.S. majority student advised the rest of to-be instructors in her focus group: "... if you know the students in your classroom and you know what they bring, then you [should] somehow weave that into your teaching ...".

Focus group reactions to international responsiveness of the WED curriculum content across all three groups reflected a majority view of limited representation of international perspectives as shown in Table 13. In most instances, students included the solution for increasing international perspectives

in their responses. This sample response from a U.S. majority student echoed the overall view on this:

I don't see a lot of reflection [on international perspectives] Since this is a global economy, I think we would benefit ... [in having] guest speakers or things like that in the curriculum that came [sic] and taught us about different styles of workforce education and development in different countries, different cultures.”

It was apparent from the majority of student contributions that the few instances of inclusion of international perspectives in the WED curriculum content made it almost unseen for most students. This invisibility helped to possibly explain the strong pattern of “Don't Know” responses among the U.S. majority group for aspects of international responsiveness and the call for more guest speakers to substitute for the limited international content in the WED curriculum.

Still, this limited inclusiveness of Non-U.S. perspectives in the WED course content impacted students (62%) as shown in Table 13. These sample comments reflected the overall views of students' feedback on this topic in focus group discussions. For one international student, reading about the dominant culture or view in course content added to intellectual development because as he explained: “my value is that I respect cultural diversity, ... whatever diversity ...” A U.S. majority student shared how she coped with the limited curriculum inclusiveness: “You'd have to do your own research.” A U.S. minority student reacts to the limitation this way:” ... the goal is to graduate (with a broad smile, causing the rest of the group to chuckle) ...whatever we have to do, we have to

do ... that's my motivation." These comments on the impact of limited inclusiveness in WED curriculum content provided a deeper understanding on how students coped with it.

Improvements. Participants' suggestions for improvements in the focus group discussions parallel the five categories for curriculum improvements in the survey results: diversification of teaching styles, diverse faculty recruitment, faculty diversity training, curriculum diversification, and curriculum internationalization as shown in Table 14. Sample responses from different participants in the three focus groups were analogous to the survey improvement categories in Tables 8, 9, and 10.

A suggestion for improvement that resonated with previous ones relating to diversifying teaching styles came from a U.S. minority student, who recommended that more guest speakers be used such as "multicultural professionals ...[in cases] where you [are] building programs [in order to give] another perspective ... other than the American perspective." An international student expounded on her suggestion for more diverse faculty this way: "I think that they [i.e., diverse faculty,] would have another set of experience to share that will enrich the program; well Prof. W is here now ... [and her] class was so much alive and rich ..." Faculty diversity training emerged as another improvement and expressed in this way from a U.S. majority student: "Training the trainers; ... making sure that the instructors are trained culturally in all the gamut of cultural diversity..."

Table 14

Theme and Group Response Frequencies for Curriculum Improvements

Emerging Themes	# in Group Responding ^a		
	N = 13		
	MAJ (n = 5)	MIN (n = 4)	INT (n = 4)
Diversify teaching styles	1	1	0
Diverse faculty recruitment	1	1	4
Faculty diversity training	3	1	0
Curriculum diversification	2	1	1
Curriculum internationalization	2	2	3

Note. MAJ = U.S. Majority; MIN = U.S. Minority; and INT = International

^a# in Group Responding: Members in each focus group most times contributed similar and different theme responses, so # responding is less or more per student group.

For curriculum diversification, a U.S. majority student suggested: "... at least have one objective ...for individual research [projects] on a different organization or ... company outside ... or ... inside the U.S...." Another U.S. majority student reinforced the need for curriculum internationalization in commenting: "... [at the] very base bottom line, you have a course on international workforce education and development ..." The focus group suggestions for improvements helped to cross-check the open-ended responses for same on the survey results in verifying that no apparent biases existed

between the two, increasing the reliability and validity for the results on suggestions for WED curricular improvements.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This mixed methods descriptive study sought to examine students' perceptions on WED curriculum responsiveness to culturally and internationally diverse graduate students at a Midwestern university, focusing on four dimensions: *teaching strategies (to include delivery)*, *curriculum inclusiveness*, *international responsiveness*, and *curriculum improvements*. A combination of two mixed methods models framed the design for the study: Follow-up Explanations Model (QUAN emphasized) presented by Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) complemented by the With-in Stage Mixed Model presented by Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004). Pragmatism, as a paradigm presented by Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), and Rescher (2000), guided the collection and analysis of the study's census data (survey and focus groups). Quantitative data analysis included descriptive statistics (using SPSS 17.0 version) such as frequency distributions, percentages, and *Spearman's rho* correlation. Qualitative data were analyzed and quantified using content analysis as discussed by Berg (2001), Strauss and Corbin (1998), Miles and Huberman (1994), and Stokes (2003) for both the survey open-ended questions and focus group data.

A newly developed WED Curriculum Responsiveness Survey (.850 Cronbach's alpha index) consisting of 23 closed – and three open-ended questions facilitated survey data collection. Three follow-up focus groups

gathered qualitative data for explaining the survey quantitative results. Study participants comprised all graduate students with at least one year continuous enrollment from fall 2007 to spring 2008 in a WED program at a Midwestern university. A total of 69 (44% response rate) participants responded to the census survey comprising of three study groups: U.S. majority, U.S. minority, and International students. In light of the Midwestern university's initiative to boost its diversity responsiveness to students, the culturally diverse student groups were of key interest in the study. A comparison of the dominant and minority groups is done in gauging curriculum responsiveness to WED students. This serves the purpose of the comparison groups option used in the mixed methods Follow-up Explanation Model.

Given the poignant nature of the central phenomenon, the reality of response rates falling short of a majority response in this census survey among some student groups is expected. The total participation (100%) of the international population group is ideal for a census survey and shows their level interest in the research topic. The less than majority response rate (38%) for the U.S. majority group is considered adequate for the study results because it's is within the acceptable response rate for survey results (Dillman, 1978) and is more than twice the size of the other smaller population group, its overall group proportion in the study population. Further, the study topic appeals more to the U.S. minority and international students, so lower participation by the U.S. majority group is expected.

The fifty percent population response rate for the U.S. minority group is considered large enough for a census survey because it brings balance to the study results, which is supported by strong consensual qualitative feedback from the other two population groups. Issues regarding culturally diverse students like ineffective teaching practices, culture bias, and cultural insensitivity in higher education are of grave concern to pragmatic researchers (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) as they impact negatively on these students' learning performance (Capella-Santana, 2003; Gay, 2000; Guiffrida, 2005; Helton, 2000; Pitt, Berthon, & Robson, 1997). As such, these issues warrant serious attention among ethnic groups regardless of related insignificant statistical results or group population response rates falling short of a majority representation.

Thus, the level of continuity in students' open-ended responses and focus group comments for words like "more," "we," and "us" paint a larger picture (to include those not responding to the survey) of the deficits and related improvements for WED curriculum responsiveness. For example, the U.S. majority and international groups responding to the survey overwhelmingly called for more diverse content and diverse faculty to close this related gap in WED curriculum and teaching delivery. Therefore, if other population groups recognize cultural gaps that affect the U.S. minority group, then the study results move beyond the fifty percent responding from this group in further validating and reducing bias for these findings relating to the U.S. minority group as a whole.

The following three sub-sections summarize the study findings. The first sub-section presents a summary of the study findings grouped by the specific

research question to which they refer. This is followed by a discussion of the conclusions drawn based on all the study findings that link to relevant research and theory previously presented in the literature review. Lastly, a discussion on recommendations imperative to educational practice and future research in WED is presented.

Summary

Research Question One

This primary question asked: *To what extent are WED teaching strategies (to include delivery) responsive to culturally and internationally graduate diverse?*

In summary, WED teaching strategies appear to have a low degree of responsiveness to the U.S. minority group and scarcely responsive to the U.S. majority and international student groups. Evidence of this is shown in the *Spearman's rho* correlation of the most used and most responsive teaching strategies (TS) for all three groups: U.S. minority – weak positive relationship; and U.S. majority and internationals – weak negative relationship.

One common positive across all three groups is that the two top most used teaching strategies (TS) in the University's WED department - Face-to-Face Instruction and Multimedia Presentation and Discussion - are also among the top three most responsive TS to all students' learning style preferences. However, the third most used TS, Group Work/Projects, is among the lesser responsive TS to the learning style preferences of all three groups. Also, Demonstration and Practice is among the top three most responsive TS for all three groups, but is the fourth most used TS in the WED program. In addition, perceptions on

allowances for students who speak English as a second language in WED teaching delivery differ greatly among students groups. International students found this to occur almost never, whereas the U.S. minority and majority groups found it to occur sometimes or quite often respectively.

Results on teaching strategies also indicate a reasonable cultural sensitivity gap exists in WED teaching delivery as a function of teaching strategies for the U.S. minority and international students generally. Evidence of this is shown in their “sometimes” and “quite often” ratings for the occurrence of cultural insensitivity in WED teaching delivery. This finding is supported by strong consensual qualitative results from the U.S. majority comparison group for more faculty diversity training and inclusion of more diverse content as suggestions for improvements. The latter reveal a need for understanding cultural differences of other minority groups in WED teaching delivery.

Research Question Two

This primary question asked: *To what extent does WED graduate curriculum content reflect the cultural plurality of the U.S. society?* Survey items 15 -19 provided data for this research question. To sum up, students’ culturally and internationally diverse backgrounds appear, as a whole, to influence their responses. Notably, none of the student groups found that aspects of curriculum inclusiveness occurred nearly always (“5” ranking) in WED content as shown in Table 6 (see page 144).

In gauging WED curriculum inclusiveness, the aspect that *WED content is aligned to the interests of the dominant majority group (U.S. Caucasians)* is found

to occur quite often (*Mdn* = 4.0), according to the U.S. minority and international student groups. The latter is also supported by their strong pattern of “sometimes” rating in their frequency responses to other aspects of curriculum inclusiveness, indicating that WED curriculum is somewhat representative of the cultural plurality of the U.S. society. The mean number of years for all WED international students participating in the survey is four, so they have some idea of what constitutes U.S. interests in curriculum content. Yet, for the U.S. majority group, this dominant alignment to their group in WED curriculum content generally occurs sometimes, which suggests that they view WED curriculum content as being generally inclusive of other minority groups in reflecting the cultural plurality of the U.S. society.

Research Question Three

This primary question asked: *To what extent does the WED graduate curriculum provide international perspectives (to include developing countries) for course topics?* In summary, students’ ratings on the international responsiveness of the WED curriculum content generally indicate adequate provision of international perspectives on course topic occurs sometimes (*Mdn* = 3), suggesting that at times such provision is inadequate. However, the extent to which this inadequacy occurs differs among student groups. For the international students, a large deficit exists for inclusion of works by international authors and global views from developing countries in WED content. They found that the latter almost never (*Mdn* = 2) occurred in WED content as shown in Table 7 (see page 148).

For the U.S. majority and minority students, WED curriculum content is internationally responsive sometimes ($Mdn = 3$), which is strongly supported by their overall ‘sometimes’ rating ($Mdn = 3$) for all four or three of these aspects as shown in Table 7. These results suggest that a smaller global knowledge gap exists for these two groups in WED curriculum content than the international student group. Noticeably, the U.S. majority students showed more convergence in their “Don’t Know” frequency rating (approximately 33%) for all four aspects of international responsiveness in WED content as shown in Table 7. This lack of awareness of global knowledge in WED content indicates that it may not be apparent in the WED curriculum content for this group.

Research Question Four

This primary question asked: *What improvements, if any, can be made to WED graduate curriculum responsiveness in facilitating culturally and internationally diverse students?* As shown in Tables 8, 9, and 10, students suggested five broad areas of improvement for WED curriculum responsiveness: diversifying teaching styles, diverse faculty recruitment, faculty diversity training, curriculum diversification, and curriculum internationalization. The top three improvements for diversifying teaching styles, according to mostly U.S. majority and international students’ along with U.S. minority group perceptions, are as follows: (a) research/plan for teaching international students; (b) invite diverse/international guest speakers; and (c) study students’ backgrounds. These improvements support survey results on the overall weak correlation between the most used and most responsive TS in the WED program, which are as follows:

U.S. minority group: weak positive correlation and U.S. majority and international students groups: weak negative correlation.

Diverse faculty recruitment as an improvement appears to be linked to all other students' suggestions for improvements except faculty diversity training. The consensus across student groups is that more diverse faculty would mean more diverse teaching styles, diverse curriculum, and international perspectives in WED curriculum content.

Research Question Five

This primary question asked: *In what ways do the qualitative data help to explain the quantitative data?* In keeping with the Follow-up Explanations model mainly used in this mixed methods study, distinguishing and non-distinguishing quantitative survey results needing further explanation were identified. Five broad trigger questions emerged from these results to kick-off discussions in three focus groups for finding explanations to illuminate the identified follow-up survey results.

Focus group discussions on preferred teaching strategies reveal insights into students' learning experiences. For instance, these discussions show diverse faculty interactive teaching style motivates students to learn and consider their different cultural backgrounds; thus, the focus group data help to possibly explain the students' suggestion for improvement: hire diverse faculty. The latter also helps to possibly explain the positive correlation in the most used and responsive teaching strategies for U.S. minority students, which did not appear to have impacted the opposite negative correlation for the other two groups as they also

benefitted from diverse faculty teaching. Further, feelings of discontent with group projects due to the lack of contribution from some students help to explain this teaching strategy as less responsive to students' learning style preferences in quantitative survey results.

Comments in focus group discussions reveal the occurrence of cultural insensitivity in WED teaching delivery is difficult for the U.S. majority group to recognize it. In contrast, the international students express feelings of alienation and inferiority in group work as well as intimidation related to language challenges in question and answer feedback. For a U.S. minority student, cultural insensitivity is likened to stereotype feelings (i.e., expectations for less than good writing skills) prompted by surprise comments on good writing skills from a professor. In these ways, the focus group qualitative data help to somewhat explain the survey quantitative results for cultural insensitivity occurring sometimes (*Mdn* = 3) to very often (*Mdn* = 4) for U.S. minority and international students respectively and their call for faculty diversity training as a suggestion for improving teaching strategies.

Focus group exchanges on the issue of curriculum inclusiveness (to include international perspectives) reveal the instructor plays an integral role in realizing it, students' openness to it is critical to its success, and some courses are ready-made for it. In voicing possible solutions to curriculum responsiveness deficits, students called for curriculum diversification to include more international perspectives, faculty diversity training, hiring of diverse faculty, and diversifying of teaching styles. These suggestions all align to those previously mentioned in the

survey open-ended responses, thus verifying no bias in the former survey results on curriculum improvements.

Conclusions

WED Curriculum Responsiveness

The intent of this study serves to examine students' perceptions on WED curriculum responsiveness at a Midwestern university. WED curriculum responsiveness is referred to as follows: (a) The equitable representation of ethnic groups and international perspectives in curriculum content whenever possible, and (b) incorporation of different teaching strategies that promote learning in the culturally and internationally diverse groups served by the curriculum. The conclusions drawn from the study findings are summarized and presented as they apply to the study's philosophical paradigm and theory in the context of two main components of curriculum responsiveness: teaching strategies and curriculum content.

Philosophy. The use of pragmatism as the guiding philosophical foundation collecting and analysing of data brought a level of realism to this study. The vivid descriptions in students' voices from open-ended survey responses and focus group comments provide a current "pulse" on WED curriculum responsiveness. Based on real-life learning experiences, their suggestions for improvements show a need for more diverse content, diverse faculty, diverse teaching styles, and faculty diversity training. Indeed, the "more" strand running through students' personal narratives signal an overall feeling of inadequacy regarding the central phenomenon in answering research questions.

Characteristic of pragmatic research, these answers can be instrumental in developing effective practice for teaching culturally and internationally diverse WED students.

Notably, pragmatism supports the fallibilist perspective in viewing theories as tentative or instrumental because reality constantly changes (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Rescher, 2000). Study findings support this perspective. Literature on critical race theory and critical education theory contend the frequent use of the mainstream dominant group (mostly Caucasians) as a standard of “normalcy” in U.S. education (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1999; McLaren, 2003). However, study findings reveal this is changing somewhat because of the telling weak negative correlations for the U.S. majority ($r_s = -.088$), and international groups ($r_s = -.140$) in the most used and responsive teaching strategies for them and the opposite weak positive correlation ($r_s = .033$) for the U.S. minority group.

Ontologically (nature of reality), study results highlighted multiple perspectives of student groups such as that for cultural insensitivity, which is almost undetected for the U.S. majority group but experienced sometimes to quite often by U.S. minority and international students in their learning experiences, in a WED program at a Midwestern university. Presenting both biased and unbiased students' views also illustrate pragmatic axiology (role of values).

The study design also demonstrated pragmatic methodology in combining the Follow-up Explanations (QUAN emphasized) and the Within-Stage Mixed

Models for collecting and analysing quantitative and qualitative study data. In the spirit of realism rooted in pragmatism, the qualitative data added cultural context to the dominant quantitative results, giving a more realistic picture and understanding of the study's quantitative findings. Use of students' quotes from focus groups in presenting the follow-up explanations of the formal quantitative results demonstrates the formal and informal rhetoric pragmatism affords. The triangulation of data and methods help to cross-validate the study findings, making them more credible.

Theory and Teaching Strategies. Based on the study findings, the weak positive correlation ($r_s = .030$) in the most used and most responsive TS for the U.S. minority group and weak negative correlation ($r_s = -.088$) for same for the U.S. majority group imply that the gap between theory and practice is possibly narrowing. The latter supports critical education and critical race theorists coupled with multicultural educators' (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1999; McLaren, 2003) advocacy for more responsive educational practices and curriculum for the U.S. minority group in closing the current achievement gap or paying the education debt that exists for them when compared to the U.S. majority group. However, the U.S. minority group's gain does not imply a loss to the U.S. majority's weak negative correlation ($r_s = -.088$) but rather a leveling of the "playing field" between the two groups as these results are negligible.

Further, literature on critical race theory (CRT) and critical education theory (CET) revealed that "Whiteness" is used as a standard of normalcy in U.S. education (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1999). However, this

“standard of normalcy” is changing somewhat based on the study findings. Still, the implication of this weak negative relationship is that WED faculty may fail to recognize, as pointed out in research by Smith (2006) and Hurtado (1996), that the teaching-learning process is dynamic and requires constant change to suit the observed learning styles and cultural differences of the transient students in their charge; one teaching style does not necessarily fit all students.

Commendably, the Midwestern university’s diversity initiative of hiring of diverse faculty (SIUC, 2005a) appears to be creating teaching responsiveness to students’ learning styles. Study findings indicate that recently hired (at the time of data collection) diverse WED faculty teaching motivates students to learn and consider their different cultural backgrounds, unlike some U.S. majority teaching styles. However, the latter does not appear to have impacted the opposite negative correlation in teaching strategies for the other U.S. majority and international groups as they also benefited from diverse faculty teaching.

Still, there appears to be generally some disconnect between the teaching strategies (TS) students perceive to be most responsive to their learning styles and what is most used in the WED program at a Midwestern university, based on study results. The overall weak correlation between the most used and most responsive TS for all three student groups (international and U.S. majority and minority) imply students have to work harder or may delay in achieving their academic goals as reported in the study’s literature review (Gay, 2000; Selvadurai, 1992).

In the case of Group Project as the third most used teaching strategies in the Midwestern university's WED program, students' additional hard work may become even double or triple. Survey and focus group results indicate that Group Project is less responsive to students' learning style due to the usually minimal contribution of several group members to the project. The latter can have negative consequences in the real world for team work in maintaining job security and detracts from the goals of the Midwestern university's Southern @ 150 initiative (SIUC, 2005a).

Of note, students' in all three student groups ranked Demonstration and Practice as one of the three top most responsive teaching strategies, which is actually the fourth most used in the University's WED program. This result reflects the pragmatic approach used in vocational education (VE) instruction from its inception in promoting learning by doing in the 1800s apprenticeship and manual training systems of that industrial era (Barlow, 1967; Gordon, 2003; Hall, 1973; Walter, 1993; Wonacott, 2003). Interestingly, even more than a century later in the age of information and technology, Demonstration and Practice is still preferred by the Midwestern university's WED (previously VE) students over computer-based learning (ranked as fourth most responsive TS).

Responsiveness to students' diverse cultural backgrounds in WED teaching delivery, as a function of teaching strategies, has shown expected norms for the U.S. majority students as a comparison group, based on study findings. Unlike the U.S. minority and international student groups, the U.S. majority group found students' cultural differences to be considered quite often

(*Mdn* = 4.0) and cultural insensitivity to occur almost never in WED teaching delivery. Evidence from focus group results further highlight their failure to recognize such cultural insensitivity. The latter is not uncommon for this group as research by Brown (1998), for transforming Caucasian pre-service teachers' monocultured worldviews in designing more culturally responsive instruction, addressed similar culturally indifferent traits. These findings are also validated by the theoretical underpinnings of critical race theory and critical education theory that unmask and address racial bias and hidden inequities in curriculum content (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; McLaren, 2003).

Moreover, the campus-wide instructor-course evaluation form (SIUC, 2007a) and WED program evaluation instruments (SIUC, 2006c) at this Midwestern university do not require students' to evaluate instructor cultural competence. Therefore, the need for accommodating students' cultural differences in teaching is almost not apparent to especially the dominant majority group students. Nonetheless, the heightened awareness of "diversity" as a core value at this Midwestern university aims to reverse this tendency. The literature strongly supports such an initiative and its positive impact on diversity responsiveness in teaching (Diamond 1998, Ladson-Billings, 1999; Lane et al., 2003; Pruitt-Logan & Gaff, 1999, fall).

Unfortunately, the limited consideration of the U.S. minority and international students' cultural differences by some WED faculty has resulted in cultural insensitivity in some instances, based on study findings. Cultural insensitivity occurs sometimes (*Mdn* = 3) and quite often (*Mdn* = 4.0) for U.S.

minority and international students respectively. International students express feelings of alienation and inferiority in group work as well as intimidation related to language challenges in question and answer feedback. For a U.S. minority student, cultural insensitivity is likened to stereotype feelings prompted by surprise comments on good writing skills by a professor. The latter suggests that the professor expected the U.S. minority student's writing skills to be less than good (stereotyping) and so acted surprise when the opposite occurred.

Such cultural deficits in teaching impact negatively on students' participation and performance in class activities, which is confirmed in the literature (Capella-Santana, 2003; Gay, 2000; Shalom, 1996; University of Michigan Admissions Lawsuits, 1999). Moreover, the wider implication for this Midwestern university is that resources expended on its diversity workshops/seminars (The SIUC Office of the Associate Chancellor (Diversity), 2006; SIUC, 2009c) are not "hitting ground" in practice. This implication resonates with Buila (2009) at the Midwestern university, who observed that there is usually a notable absence of Caucasian educators at workshops on cultural competence. Further, on return to their classrooms, "Colored" students question the legitimacy of Caucasian educators to address cultural diversity issues, while Caucasian students suspect "Colored" educators of having personal agendas in teaching about white supremacy and oppression.

Theory and Content. The study results show an overall under-representation of ethnic groups and international perspectives in WED content, which negatively impact students' motivation to learning and, by extension, their

academic performance. The latter also promotes ethnocentrism, a view that one culture is seen as superior to others as reported in the literature as a major barrier to culturally responsive teaching (Campbell, 2002; Gay, 2000; Sahin, 2003; Walker-Tileston, 2004). A bigger implication of this cultural deficiency in WED content for the international students is limited learning transfer to their home settings as indicated in the literature by De Vita and Case (2003), Powell (2001), and Watson (1994). If left unnoticed, this lack of global knowledge in the WED curriculum may deter future international enrollment, which would result in a substantial decline in tuition revenue for this Midwestern university. International students pay more than twice the tuition cost of a U.S. student for seated classes (SIUC, 2009a).

In addition, WED curriculum content generally does not equitably represent the cultural plurality of the U.S. society or adequately provide international perspectives on course topics. Survey results show that unlike the U.S. majority group, U.S. minority and international students found such content to be aligned to the interests of the dominant majority group quite often (*Mdn* = 4.0). In addition, international students found international authors and global views from developing countries are almost never (*Mdn* = 2) used in WED content. These findings imply that students experience considerable intellectual and cultural bondage in their graduate studies that do not adequately prepare them for the rapidly growing global marketplace. The latter detracts from the goals of the Midwestern university's Southern @ 150 initiative that includes being

known for its global intellectual pluralism (SIUC, 2005a) and its WED department's mission of producing world-class graduates (SIUC, 2008).

WED Curriculum Improvements

Theory and Teaching Strategies. Students' instructive comments on curriculum improvements must be duly noted. Being at the heartbeat of WED curriculum responsiveness, they can take a more accurate "pulse" of needed improvements than probably a faculty curriculum committee. Results from the survey and focus groups indicate much needed improvements to WED teaching strategies for responsiveness to students' diverse cultural backgrounds and learning styles. The three broad categories of suggestions for improving teaching strategies, based on study findings, are diversification of teaching styles, diverse faculty recruitment, and faculty diversity training. These findings are all in keeping with the shift in the literature in multicultural education from the curriculum content to instructor quality (Gay, 2004) as well as the Midwestern university's diversity thrust (SIUC, 2005a). Furthermore, the clarion call by all three student groups for diversification of teaching styles to include more demonstration and practice validates the overall weak correlation between the most used and most responsive teaching strategies in the survey results.

The suggestion to diversify teaching styles is consistent with findings in the literature (McKeachie & Svinicki, 2006; Miller & Miller, 2006; Smith, 2006), especially for students in workforce education who will become trainers and faculty of culturally diverse students with diverse learning and communication styles. Similarly, diverse faculty recruitment is strongly supported in the literature

as a suggestion for improving teaching strategies for culturally diverse students (Gay, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Lane et al., 2003; Pruitt-Logan & Gaff, 1999, fall). Likewise, the call for more faculty diversity training by students across the three groups is consistent with the literature on preparing future faculty (Lane, Hertog, & Waldhart, 2003; Pruitt-Logan & Gaff, 1999, fall) and also supports the survey finding of the “sometimes” and “quite often” occurrence of cultural insensitivity for the U.S. minority and international student groups. Nonetheless, a pitfall that the Midwestern university should avoid, as pointed out in the literature review, is not to continually evaluate these faculty diversity training initiatives for effectiveness in diverse classrooms and follow-up on areas needing improvements (Ladson-Billings, 1999).

Theory and Content. Based on the study findings, WED curriculum content needs much improvement in becoming more responsive to the learning needs of the WED graduate students. Notably, students’ almost unanimous suggestion to diversify and internationalize WED curriculum content resonates with findings in the literature on creating more inclusive curriculum in higher education (Diamond, 1998; Friedman et al., 1996; Mestenhauser & Ellingboe, 1998). The implication here would be a reduction in ethnocentric view and the intellectual bondage students’ experience with the existing curriculum at the time of this study and strongly validates the theoretical underpinnings for CET, CRT, and multicultural education in the literature (Ladson-Billings, 1999; DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; McLaren, 2003; Walker-Tileston, 2004).

While the literature supports students' suggestion for hiring of diverse faculty for diversifying curriculum content (Ladson-Billings, 1999; Pruitt-Logan and Gaff, 1999, fall), this may not be possible. Current developments at the Midwestern university indicate eminent budget cuts to include hiring of new faculty (The Saluki Times, 2009, September 14). An alternative to hiring of diverse faculty as reported in the literature would be to make diversity a major curriculum goal campus-wide, requiring faculty to present multicultural perspectives in all courses (Diamond, 1998). This alternative has potential for implementation as the Midwestern university's plans for revisiting its diversity initiative for any needed improvements are forthcoming (SIUC, 2009e).

To conclude, WED curriculum responsiveness to culturally and internationally diverse graduate students at a Midwestern university appears to be inadequate at this snapshot in time, based on the study findings. While the hiring of a few diverse faculty are enhancing WED teaching delivery and its curriculum inclusiveness, more departmental strengthening for faculty diversity training and curriculum diversification (to include internationalization) are critically needed to adequately accommodate the changing cultural and international curriculum needs of WED graduate students. Several limitations are also evident in this study. Data were collected using a self-reported WED Curriculum Responsiveness Survey, which is prone to personal bias. The Hispanics and other Unknowns in the study population did not respond to the study survey, so findings are restricted to mostly the Caucasians, African Americans, and international students who participated in the study. In addition, findings cannot

be generalized to other populations or settings because no random sampling was done, but workforce educators in similar settings can relate to the results accordingly.

Recommendations

Professional Practice

Based on the study findings, the Midwestern university's campus-wide Instructor-Course Evaluation form should be revised to include student groups (e.g., U.S. majority, U.S. minority, and international) or student ethnicity/national origin; aspects of instructor cultural competence; and curriculum internationalization. The practical implication here is for a more comprehensive evaluation of course delivery for all students that will potentially impact program improvements evenly for students. Likewise, its WED department's program evaluation instruments should be revised to include aspects of curriculum inclusiveness and international responsiveness in order to track needed curriculum improvements for all graduate students served by the WED curriculum. Again, the latter implication is for more equity in curriculum improvements to benefit all students.

In addition, a multicultural taskforce (to include U.S. minority and international students) should be convened to conduct a critical review of the WED curriculum content in light of the tenets of the Midwestern university's Southern @ 150 diversity thrust for creating a more inclusive curriculum. This committee can be charged with the main responsibility of overseeing WED curriculum inclusiveness and responsiveness improvements. The WED

department should also make faculty diversity training mandatory for faculty with incentives and exposure to diverse settings both local and international in order to improve teaching strategy responsiveness to culturally and internationally diverse graduate students. WED teaching strategies should also be revisited to include more Demonstration and Practice, all student participation in class discussion with attention to international students, and all student participation in group projects in order to stem any further drudgery among students regarding unresponsive teaching strategies.

Future Research

Study findings indicate a need for extending the current study to the next step with a census study of the Midwestern university's WED graduate students to determine the impact of teaching strategy responsiveness on student achievement. This future research will help to identify intervention strategies for closing the gap between the most used and most responsive teaching strategies to students' individual learning style preferences in the WED program. Similarly, a tracer study on the university's WED graduate international students is recommended to determine the degree of far learning transfer of skills and knowledge to their local settings for improving the responsiveness of the WED curriculum to them.

Future research can also extend the current study to the on-line WED programs at the Midwestern university to determine if any cultural barriers exist in the curriculum content and on-line teacher-student interaction for culturally and internationally diverse graduate students. Such research will address the current

study's limitation to mostly seated classes for WED curriculum responsiveness.

This current study can also be adapted and repeated for taking the "pulse" on curriculum responsiveness in other academic departments at the Midwestern university, in light of its thrust to increase diversity responsiveness to students. Findings from such research can similarly inform curriculum upgrades and teaching responsiveness to culturally and internationally diverse students in other academic departments.

A research study on the impact of the name change from "vocational education" to "workforce education and development" on U.S. majority WED instructors' motivation to explore international perspectives is recommended. The findings from such a study will help to determine whether the permanent adoption of the term "vocational education" by some international regions contribute to any limitations for expanding WED curriculum content to include more WED international perspectives.

Finally, a study of WED international practices for major world regions to include developed and developing countries will help to provide WED educators both inside and outside the U.S. with international content to support their local WED content. The latter will enable them to provide a global perspective on WED in adequately preparing their students for the rapidly growing global job market and also fill gaps in the literature for such research.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Pre-contact E-mail


Workforce Education & Development (WED) Curriculum Responsiveness Survey

November 20, 2007

Dear Graduate Student:

I am a doctoral student in the WED department at Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC), currently conducting my dissertation research. Your e-mail was obtained with permission from the WED department at SIUC. The purpose of my study is to examine the perceptions of WED graduate students on "WED curriculum responsiveness to culturally and internationally diverse students". In the context of the study, *curriculum responsiveness* is defined as the equitable representation of ethnic groups and international perspectives in curriculum content whenever possible and incorporation of different instructional strategies that promote learning in the culturally and internationally diverse groups served by the curriculum. Given SIUC's on-going diversity thrust, the results of this study will help to highlight any ineffective curricular practices for culturally and internationally diverse students and make recommendations for improvements accordingly.

As a current graduate student at the "heartbeat" of WED curricular activities for at least one year, you have the learning experiences for answering the survey questions and so were selected for the study. The survey will be sent to you via e-mail in early **December 2007**. If you do not respond to that e-mail survey, you will be contacted again with the research request twice in the forthcoming weeks. The two-page survey will take about 15 minutes to complete, requiring background information on your geographic/ethnic origin as well as perceptions on WED teaching responsiveness and curriculum inclusiveness for culturally and internationally diverse students. Follow-up focus groups will be held to gain a deeper understanding of the survey responses in arriving at answers to the study questions. You will be required to sign a consent form for focus group participation, which will be video-taped.

Participation in this study is strictly voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time. All information provided will remain confidential and anonymous. A three-digit code will be assigned to individual e-mails to form a code listing of e-mail respondents for anonymity. A list of respondents' names will not be compiled. Instead the e-mail code listing will be retained for scheduling the follow-up focus groups with respondents (given pseudo names). A blind copy format will always be used so that the list of recipients does not appear in the header in contacting respondents. All reasonable steps will be taken to protect your identity. Only the researcher, her advisor, or doctoral committee will have access to the code listing and data gathered, which will be destroyed one year after completion of the study. Survey responses will in no way jeopardize your standing in the WED program, so your honest opinions and impressions, whether favorable or unfavorable, are appreciated and invaluable for successfully completing the study. Only aggregate data will be reported. You will be provided with a copy of the study results, if you so desire, in appreciation for your participation. **If you have more than one e-mail, please indicate which e-mail address you would like the survey to be sent to in December 2007.** I thank you for your participation in advance.

If you have any further enquiries about this study, please contact me at cideb04@siu.edu or my advisor, Dr. Clora Mae Baker, Workforce Education and Development Department, 212 Pulliam Hall, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, IL 62901-4709. Phone: 618-453-3321. Email: cmbaker@siu.edu.

The SIUC Human Subjects Committee has approved this study. Any Questions regarding your rights as a participant in this study may be addressed to the Committee Chairperson, Office of Research Development and Administration, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, IL 62901-4709. Phone: 618-453-4533. Email: siuhsc@siu.edu.

Sincerely,

Debra Ferdinand, WED Doctoral Student
SIUC

**Workforce Education & Development (WED) Curriculum Responsiveness Survey**

November 29, 2007

Dear Graduate Student:

As you know, I am a doctoral student in the WED department at Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC), currently conducting my dissertation research. Your e-mail was obtained with permission from the WED department at SIUC. The purpose of my study is to examine the perceptions of WED graduate students on "WED Curriculum Responsiveness to Culturally and Internationally Diverse Graduate Students". In the context of the study, *curriculum responsiveness* is defined as the equitable representation of ethnic groups and international perspectives in curriculum content whenever possible and incorporation of different instructional strategies that promote learning in the culturally and internationally diverse groups served by the curriculum. Given SIUC's on-going diversity thrust, the results of this study will help to highlight any ineffective curricular practices for culturally and internationally diverse students and make recommendations for improvements accordingly.

As a current graduate student at the "heartbeat" of WED curricular activities for at least one year, you have the learning experiences for answering the survey questions and so were selected for the study. The two-page survey will take about 15 minutes to complete, requiring background information on your geographic/ethnic origin as well as perceptions on WED teaching responsiveness and curriculum inclusiveness for culturally and internationally diverse students. Please return the attached survey via e-mail by **December 14, 2007 to cideb04@siu.edu**. If you do not respond to this e-mail survey by December 14, 2007, you will be contacted again with the research request twice during the next three weeks and then no further e-mails will be sent to you. Follow-up focus groups will be held to gain a deeper understanding of the survey responses in arriving at answers to the study questions. You will be required to sign a consent form for focus group participation, which will be video-taped but students will be given pseudo names.

Participation in this study is strictly voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time. All information provided will remain confidential and anonymous. A three-digit code will be assigned to individual e-mails to form a code listing of e-mail respondents for anonymity. A list of respondents' names will not be compiled. Instead, the e-mail code listing will be retained for scheduling the follow-up focus groups with respondents (given pseudo names). A blind copy format will always be used so that the list of recipients does not appear in the header in contacting respondents. All reasonable steps will be taken to protect your identity. Only the researcher, her advisor, or doctoral committee, if necessary, will have access to the code listing and data gathered, which will be destroyed one year after completion of the study. Survey responses will in no way jeopardize your standing in the WED program, so your honest opinions and impressions, whether favorable or unfavorable, are appreciated and invaluable for successfully completing the study. Only aggregate data will be reported. You will be provided with a copy of the study results, if you so desire, in appreciation for your participation. I thank you for your participation in contributing to efforts for enhancing WED students' learning effectiveness.

If you have any further enquiries about this study, please contact me at cideb04@siu.edu or my advisor, Dr. Clora Mae Baker, Workforce Education and Development Department, 212 Pulliam Hall, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, IL 62901-4709. Phone: 618-453-3321. Email: cmbaker@siu.edu.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ferdinand". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Debra Ferdinand, WED Doctoral Student



WED Curriculum Responsiveness Survey

Directions: Check the appropriate box or fill in the blank that best represent your answers for items 1-5.

About Yourself		
1. Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	2. Graduate Status: <input type="checkbox"/> Master's <input type="checkbox"/> Doctorate	3. Length of time in WED Program: <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 1 yr. <input type="checkbox"/> More than 1 yr.
4. Geographic/ Ethnic Origin:	<input type="checkbox"/> United States (U.S.) <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (White) <input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Asian-American <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> International Regions <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> African <input type="checkbox"/> Latin American <input type="checkbox"/> European <input type="checkbox"/> Middle Eastern <input type="checkbox"/> West Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ 5. No. of years in U.S.: _____

Directions: Fill in the blank and check the appropriate box that best represent your answers for items 6 – 23.

Culturally Responsive Teaching			
<p>6. Choose a different number to rank each teaching strategy for "degree of use" in WED courses using the following scale:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Least Used ⇌ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 ⇌ Most Used</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;"> ___ Multimedia Presentation and Discussion ___ Group Work/Projects ___ Guest Speaker ___ Field Trip ___ Individualized Instruction </td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;"> ___ Computer-Based Learning ___ Face to Face Instruction ___ Demonstration and Practice ___ Simulation/Role Play/Case Study ___ Other _____ </td> </tr> </table>		___ Multimedia Presentation and Discussion ___ Group Work/Projects ___ Guest Speaker ___ Field Trip ___ Individualized Instruction	___ Computer-Based Learning ___ Face to Face Instruction ___ Demonstration and Practice ___ Simulation/Role Play/Case Study ___ Other _____
___ Multimedia Presentation and Discussion ___ Group Work/Projects ___ Guest Speaker ___ Field Trip ___ Individualized Instruction	___ Computer-Based Learning ___ Face to Face Instruction ___ Demonstration and Practice ___ Simulation/Role Play/Case Study ___ Other _____		
<p>7. Choose a different number to rank each teaching strategy for "degree of responsiveness" to your individual learning style preference using the following scale:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Least Responsive ⇌ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 ⇌ Most Responsive</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;"> ___ Multimedia Presentation and Discussion ___ Group Work/Projects ___ Guest Speaker ___ Field Trip ___ Individualized Instruction </td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;"> ___ Computer-Based Learning ___ Face to Face Instruction ___ Demonstration and Practice ___ Simulation/Role Play/Case Study ___ Other _____ </td> </tr> </table>		___ Multimedia Presentation and Discussion ___ Group Work/Projects ___ Guest Speaker ___ Field Trip ___ Individualized Instruction	___ Computer-Based Learning ___ Face to Face Instruction ___ Demonstration and Practice ___ Simulation/Role Play/Case Study ___ Other _____
___ Multimedia Presentation and Discussion ___ Group Work/Projects ___ Guest Speaker ___ Field Trip ___ Individualized Instruction	___ Computer-Based Learning ___ Face to Face Instruction ___ Demonstration and Practice ___ Simulation/Role Play/Case Study ___ Other _____		

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Perceptions on WED Teaching Delivery	Nearly Always	Quite Often	Sometimes	Almost Never	Don't know
8. Students' cultural differences are considered.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
9. Students are treated equitably regardless of ethnic/national/geographic origin.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
10. Allowances are made, as needed, for students who speak English as a second language.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
11. Ethnic stereotyping of students is avoided.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
12. Cultural insensitivity occurs in verbal and non-verbal communication with students.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
13. Potential for WED learning transfer to Non-U.S. settings is limited.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
14. Opportunities for students to share cultural differences are limited.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Curriculum Inclusiveness

Perceptions on Cultural Plurality in WED Curriculum	Nearly Always	Quite Often	Sometimes	Almost Never	Don't know
15. Ethnic groups are equitably represented as far as possible in WED content.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
16. Scholarly works of people of color are included.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
17. Perspectives of minority groups are fairly represented.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
18. WED content is diversified, as needed, to facilitate learning transfer to Non-U.S. settings.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
19. WED content is aligned to the interests of the dominant majority group (U.S. Caucasians).	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Go to the next page ⇨

International Responsiveness

Perceptions on International Perspectives in WED	Nearly Always	Quite Often	Sometimes	Almost Never	Don't know
20. WED curricular materials adequately provide international perspectives on course topics.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
21. Works by international authors are selected in presenting global views in curriculum content.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
22. Global views on course topics in WED curriculum include those from developing countries.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
23. U.S. research is preferred to that from other international countries by faculty.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Suggestions for Improvements

Please type in your feedback.

24. How can WED teaching strategies be improved to facilitate culturally and internationally diverse students?

25. How can WED curriculum content be improved to reflect the cultural diversity of the U.S.?

26. How can WED curriculum content be improved to accommodate international perspectives?

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix C

E-mail Focus Group Invitation

Dear Graduate Student:

As you know, I am now planning for my follow-up focus groups. Since there are only a few international students in the WED program, I need as much input from them as possible for the success of my study. Please consider participating in a 2hr focus group this semester. If you accept, send me the day(s) and time(s) that are convenient to you. I am trying to plan the focus groups around participants' availability. Hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Debra Ferdinand
WED Doctoral Student

Appendix D



Focus Group Consent Form
Workforce Education and Development Department

March 27, 2008

Dear Graduate Student:

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of WED graduate students on "WED curriculum responsiveness to culturally and internationally diverse students". Given SIUC's on-going commitment to diversity in achieving its educational mission, this focus group discussion will help to provide a deeper understanding of issues identified on the survey regarding curriculum responsiveness for culturally and internationally diverse students. The study is conducted as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for my Ph.D. in workforce education and development (WED) at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Your acceptance to participate in this research study includes a statement of consent for the focus group procedures and expectations.

I agree to participate in this focus group, and I understand the following:

1. I qualify as a focus group member since I am enrolled in the WED program for at least one year and am at the "heartbeat" of WED curricular activities, which is critical for responding to the focus group discussion questions.
2. My participation in this study is voluntary, and I am free to withdraw at any time.
3. I am required to attend only one focus group discussion, lasting approximately two hours that will address five trigger questions arising out of the previous survey data collected.
4. The focus group questions are designed to tease out my honest opinions or impressions, which will be respected by group members, whether favorable or unfavorable.
5. My focus group responses will in no way jeopardize my standing in the WED program at SIUC.
6. My focus group responses will be video taped and recorded verbatim on mini DVs with pseudo names for respondents so my name cannot be linked to qualitative data. The video taped responses will later be stored in a secured storage container at the researcher's apartment and accessed only by the researcher, and if necessary her advisor, and doctoral committee.
7. The recorded mini DVs will be erased one year after completion of the study.
8. All reports based on this research and written by the researcher will maintain the confidentiality of individuals in the group.
9. Only group data will be reported and no names will be used.
10. Since focus groups involve a group process, all group members will be privy to the discussions that occur during the session.

11. Absolute confidentiality on the part of the participants, themselves, may be difficult to ensure, given the nature of focus groups. However, all reasonable steps will be taken to protect my identity.

12. I agree ____ I disagree ____ that the researcher, Debra Ferdinand, may quote me in her paper.

Name of Participant: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____

If you have any further enquiries about this study, please contact the researcher, Debra Ferdinand at cideb04@siu.edu or my advisor, Dr. Clara Mae Baker, Workforce Education and Development Department, 212 Pulliam Hall, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, IL 62901-4709. Phone: 618-453-3321. Email: cmbaker@siu.edu.

The SIUC Human Subjects Committee has approved this study. Any Questions regarding your rights as a participant in this study may be addressed to the Committee Chairperson, Office of Research Development and Administration, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, IL 62901-4709. Phone: 618-453-4533. Email: siuhsc@siu.edu.

Name of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix E – Cronbach's Index of Internal Consistency for Survey

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.850	.821	34

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	58	84.1
	Excluded ^a	11	15.9
	Total	69	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

From: **permissions (US)** <permissions@sagepub.com>
Date: Fri, Aug 7, 2009 at 12:30 PM
To: cideb04@siu.edu

Dear Debra,

Thank you for your request. Please consider this written permission to use the material detailed below in your research. Proper attribution to the original source should be included. The permission does not include any 3rd party material found within the work. Please contact us for any future usage or publication of your dissertation.

Best,

Adele

From: Debra Ferdinand [mailto:cideb04@siu.edu]
Sent: Thursday, August 06, 2009 12:10 PM
To: order@sagepub.com
Cc: Debra Ferdinand
Subject: Permission to Use Models in Dissertation

Dear Publisher:

I am a doctoral student at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, where I took a Mixed Methods course in order to use this in the design of my dissertation research. I am requesting permission to use the following in my dissertation: Figures 4.3, 6.1, and 7.1 in John C. Creswell and Vicki L. Plano Clark "Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research, which you publish. I would like to have a speedy response from you, since I only just found out about such requirements from my graduate school.

Many thanks,
Debra Ferdinand

From: **Debra Ferdinand** <cideb04@siu.edu>
Date: Sat, Aug 8, 2009 at 2:42 PM
To: "permissions (US)" <permissions@sagepub.com>

Adele:

Thank you for your speedy response. I will abide by your guidelines in using the requested material from your text.

Sincerely,

Debra Ferdinand

 From: **Debra Ferdinand** <cideb04@siu.edu>
 Date: Sun, Aug 9, 2009 at 10:05 AM
 To: "permissions (US)" <permissions@sagepub.com>
 Cc: Debra Ferdinand <cideb04@siu.edu>

Dear Adele:

Thanks again for the prompt response to my permissions request. I do need some clarification on what I am proposing to do in order to accommodate the mixed methods design for my dissertation.

I am using a survey with more closed-ended questions and three open-ended questions. Both datasets are needed for answering different research questions. The open-ended questions answer a qualitative research question and are not an add-on to the survey. In addition, I am using focus groups to follow-up significant results from the survey that need further contextual explanation.

However, I am not sure from the text whether the Follow-Up Explanations model, which I have chosen for my research design, allows for the collection of qualitative data like open-ended questions. The only other models that seem to allow for this are the triangulation and embedded models. Specifically, the embedded model appears to be suitable for collecting concurrent quantitative and qualitative data for answering different research questions like on my survey. Can I then merge these Embedded and Explanations Model to facilitate my design?

If I can do so, then I'll need further permission to use Figures 6.2 and 7.3. in Creswell and Plano Clark (2007): Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research.

Please let me have as soon as possible any feedback and guidance on this request.

Many, many thanks,
 Debra Ferdinand, Doctoral Student
 Southern Illinois University Carbondale

 From: **permissions (US)** <permissions@sagepub.com>
 Date: Mon, Aug 10, 2009 at 12:37 PM
 To: Debra Ferdinand <cideb04@siu.edu>

Dear Debra,

You have our permission to adapt the material below and use the figures, as long as it is cited as "Adapted from..."

Best,

Adele

From: Debra Ferdinand [mailto:cideb04@siu.edu]

Sent: Sunday, August 09, 2009 8:06 AM

To: permissions (US)

Cc: Debra Ferdinand

Subject: Re: FW: Permission to Use Models in Dissertation

From: **Debra Ferdinand** <cideb04@siu.edu>

Date: Mon, Aug 10, 2009 at 2:08 PM

To: "permissions (US)" <permissions@sagepub.com>

Thank you for your prompt and favorable response.

Debra

Appendix G: Data Analysis Matrix

Data Analysis Matrix			
Research Questions	Survey Items	Theoretical Analysis	Statistical Analysis
Demographics or Background Information	1-5		Descriptive (frequencies, percentages)
1. To what extent are WED teaching strategies (to include delivery) responsive to culturally and internationally diverse graduate students?	6-14	Critical Race Theory (CRT) Critical Education Theory (CET)	Descriptive (frequencies and Spearman's rho)
2. To what extent does the WED graduate curriculum content represent the cultural plurality of the U.S. society?	15-19	CRT, Ethno- centrism, Multi-cultural Education	Descriptive (frequencies, percentages)
3. To what extent does the WED graduate curriculum provide international perspectives (to include developing countries) for course topics?	20-23	CRT, Ethno- centrism	Descriptive (frequencies, percentages)

Research Questions	Survey Items	Theoretical Analysis	Statistical Analysis
4. What improvements, if any, can be made in facilitating culturally and internationally diverse graduate students?	24-26	CET CRT	Qualitative (content analysis, frequencies)
5. In what ways do the qualitative data help to explain the quantitative results?			Qualitative (content analysis, frequencies)

Appendix H: Survey Open-Ended Responses

Q24. How can WED teaching strategies be improved to facilitate culturally and internationally diverse students?

E-mail

- No changes are needed. What WED has so far is working.
- Employing international faculty.
- Encouraging research beyond U.S. workforce Dynamics and concerns
- Study class population backgrounds before starting a course.
- I have not noted an obvious need for improvement in my time on campus or in on-line courses.
- I don't know.
- WED does a good job of this already. I don't see any need for improvement, but that comes from "my" perspective which may be jaded/biased.
- WED already uses strategies that allow the inclusion of international students and their culturally diverse backgrounds.
- As an instructor myself, I find that I spend time with international students outside of class explaining course content so they may understand it better. I am not familiar enough with how well WED faculty make themselves available to students, but this seems to be an appropriate and important part of faculty responsibilities.
- No response.
- I do not know what they could do that they do not already do.
- No response.
- Most of the courses, I have taken, encourage and allow for strategies that are inclusive in nature.
- Wed teaching strategies could be improved by focusing more on the international aspect of education and providing more diversity training to faculty which will help them to know how to deal with a diverse student population.

- Not Sure. I want relative information as I would be looking for a job here and not there. But, some students or myself could find that we need a little insight to other countries. The problem is who knows what countries and to what extent as all are different to some extent.
- Assignments can be made instructing students to research work from international sources and share findings in class. Study groups can be formed to share information across international lines.
- Turn empathy into knowledge and understanding
- The only problem I have noticed for them is this is Workforce Ed and some have never worked here so they are lost when talking about it or ways.
- No response.
- No response.
- I feel these issues are already being addressed by WED
- The principles of training do apply across racial or ethnic boundaries, though the context of the topic may be different depending on how several factors. I feel it is imperative that each student interested in international workforce issues be given permission to lead the research and inquiry of how training principles and opportunities apply to other nations or cultures and to share that new insight with other students during class.
- No response.
- I don't know that the faculty teaching strategies can be changed. Most have taught for years, are set [sic] in their ways, and there is no incentive to try new or different strategies.
- Faculty could be more diverse or at least more aware of cultural differences. Although we are in the United States, quite a few students on this campus are not and also pay for their education so the curriculum should be made more diverse. Moreover, in a world that is becoming more globalized, it would not be a good idea, in my opinion, to remain centered on nation/state level issues.
- Assignments can be made instructing students to research work from international sources and share findings in class. Study groups can be formed to share information across international lines.
- Students can be asked to share what they have learned from a culture other than their own in each class venue.

- No suggestions
- Teaching strategies can be improved to facilitate culturally and internationally diverse students by insuring that all instructors complete courses in diversity and global sociology.

Paper

- No response.
- I don't see any improvements needed
- No response.
- No response.
- Prof. X (alias name substituted) needs_sensitivity training to international students. He often uses slang to identify a specific ethnic group.
- HIRE DIVERSE FACULTY. PAY ATTENTION IN CLASS WHEN USING INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH
- No response.
- They can introduce cultural related topics specifically in the HR courses
- Engage the students in more discussion in the class. We sometimes as students just sit in class and never feel engaged in part of the class by discussing relevant things in the world that could pertain to things in class.
- International perspectives from authors, educators, various minority groups, etc. not being utilized more often, if at all, in the WED curriculum definitely sounds like a needed area for improvement. SIU has a bad habit of keeping in-house grads to teach here after graduation. Unfortunately, as you know this can keep perspectives limited. While researching a division of CASA here as SIU a few years ago I noticed that were 27/31 teachers that were all graduates of SIU!
- No response.
- Moyby [*sic*] by focusing in international workforce issues.
- Diverse staff will impact this subject
- No response.
- No response.

- No response
- Be more prescriptive [sic]to students + instructor relation to the course
- Make WED instructors, who are not of non-white origin, present a cohesive plan to adequately address the needs of international students.
- More diversity classes and diverse faculty
- No suggestions at this time
- I think the idea of participation points should be revisited. It doesn't work for all culture especially those from Africa and Asia.
- The faculty must become more diverse with teaching styles and diversity inclusiveness
- I feel the students should be giving a questionnaire on how the [sic] want the problem to deal with and what the [sic] feel the problems are.
- Invite diverse guest to share a different perspective
- More professor that are culturally aware of the material
- Improve non-domestic opportunities for discussion & implication
- No response.
- Relate topics to their countries of origin
- No response.
- ONE PARTICULAR PROFESSOR IS ENTIRELY ARASIVE (Prof. X alias name substituted). REGARDLESS OF YOUR RACE, GENDER, OR NATIONALITY, HE, AND HIS STULE ARE AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT'S WRONG IN EDUCATION TODAY. IF YOU'RE NOT ONE OF HIS FAVORITES (WHITE, FEMALE) YOU'RE IN FOR A BUMPY RIDE
- No response.
- No reply
- No idea HR certificates
- No response.
- No response.

- Through hiring more international students as WED GAs or even faculty members
- No response.
- Because there're not so many international students staying in WED, they're sometimes overlooked! WED teaching strategies should pay more attentions to international students.
- Curriculum that is inclusive and relevant to discuss cultures.
- IDENTIFY BEST PRACTICES TO FACILITATE TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR CULTURALLY AND INTERNATIONAL DIVERSE STUDENTS AND EMPLOY THEM
- Offering courses focused on international affairs could be beneficial
- No response.

Q25. *How can WED curriculum content be improved to reflect the cultural diversity of the population in the U.S?*

E-Mail

- No changes are needed. What WED has so far is working.
- Employing faculty where all possible minorities are represented within the faculty
- Create courses that address specific minority issues within the U.S. workforce
- Introducing research done by minority researchers
- I don't know. I am a white male with no exclusive rights and statistically am a minority in today's sensitive work environment. Too much sensitivity is worse than not enough sensitivity, if you objectively study the results.
- I have not noted an obvious need for improvement in my time on campus or in on-line courses
- Include more information on culturally diverse experiences and more materials about different cultures.
- I don't know
- By presenting more than one cultural perspective to students either through lecture material, presentations or class
- Guest speakers from a variety of cultural/ethnic backgrounds
- Articles. Authors reflecting various cultural/ethnic backgrounds
- Supplemental course material (videos/further readings, etc) reflecting a variety of authors
- No response.
- Ditto as above
- No response.

- Possibly to not only explore how topics are viewed in the US but in all nationalities. For example, to bring in more examples of perhaps evaluation practices in other countries. The courses I had included such examples, but I think mostly because there was diverse student population in the room that brought this to life, not because the curriculum already entailed it
- Hire a more diverse faculty from US and outside the US to teach/train about education which will help the students to have a less ethnocentric view of education and be more open to international perspectives.
- By offering class that cover different cultures to include behaviors, learning styles and character content.
- I think it is doing a good job. A few specific classes for diverse students to help them understand the US culture.
- No response.
- No response.
- It is already being addressed, WED is doing a good job of this
- Given we now are asked to survive and thrive in a global free trade zone environment, the more we know to help us compare and contrast employment systems and needs of workers among and across nations, socioeconomic ladders, and racial and ethnic divides, the better.
- No response.
- More than one diversity course could be taught.
- I am not sure. Maybe integrate more works foreign researchers.
- Instructors can make an effort to broaden the perspective of the class by discussion and assignment of projects that highlight diverse populations.
- No suggestions
- Ask *Prof. Y* (pseudo name), an adjunct professor at *Midwestern university* (pseudo name). You won't need to look any further.

Paper

- No response.
- By marketing towards different groups
- No response.

- No response.
- More from the Mexican perspective.
- N/A
- No response.
- No response.
- Have WED faculty work in communities (cultural diversity)
- No response.
- I feel minority content is rarely used and discussed unless you have a minority instructor. To me Caucasians instructors only deal with safe topics and don't open up to discuss content that's prevalent [*sic*] to minority students.
- Obviously, include it (more diverse content) in curriculum.
- No response.
- I think WED 581 workforce Diversity (class) Does a good job in reflecting the cultural Diversity in the US.
- Structure learning styles from international locations that match the international population by percentages
- No response.
- No response.
- Include more subject diversity
- A laborious process, that should include people who are not of the dominant culture, putting together a comprehensive curriculum to be considered by the dean of the College of Education.
- More diverse faculty
- Same as above

- The content should be more inclusive & global perspective, process and research. How does Workforce Devt. take place in Europe, Asia, Africa for instance?
- This can be done by including information from other countries and using curriculum to express cultural diversity
- I think more work should use cultural diversity
- Touch on the topics that affect those diverse groups
- Needs to be included by adding cultural diversity specific courses
- See #24
- No response.
- More example given
- No response.
- I THINK WED WOULD DO WELL TO HIRE PROFESSORS IN A MORE ETHNICITY BALANCED WAY. WHAT IS THE WHITE TO NON-WHITE RATIO FOR PROFESSORS? NO ASIANS. NO HISPANICS... AND MOSTLY OLD (60+). CURRICULUM IS DIRECTLY INFLUENCED BY THE INSTRUCTOR. DIVERSE FACULTY = DIVERSE CURRICULUM
- By open discussion
- No reply
- No idea HR certificates
- No response.
- No response.
- By studying and reading more international authors or researchers
- No response.
- Same as above.
- BRING THE CULTURAL DIVERSITY ISSUE TO THE COGNITIVE LEVEL IN THE CLASSROOM
- I think it is adequate

- No response

Q26. How can WED curriculum content be improved to accommodate international perspectives?

E-Mail

- No changes are needed. What WED has so far is working.
- Create courses addressing international workforce issues
- Create basic courses that addresses theory of Workforce education
- Study the politics in the world economic system and introduce the polarization of national and business decisions.
- I have not noted an obvious need for improvement in my time on campus or in on-line courses.
- I think they do a pretty good job already.
- I don't know
- Today's business world included geographically related issues and knowledge, therefore students who are planning to be involved in the business world should have to a basic geography class where cultures is covered so they have the knowledge they need when traveling abroad.
- I think that WED faculty should remain current on what other countries are doing with regard to their specific specialty area... so they have a broader knowledge base. This may be more appropriate in some specializations than others however.
- No response.
- Should they be?

- No response.
- Maybe there is a need to offer a course that discusses international perspectives on HRD, for example. All students could benefit due to the fact that as we work out in our field there is always going to be a lot gained from understanding the viewpoints of co-workers who may be a different nationality than ourselves. Personally, I gain more enrichment from discussing various topics with other peers, culturally different than myself.
- Wed curriculum content could include more courses related to diversity, global education and international workforce and also promote strongly the participation of international students in the classroom instead of asking them “to assimilate” to the American education content. We should include international expertise in the content and the teaching strategies.
- Same as above
- International teachers and classes to prepare for global work and communications as we are becoming more linked each day.
- No response.
- No response.
- More international exposure is good
- It is up to each instructor to recognize those areas where an international perspective is warranted, and to integrate in views, perspectives, and writings of a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Some classes would be easier to integrate in a global perspective than others. You have to always remember who your audience is, and do your best to meet the needs, interests, and expectations, of as many students as possible. No one curriculum fits all needs.
- No response.
- I don't know.
- Same as 25.
- Curriculum committee could invite international students to share ideas for broadening curriculum content.

- No suggestions
- Same ans. To #25.

Paper

- No response.
- None at this time
- No response.
- No response.
- I don't know
- N/A
- No response.
- No response.
- TRAVELL!!!
- No response.
- I feel it can be improved by using international content and material to further expand our learning. Bring in guest speakers with international perspectives to engage in discussion with students who don't understand international issues and beliefs. Instructors have to engage students [*sic*] perspectives more in their discussions in class. Presidential candidate Barack Obama is challenging America today to look at ourselves and discuss content in a diversity way to end misconceptions of minorities. But he is a minority.
- See answer above (25)
- No response.
- by [*sic*] Focusing on international issues as well, by having a more Diverse Staff that would be more open to international students.
- Unknown
- No response.

- No response.
- No response.
- I am not sure improvement is needed.
- See above.
- Include international instructors
- Same as above
- The texts and learning materials referred [sic] to should reflect all perspectives available internationally not just those selected locally.
- I am not sure.
- I think the students should tell the school what they feel needs to be done to fix the problems.
- include writings from international authors
- invite internationally interested guest to share their perspective
- More research and presentation of the info needs to be provided
- See #24
- No response.
- Have more examiners or people from different nationalities come + speak to classes.
- No response.
- SO MUCH OF WHAT WE HEAR IS SOLELY GEARED TOWARD THE US ECONOMY, WORKFORCE, AND EDUCATION SYSTEM. MORE CASE STUDIES, PERHAPS FROM "OTHER COUNTRIES" WOULD BE HELPFUL.
- More reading about other culture
- No reply
- No idea HR certificates
- No response.
- No response.

- Through opening more globalized perspectives classes, possibly by inviting global company's CEOs or reading Global perspectives on US Education & Training
- No response.
- Same as above
- HIRE INTERNATIONAL FACULTY MEMBERS TO IMPROVE INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES
- See #24
- No response.

Appendix I – Abridged Focus Group Transcripts

Focus Group 1 Video (DVD) Transcript

Conference Room at a Midwestern University

March 31, 2008 – 2:30 p.m. – 4:00p.m.

(Pseudo names are used and other more personalized statements truncated in most instances for confidentiality)

MODERATOR: Welcome everybody to our focus group.... I focused my research topic because there was so much in the Southern 150 that related to diversity. As a matter a fact, if I could just read a paragraph there, where it says:

Diversity will drive our ability to attain our educational mission, as our world increasingly changes so must we. We will not only respect but also value differences in all there forms of expressions as necessary to the creation of a view of each other that is balanced and healthy. We will be known for a faculty and a student body that reflects the human and ethnic diversity and intellectual pluralism of the world.

- Group introductions omitted for confidentiality

Moderator (smiling intentionally): speak freely. I just wanna explain the purpose of the focus group. So far, you know that the survey has been distributed, and what I've done is to ah, is to do a preliminary, am, summary of the results. It's not the whole thing; but what I did, I just looked at trends and issues that were identified in the survey data, at this first point; and out of that I established or developed five trigger questions for our discussion that will give me an idea of what kind of learning experiences actually influenced your opinions

and perceptions on the survey, because you just tick, yuh know, what, what the response would be whether it's always, never, sometimes and so on, but we don't know why (stressed) you did that. So today, we just wanna go in and delve a little bit into what (voice pitched) made you, am, tick a certain response and so on.

We may not (stressed) sometimes have the same opinions; but we're here to respect everybody's view. So with that said, am, any questions? Because I know we're kinda running behind time (smiling).

- Brief exchanges not pertinent to research questions and omitted

MODERATOR: And I'll give you the background. I'll do a preamble to where we are coming from. OK. Now, I know it's been a few months since you filled in the survey, so I'll just give you the definition for curriculum responsiveness in the context of the study, because we have to keep it in that context. There are two components or elements to curriculum responsiveness in the context of the study:

The first one is *the equitable representation of ethnic groups and international perspectives in curriculum content whenever possible*, and the second one is *the incorporation of different, different teaching strategies that promote learning in students*.

And so with that focus, there are four variables of interest that I'm looking at. Obviously *teaching strategies*, and how responsive those are to the cultural diversity of the students; I'm looking at *curriculum content inclusiveness*; then the *international responsiveness* of the content; and the last part is just like

suggestions for improvements. So, so far I looked at what seem to be an issue rather than what everybody agreed on, because that's what we learn more about. So the first question ...

What preferred teaching strategies promote learning for you and are these strategies used in WED classes? (brief period of silence)

SPEAKER1G1: I like the face-to-face interaction, and I was privileged to have all my classes offered that way (nodding head in confirming way).

MODERATOR: OK. And how did that sort of impact your learning performance?

SPEAKER1G1: Well in relation to, well I know that for me I would just have to contrast it to an on-line environment or distance learning; I've always preferred the face-to-face, that really help my performance; have them there to deliver the instruction. I could ask questions and get the feedback right on hand, so for me that worked for me (nodding head in confirming way).

SPEAKER2G1: I feel the same way, face-to-face interaction and also; not only for the instructor but also the student. I guess, as I am not, ah, any way computer oriented. I haven't did any on-line courses, and I prefer, I mean face-to-face interaction, in my, in my opinion (hand gesture to the chest) it helped me a lot to interact with people than to interact with computers.

MODERATOR: And so, in the interaction, am, what brought out, yuh know, the learning for you in the interaction with the students or with teachers?

SPEAKER2G1: Ah (slight sigh). Can I specify my answer because we're talking about international influence, yuh know (hand gesticulating) influence?

Probably if I was in France, probably using a computer to get the courses, we'll be probably different than the U.S. where I'm a foreigner. I don't know the culture. I don't know very well the people, so I needed the interaction with people and especially interaction with other classmate because, am, it help me a lot to learn about the culture, about people, and also how people perceive me and react to my opinion, ah, which was sometime different from the American opinion. And so for me, face-to-face was interesting (smiling and nodding head in a confirming way).

MODERATOR: OK!

SPEAKER3G1: I seem to have a different philosophy, yuh know, in respect to face-to-face instruction and interaction in the classroom and stuff like that (looking at his laptop screen). From my personal experience is that, my learning retention seem to be limited, whenever theories, concepts, and everything are solely introduced in face-to-face interaction learning, yuh know. I, my learning retention, which is, and other measures of learning performance or whatever the performance you want to measure, is that you give me the theories and concepts in classroom right but, give me ample time to go outside the classroom to conduct my own independent research and study on that domain, on that content, that helps me to retain (hands gesticulating in a confirming way), yuh know, ah, my learning, and my record is that, once when I'm able to retain is probably gonna take me a long time to forget that ah, thing, items or concepts, ah theories or concepts or whatsoever being introduced in the face-to-face session, so I personally learn best (stressed) with ah, with opportunities given to me to

conduct my own independent studies and do ah, multimedia interactions and everything, and I view face-to-face instruction as just a guidance, and if that, that, does not basically going to influence my learning retention much, that's what I feel about face-to-face session (shaking head in an affirming way).

MODERATOR: So how does the face-to-face instruction, how has it impact your learning performance?

MODERATOR: OK!

SPEAKER3G1: If that helps, yes so face-to-face instruction does not help me much, but real time, real application outside of the classroom ah, ah, independent moments to conduct my own studies, those help my learning retention a great deal, so yeh (shaking head in confirming way).

MODERATOR: OK (pause). **SPEAKER4G1**, I guess, we just need to hear from you.

SPEAKER4G1: Well, I have never taken an on-line class.

MODERATOR: OK!

SPEAKER4G1: because I prefer instruction, ah going to the classroom, getting a lecture, having an opportunity to have discussion on the topic, and I actually learn quite a bit from other students (emphasized) in the classroom (shaking head in a confirm way), whereas, when you're on-line, you're by yourself, and also am, which theory (pointing to student with computer), models and everything, and ah (gesticulating with hands) kind of, on-line I think I would lose the personal element?

MODERATOR: Uh hm.

SPEAKER4G1: Ah, which is very beneficial for me (pointing toward self), especially being in the classroom. I need that structure (shaking head in a confirming way).

MODERATOR: What? What is it about the environment of being in a group and having the teacher there with you, that personal interaction? What? How does it benefit you? You did say that it benefits you.

SPEAKER4G1: It benefits me in terms of retention, in terms of understanding concepts and theories, because some of the instructors may not explain it where I can understand it, but then the other students would have some input, instead in a different way? It's like OK, I get it now! (Nodding head).

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER4G1: But it's like am, there's different views of looking at the same thing, and some of those views are easier for me to understand (shaking head in a confirming way).

MODERATOR: Let me throw this out to you (pauses with a slight smile). It appears that the face-to-face instruction is used am, most of the time. Do you think this is a situation where, it's a one-size fit all? And, for example, in the case of student X, he prefers more reinforcement and out-of-class assignments.

SPEAKER4G1: I don't think it should be a one-size fits all; because I think ... some of our younger ones are so computer literate, ah mean they bring their computer to class (pointing at [student with laptop]); they always on-line; whereas someone like me, an older learner (stressed), this is all foreign. Yuh know, it's hard to keep up on the computer, yuh know, I'm not that computer literate. But, I

think the trend is more going on-line, am, because of all our budget cuts in terms of faculty members that won't be replaced; a lot of it is going to be on-line;

MODERATOR: Yeah!

SPEAKER4G1: and they're young students, yuh know they can keep up (looking across and pointing to student with laptop, while shaking head).

SPEAKER2G1: Sometimes, I, even you know, with face-to-face interaction, they give you, ah, assignments, and you go on-line, and you do your own research; you know what I mean, or they give you like group assignments, or I don't really think that they teach you in class, and then you don't have anything to do with computers or on-line or Internet because most of the time, what we're doing based on our assignment is using the Internet, and we're doing research. I don't really think they're two opposite things, but if you're talking about ... (word in audio not clear), you feel more comfortable, ah, to be in the classroom communicating with students. And am, although then you know having online courses. I think it really depend on people, I mean. I know that, you know, I would prefer that than, being behind or managing a course on line. I need also personal interaction with people (hands gesticulating).

MODERATOR: SPEAKER1G1, I'll just am, throw out the last question to you. You made the statement that "you had all (stressed) your classes in face-to-face interaction. OK. Now when you said all, am do you mean that you were able to get face-to-face instruction in, in all of the classes, but was it the only the one teaching strategy that was used, because what the survey showed, people liked demonstration and practice, and they also liked the multi-media presentation and

discussion. So with the face-to-face you don't have those two. But these three teaching strategies, face-to-face of course was number one, to the top, and then demonstration and practice and multi-media presentation and discussion. I just wanna be clear that when you say you had all (stressed) your classes in face-to-face instruction, it, it throws a different light, you know, on what the survey is showing, and, and am what happens in the classroom.

SPEAKER1G1: Well, doesn't the face-to-face include the multi-media?

MODERATOR: Yeah, but, the focus, most of the delivery and the content is done through the multi-media and through discussion rather than the instructor, am explaining the content to you and giving examples just through face-to-face interaction.

SPEAKER1G1: I, actually did, because, am, are you referring to the multi-media? Could you explain what the multi-media is in terms of Power-Point and that sought of a thing (leans forward)? Cause I could probably just...

MODERATOR: Of videos.

SPEAKER1G1: Yeah, I, (serious expression), I, probably just one or probably two classes that didn't utilize anything like that but, invariably all the classes had a mixture of, of had something;

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER1G1: Whether or not it was the primary focus (gesticulating with hands) through which the instruction came. But, they incorporated it.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER2G1: Yeah! Through the use of Power Point to communicate the message than having like traditional lecture. Ah mean (pointing to self) in my case, I never really had traditional lectures.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER2G1: They used multi-media, yuh know, to support their, yuh know, message (shaking head).

MODERATOR: Good. So you had, you had ... (acknowledging speaker to the left)

SPEAKER4G1: When I think of traditional lectures, I think of the instructor just (hands outstretched) standing up talking to us just giving us information. But, most of my classes, the instructors kind of led the discussion and everybody had some input. So, it wasn't like a traditional lecture.

MODERATOR: OK!

SPEAKER4G1: And there were usually small groups, ten fifteen people, where I've been in, lectures with three hundred people where nobody gets to say anything. So, am, that distinction should be made; what you mean by lecture (shaking head to affirm statement).

MODERATOR: OK. Am, we, in the last year, I think in 2006, just when this whole diversity thrust, am, took off, the WED hired ah, two African American instructors and one of an American Indian heritage. If you had any of these instructors ah, for classes, have you found a difference in, in their teaching methodology, the strategies that they use? Or you'd say, even though they are, am, diverse in terms of eth, ethnicity (stressed) am, they use the same

strategies. Have you seen any difference, yuh know, in their diversity in the faculty.

SPEAKER2G1: I notice a difference, but I'm not sure if I, if it's correct to talk about teaching strategy, but I don't know, I'm gonna explain myself. I just notice a difference based on their perception of diversity on how they respond to diversity, Yuh know, that you, I have felt that some of them are more open than other instructors and try to stimulate (hand gesticulating in a forward motion) this, yuh know, diversity, control diversity, and this difference, ah, in the classroom, am in a position to people would try to shut down, you know, this type of situation. I don't know if it's part of the teaching strategy, but, am, trying to motivate people to talk about their background; ah knowing that the background may be difference. I think for me is really positive than people trying not to hear; they don't care if you have a different background.

MODERATOR: OK. I think we exhausted that question. So, if you have anything else to add, I, before we move on to the second question?

SPEAKER3G1: Yeah, I, I want to talk (slight scratch of head), although I was about to kind of like contribute to what I see as the trend, yuh know, in respect to young learners is that, we are in a process right now preparing educators to educate young learners; they're coming off like the X generation, yuh know, computers and everything, My Space ... (slight pause)

MODERATOR: You mean learning how to facilitate and teach them.

SPEAKER3G1: Yeah, so we now need to, (gesticulating in an up and down motion with hands) educate educators to teach (looking down at computer

screen, while participant to the side of him bends over to see what he's looking at, and she smiles), to, to be working with those kind of learners in the long run, yuh know, what we see at the moment, that most, most of our lecturers or professors, they are like at least in their probably like forties or early forties (slight chuckle comes from some participants) , and my feeling is that, also research shows us, usually they're not comfortable with integration of technologies, and stuff like that. So (pointing to self) I'm about to graduate and then I, yuh know, probably gonna be the one may be can stay relevant with the young learners, yuh know, and that matter, just for example so (shaking head).

MODERATOR: So, are you saying that you think more emphasis or there should more technology integration in the teaching delivery and in, in addition to the face-to-face, and other strategies that are used?

SPEAKER3G1: I'm a strong advocate for technologies.

MODERATOR: OK. I got yuh (shaking head in agreement). Alright. Ok, let's move on the second question. Ah, again, a preliminary review of the survey indicates wide variances in student perceptions on the consideration given to students' cultural differences in WED teaching delivery. And when I talk about cultural differences here, I am mainly referring to language, racial diversity, and geographic or national origin; Ok, those three because when we talk about cultural differences, it incorporate a lot. So, my question is coming out from whatever the data, ah mean, people had varying, varying ah, (gesticulating with hands in a wide motion) perceptions on how cultural differences are accommodated. The question is:

Is awareness of students' cultural differences (language, ethnicity, national origin) demonstrated in WED teaching delivery and what in your learning experience has influenced your response?

SPEAKER3G1: Are you, are you saying that, are you asking if, the WED curriculum, yuh know, incorporate cultural diversity in, into its content? I... (Looks somewhat confused).

MODERATOR: Not, not so much the content because we'll come to that question next. But in that interaction ... (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER3G1: Ok, the interaction (Nods head to show understanding)

MODERATOR: In actually delivering, am, their skills and knowledge or imparting that to students. How do they accommodate for the cultural differences? Ah as SPEAKER2G1, sought a pointed to (pointing to participant SPEAKER2G1).

SPEAKER4G1: So you're saying the WED instructors, do they teach to the different cultures in the classroom?

MODERATOR: Yeah. Do they demonstrate an awareness of cultural differences (hands gesticulating outward) in their teaching delivery? because ... (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER3G1: Ah, I, I, I think they, they do basically because; for example, I may be able to provide ... (word not clear on audio) that they are not going to cite example that may offend me as an Asian, yuh know, so that demonstrate their, their awareness of cultural diversity in the classroom, yuh know, they're not going to say something that will offend a Cambodian or Asian

in general, so these examples, I, I think they are culturally aware (eyebrows raised) of diversity in the classroom.

MODERATOR: Ok. That will be for national origin. Am, what about language? I am just, yuh know, throwing out another cultural difference because of ... (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER2G1: Sometimes, I, I don't know if it's a, I mean it's also, I've been in another departments, so I What I'm saying is not really just related to the WED department but that's your study. But I find that sometimes, am, when you express yourself and you, your first language is not English, so of course you have an accent, am you make mistakes; and I, I experience two situations: First situation someone asking you to repeat because, unless he did not understand what said or what you asked; and the other situation, someone would ask you to repeat not because they didn't understand your sentence, but because they don't want to answer you or I really felt that or try to ignore you or you know because when you talk and then two or three times they ask you to repeat what you said; and then you repeat it and then it's ah, ah I can, it's not just one time. It's two or three times the same cause (word not clear on audio) that the person; you felt that way ; so then you say you not going to ask any more questions or you know, come and to participate so I really, ah, (hands gesticulating outward) experience two situations of people really am, they didn't understand you because they confused or using the word or wrong word; stuff like that; but other people (eyes squinting) you know that they understand you but may be the question was not something, you know, they expected (slight chuckle) or ... (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER3G1: Or, it may not be easy.

SPEAKER2G1: Yeah, really, to be honest it was not just in WED, WED courses; also in other courses so, I think that, you know, as international students that's really; I've been here more than now five years so I've been experience two situations; you see the difference, you can tell the difference, when really they don't understand you, ah, because you speak too fast ... (audio not clear) like I usually do (hands gesticulating outward with a slight smile) or because they do want to answer your questions.

MODERATOR: And so, you, you mentioned that you, you don't ask questions, so how does that imp., you know, does it have any impact on your, your performance?

SPEAKER2G1: You know I said, I said that's the reaction that may be some people expect you to do but I not saying that I don't ask; yeah, I didn't stop asking questions (voice gets louder while smiling) (Moderator breaks in)

MODERATOR: I thought I heard you say ...

SPEAKER2G1: No, no but the reaction is that, you know, someone is all the time, you know, you like the only one in the class not speaking very well, you may be, you know what I mean, so the first reaction is like, why should I share because all the time that's the same thing.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER2G1: But I should say the second situation where people trying somewhat to ignore me is really rare situation, but it happens so (nodding to confirm statement).

MODERATOR: Ah SPEAKER1G1, you have anything to share, in terms of your experience, ah, with the way cultural differences, in particular, language, ethnicity, or national origin is accommodate in teaching delivery in WED classes?

SPEAKER1G1: Mm (pauses; shows uncertain expression about the question)

MODERATOR: Well let me ask it this way, have you had, am, experiences where you were able to share your cultural difference or explain in a situation how things are done differently in another country? Or were you just expected to adjust to whatever, am, the majority or dominant group culture was being talked about at that point?

SPEAKER1G1: Am, (leans forward) I, can't recall (speaking slowly) really; I can't recall a specific instance, when I, I, shared, but I'm not saying that it didn't happen, it's just that I can't recall it right now.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER3G1: Well I, I'm sorry. My experience that I would be asked to contribute; I would be asked in the classroom to contribute (hands gesticulating outward) say, or what do people do in ... [my country]? Yuh know, and they would like to know the exact particulars and everything in one of the class ... that I do not wish to disclose (moderator breaks in)

MODERATOR: Is this in the WED program?

SPEAKER3G1: Yeah. Ah, I was asked to, yuh know, explain the situation of the ... (audio not clear) happen in Cambodia, so I, I thought it was a pretty neat ah discussion back then. Well my personal philosa..., perception is that

people, people, yuh know in the, in the academic community (hands gesticulating outward) have tremendous respect for cultural diversity, that's what I feel and also their awareness of, of cultural diversity. I think they have a strong ... (pauses and looks up) what do you say... (Moderator breaks in)

MODERATOR: Awareness?

SPEAKER3G1: A full awareness (nodding head in confirmation), a strong awareness of cultural diversity and they respect that (leaning forward), yuh know, from my interaction with people in the, in the academic community.

MODERATOR: OK. Now with that respect, am, have you ever encountered any sort of, am, reaction where you were expected to behave in a certain way because you're an Asian...

SPEAKER3G1: I, I (Moderator breaks in)

MODERATOR: Now, now, that's if you have experienced something like that.

SPEAKER4G1: I think ah, the WED department ... is trying to be more ... (makes hand gesture to moderator searching for word).

MODERATOR: Culturally responsive?

SPEAKER4G1: Yes. I think they're trying but, I also think that this is all new territory for them; cause like you said, up until two years ago, they had no faculty members that were not White. So, their involvement in cultural diversity is fairly recent. I think they're, they're trying (stressed) and they are making some strides, and the only incidence I think of is when the professors told me that I wrote well; Why wouldn't I write well?

MODERATOR: Now, am (small giggle from around the table)...

SPEAKER4G1: Yuh know, I'm a doctoral student. Why can't I write well?

Why is that so surprising?

MODERATOR: Or, you said in a surprising way; it was not complementing you (looking at participant checking for clarification)

SPEAKER4G1: No. No. Yuh know: Oh, you write well? (mimicking professor). Well of course I do! What, what do you think I'm doing here? But ... (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER3G1: I've heard that before (smiling and nodding in confirmation)

SPEAKER4G1: You've heard that before? I'm sure you have. It's like some things are surprising to them. That's because its, its new to them, but I think they are (stressed) trying; and they're making some strides; and their, the department is diversified; yuh know there're more minority and international students now than there were when, yuh know, five years ago, oh 2001 when I did my master's degree?

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER4G1: So, they're trying (looking at the rest of participants and nodding).

MODERATOR: Now you said that, that it's new to them; ok, the whole thing about cultural differences ... (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER4G1: Yes.

MODERATOR: And diversity. If it's new, there're probably gonna be instances or situations where, faculty would demonstrate some, some struggle (gesticulating with hands for emphasis) with dealing with cultural differences; they may not get it right (stressed)....

SPEAKER1G1: Well in terms of the trying, I remember, getting an assignment and they said the, the paper had to discuss from another country, so it couldn't be in the U.S.; so actually, so I see that as trying per se.

MODERATOR: OK. Good.

SPEAKER1G1: The whole essence of the paper, it couldn't be in the U.S. (nodding in confirmation).

MODERATOR: Now it's not, it's that, do you get that sense am, across classes (gesticulating with hands) or it's just ah mean a one, one-time experience (smiling); what I'm trying yuh know (making a wide moving motion with hand for emphasis)

SPEAKER4G1: I've never had that class.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER1G1: Well it was 466, the Foundation course with Dr. Baker and there was a paper that we had to write in there and am I think she said it should really be about workforce in another country, am apart from ...

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER4G1: let me just add that this whole idea of cultural diversity; you mentioned at the beginning it was part of *Southern at 150*.

MODERATOR: Yes.

SPEAKER4G1: *Southern at 150* is a fairly recent document in the last five years, and one of the reasons it was included in the document in my opinion is that it was a problem on the campus or else there would not be this push to increase cultural diversity; so that's another reason why I think it's so, am..., recent because prior to this document, the instructors in WED and in any other, am departments, did not have to think (stressed) about diversity (nodding to affirm statement).

MODERATOR: OK. So, how would you assess, ah mean, the instructors' preparation for diversity? Do you think they, they are getting that support that they need to deal with it or it's overlooked or it's not placed on the front burner as such?

SPEAKER3G1: My feeling is that, when, say for example, when they are designing a lesson plan or lecture plan or whatsoever; my feeling is that, that is not intentional, that is not intentional, what I'm trying to say is that, they're not; the elements of cultural diversity is not intentionally included in the... it comes like a situation arises, yuh know at the class carries on, when we have an example that is related then people will, yuh know like, ah, from nowhere ask you to share your experience; so it's not, like intentionally ah, so what I'm trying to say it's not pre-included (squints to indicate difficulty with language), in yuh know (moderator fills in end of statement)

MODERATOR: It's not included in the preparation

SPEAKER3G1: what I'm trying to say, in, yeah; so it comes as (hands in the air to indicate on occasion) yuh know, when it comes it comes.

MODERATOR: OK. Am, the reason I asked that, when you compare that with the focus of the *Sothern 150* initiative, it's actually, it has diversity as a core value; so whatever we do: if we teach (hands moving in a forward gesture), if we assess, if we play sports; whatever we do as SIU, we have to remember that diversity and that inclusiveness is the core value in moving forward to achieve the goal of commitment to excellence and becoming a top research university. I'll leave that there. Ok. I'll move on to the third question:

Curriculum inclusiveness is defined as a concerted, a concerted effort to eliminate cultural bias in the higher education curriculum. So, how would you characterize curriculum inclusiveness for WED classes?

(Leaning back with arms folded and waits a while for participants to respond).

From your learning experience, you have been exposed to the curriculum content and material over the past four years.

SPEAKER3G1: Talking about curriculum as a whole, we have a class called "Workforce Diversity" offered by Prof. W right. So I think that's a pretty neat, ah, ah, yuh know, element into the equation of the Workforce Education curriculum right there, you know that workforce diversity. Ah, I, I feel, my experience, now (pointing one figure in the air), I have one example. Now, do we include, cause, in a doctoral program, e.g., we need to take two classes outside of our department; the core, they call it core courses right. Ah, ah we including those two courses in this discussion as well?

MODERATOR: Ah No, because ... (SPEAKER3G1 breaks in)

SPEAKER3G1: Because those incidents happened in those two courses.

MODERATOR: We're looking mostly at; now if you think it would help (slight interruption as observer is called away)... Anybody else wants to talk about the curriculum inclusiveness for the WED program? Do you find ethnic groups are, you know, fairly represented, their perspectives, or do you think there's a bias in the way certain ethnic groups are represented in the curriculum?

SPEAKER2G1: You mean thru the content or ah ...

MODERATOR: Ah ha

SPEAKER2G1: Thru the content that you know; you talking about content now

MODERATOR: Yeah, all, if it's not ... (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER4G1: There's not much diversity in course content, except for the diversity class, that's the only ...

MODERATOR: OK. So what actually happens, or how would you describe what is (stressed) in the curriculum, if there's not much diversity, what is there?

SPEAKER2G1: It's pretty much... when we're talking about workforce education, it's pretty focus on education and workforce in America and doesn't have necessarily, am, something else related to the world, yuh know what I mean (in a low soft tone), so that's the impression I have because e.g., when you talk about the American education system and then you come and talk about your own system; people don't, they get it, some of them are not interesting. They don't know the difference, and there is a huge difference between educational systems in the world; so that's the comment I can make about the content in general. It's too focus on U.S. perspectives and U.S. needs, and we're not talking

about the world because the world is important especially to the competition and we know that, so we don't talk too much about that. We should.

SPEAKER4G1: I think it's pretty much all U.S. driven.

MODERATOR: And when you say U.S.

SPEAKER4G1: United States

MODERATOR: There're different ethnic groups within the U.S. population: you have Americans or Caucasians, as we would say to be politically correct, African Americans, some of the major groups, Asians, Hispanics; am, are these groups fairly represented in the, in the U.S. context, fairly represented in the curriculum content? And if you find the groups represented, what actually is the presentation? Is it positive, is it negative, is it neutral?

SPEAKER2G1: I think if I recall correctly, I mean the only class where talk about, yuh know, ethnic groups was the diversity class because I know that it's more general about the dominant group. We're not saying we're talking about the dominant group, but we know we're talking about the dominant group, you know what I mean, we don't talk about minorities in general courses. It's about the dominant group, but they don't say that. We don't say we're talking about it, but we know, we know it thru the content, ah mean (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER4G1: The theorists are, am, Caucasian. I don't remember any other ethnic theories in any of the other classes; outside the diversity class (nodding to emphasize point).

SPEAKER2G1: Yeah, yeah (nodding in confirmation)

MODERATOR: Yeah, outside of the diversity class, am, if , if, we look at authors, am, (gesticulating with hands) authors of books or the journal authors, am ... (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER2G1: But then, I'm sorry I'm gonna cut you, but that's where am the ethnicity of the instructor is important because then, you know, ah not from the dominant, class in America, then he can share, or she can share of his or her own experience and even give us a little insight about what's going on for this group of people, yuh know. So, that's the only connection I can make.

MODERATOR: And what if the instructor is am, is a Caucasian? Do you think they would be apt to doing that? As oppose to having someone who is racially diverse? Because you're saying it's up to the instructor and give the support or bring a different perspective if, if the U.S. perspective is only represented in terms of ethnic groups and so on. But what if you have, you know, a U.S. Caucasian instructor?

SPEAKER2G1: Well some, some of them they do. Ok. I could say stimulate the diversity in that class, and some of them they don't, because probably they're not affected by that or facing that.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER2G1: But you know, am one thing that I am connect or so, when we're talking about the instructor, we're talking about the classroom, and we're talking about the classmate; and also I think that the classmate are important because they represent in some way am there's reflection of the instructor of course. I don't know if you know what I mean but, the reaction of

bringing up diversity is also related to the group because if the people are not open to that even if you try as an instructor sometimes it's very difficult and you struggle, so I really relate to the WED students and also how can we classify them and how are we represented in this group.

MODERATOR: Any other contributions regarding the curriculum inclusiveness in WED classes?

SPEAKER3G1: Yeah. Ah, like when you mention about using articles for classes, most of the articles are from like American authors, you know; so, I think it's probably if I were to give a suggestion ... probably is to incorporate articles from other authors: Asian, European, other countries.

MODERATOR: How does the, the fact that you have the dominant group mostly represented in the curriculum content, how does that impact your motivation to learn or class participation or even your learning performance? What kind of impact that has on you? Because what we've talked about so far is what is there, but you have to interact with the material; you have to be able to be interested in it; you have to be motivated to learn; how does that impact your learning effectiveness?

SPEAKER3G1: Well for me personally (forcefully pointing to self), my value is that I respect cultural diversity, and I respect intellectual diversity. I, I have no problem at all with, yuh know, people presenting ideas: I take it all, because I respect the intellectual, intellectual element in the classroom and also the cultural diversity in the classroom

MODERATOR: OK. In the material, that respect that you have for other cultures, you're saying that gives you the motivation, even though it's a dominant culture that's represented, your respect for diversity gives you the motivation to, to read and be interested in the material.

SPEAKER3G1: Yes because, because what, what I see may be I, I tend to think as just diversity, I omit the word culture or omit the word intellectual; you know, you know diversity itself contains intellectual cultural and other synonyms that can be found in diversity, so, because I highly value diversity in general, what I've heard of diversity I highly value that. Therefore, it has very little impact, ah, on my learning performance; you know, I don't, I do not allow that to impact it at all; the like of say diversity or the like of whatever diversity does not impact me at all because I value it.

SPEAKER4G1: Well, the goal is to graduate (with a broad smile, causing rest of group to chuckle).

MODERATOR: Meaning? (Smiling broadly)

SPEAKER4G1: And am, whatever we have to do, we have to do (hands gesticulating and shrugging shoulders). Ah, that's my motivation (looking at moderator).

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER4G1: To graduate. Go to this class they tell me; do what they tell me to do ... and (nodding head in confirmation).

MODERATOR: But at the end of the day, do you feel short-changed in any way, ah, on the quality of your education?

SPEAKER4G1: No. No. No (nodding head emphatically)

MODERATOR: Does the culture bias or the dominant group that's represented in the curriculum, does it, you know, lessen your understanding of the topic or does it affect in any way your ability to master the content?

SPEAKER2G1: I think it's really you know, like she said, to your motivation, and even sometimes when you want to share, and you know that probably they won't be interested, you share. Ah mean that's my opinion, I share because I don't wanna go home with that baggage, so I share it, and I talk about what I know and my experience; the difference related to U.S. and ... [in my country] for example and some of students they react and they're interested; some of them they are not interested but that's their choice to not understand or not necessarily want to hear you talking about your country or your culture or differences because we're in American class; and sometimes the instructor really react very well and sometimes they just don't have any reaction.

MODERATOR: OK, Let's move on for the sake of SPEAKER1G1, am question 4 and this is where we get into more the international responsiveness of the curriculum. Ah is a reflection in the survey that shows, across the board, there is a need for more international perspectives in WED curriculum materials.

So, do WED curriculum materials adequately address international perspectives specifically and what in your learning experience has influenced your response?

SPEAKER4G1: I think SPEAKER2G1 already answered that question (pointing to participant). It's all the U.S. workforce.

MODERATOR: Ah, am how does that impact your intellectual development as, you know, doctoral students?

SPEAKER2G1: I don't know if it impact, but it's like, e.g., you have international students in your classroom, and you have a chance to have people from, you know, probably different roots, sometimes different regions of the world and to think it would be interesting, you know, to ask them to share or at least base my lesson plans base on the people I have in my classroom and try to come up with Asia, Europe about education on workforce. For example, sometimes it's people probably don't have time or they don't have the motivation to do it, and we talk a lot about competition worldwide but we don't talk about the world, you know what I mean, and related to workforce; we talk about competition that U.S. should prepare them younger, you know, students and future work but we don't talk about the world (nodding in confirmation).

SPEAKER4G1: That's why I said earlier, I learn (pointing to self) from other students about the world, because I don't know, with the exception of one of the faculty members, I don't know that any of them lived outside the U.S; so their view of the world is very narrow; they know what they know and that's it. I only know of one of them that lived outside the U.S. (participant breaks in). And a lot of the, except for the international students, not too many of the American students have lived outside the U.S.

SPEAKER3G1: I think there may be some faculty, may be lived outside the U.S. but that occur, like long time ago, you know; so the current trends, they still not have a clear picture of current trend at all; I mean, because they live in

that particular country like such a long time that it's hard to keep up with what's going on over there; that's what I mean by current trends (smiling).

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER2G1: But your question is probably related to transfer; how we can transfer based on our knowledge and what we did before. Sometimes it's difficult in some classrooms but sometimes, you know, am, they give you the opportunity to talk about what you did before or where you came from. I think it's interesting for other people like, you know, to share or just to give another perspective than what we usually hear, and some of the time even when you share, there is no response to that ... so you just share (hands gesticulating outward), that's my philosophy, I just share, you know, some people they are annoyed and some people they are happy to know what's going on in other countries, and I think it's interesting also because, am, it's challenging; it should be challenging for us and I'm not saying that what we have is not challenging, but challenging in some way that we can transfer from where we came from, you know; some of us we work before, so we have an experience, may be not a U.S. experience, but we have an international experience and to let us talk and share about those experience. I think it would be interesting (nodding in confirmation).

MODERATOR: Now, is it that the instructors depend solely on the international students to bring an international perspective to the class? Are they using other means, you know, bringing journal articles or may be speakers in the class to sought of fill the gap (one participants nods immediately indicating no to the question).

SPEAKER2G1: Yeah, I remember one course. It was an HR course, when we talk about other European perspectives in HR, which was not related to my presence in the classroom, but it was part of the content of the course, so, am some, probably some of the instructor, they might be safer to go and look for resource related, you know, to international perspectives.

MODERATOR: Now in the context of workforce, do you think because it's sought of a U.S. terminology, that instructors, that influence to keep it, you know, not to go outside the U.S. or do you think they have a broad enough perspective to see workforce education in the context of other countries? So, it would be called vocational education, am, technical education and training in other countries and so on; do you think that has any, am, impact on the fact that they keep it more to a U.S. perspective than an international perspective?

SPEAKER2G1: I think they keep it more U.S. also because I guess it's also related to the people in the classroom but I think sometimes I think that people they don't wanna hear about what's going on outside the U.S. So, I think that they just, am, give what people expect to have in those classroom, because, am, when we talk about the instructor really connect to the classmates, because some classmates also, sometimes they don't wanna, or why are we talking about that. We need to talk about the U.S. you know. They don't say but they feel that way and that because the course is focused on the U.S. we need to talk just about the U.S. I think it's related also to the audience, you know, which is mostly American, you know, American audience.

MODERATOR: Now it sounds as if am that's the students' perspective but what about the instructor perspective; is there a recognition that there is a need for an international perspective?

SPEAKER2G1: Some of them recognize, when you share, oh yeah, what's going on there what do you different than what we do but some of them they don't. But I'm not going to say, I think there is really am, am, progress that people want to change things but it's also related to the population you have in your classroom. You cannot change, it's based on how many people, you know care about that in your classroom.

MODERATOR: So you accept that as a basis for the lack of international perspectives?

SPEAKER2G1: No. I'm saying that the lack of international perspectives in the classroom is related to the instructor but also to the classmate, you know, because although you come with the content related to international perspectives; may be some people they do not get it and then you talk about the American culture in general, you know, because it's related also to that, you know, some people they are not open to talk about what's going on in other countries just because they think U.S. you know and it's not just WED (making invisible commas with fingers) it's in the culture in some way I'm not wrong so as an instructor it can be difficult to talk about international perspectives in the classroom.

MODERATOR: WE can probably get some feedback from the other two ... students. Is it easy to apply what you lean in the U.S. context with that

perspective? How easy is it to apply it or modify it to, you know, your perspective to suit what you need to do when you are finished with your degree?

SPEAKER3G1: You know, as much as I highly value cultural and intellectual diversity, you know, here it is, what, what people see about the United States as a global trend, what is said over here is going to be transmitted across the universe, right? So, here is, I don't mind learning all the theories, you know, based on American culture, because I view that this is like a warehouse for global trend; most of the technology theory-wise, research applications wise, this is the warehouse of global trend, then by studying this I myself would be feeding the purpose of myself highly value, you know, cultural diversity, but this is what I see, now here is the warehouse of global trend and everything that's here is going to transmitted everywhere, so please forgive me if I may be, ah you know, deemphasize European countries. European countries are great nations, you know, and I would love to go there and spend some time in European nations (smiling) and it, it's the reality here based on my perceptions is that theories, applications, everything is coming from here.

MODERATOR: Anything else SPEAKER1G1?

SPEAKER1G1: Well, in terms of application, because I have been working in an educational setting; and then a lot of the professors were trained here and that's how I came here and going back, you know, it would not be very hard to apply it in that setting; and because you see in education, and I know they appreciate what is taught here to some extent, so I didn't see that there would be a problem in applying it; probably I didn't think about too much

MODERATOR: Hm!

SPEAKER1G1: As well as I was thinking of probably working in the U.S. for a while, so I didn't think of how it would apply back; but I didn't think I would have any difficulty applying it because it was, what I kinda get from the program is like a blue print, not necessarily to drop in, but I'm just looking at it from a blue print perspective

MODERATOR: OK. A blue print for the world or a blue print for the U.S.? (Question prompts chuckles around the table). Because if you say it's a blue print, am a blue print ... (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER1G1: For example, they teach us how to design an instructional program, then I would just use the blue print and modify it when I go home depending on the situation, so that's what I mean by blue print not expecting that it would fit exactly.

MODERATOR: OK. So you would do your own modification, and you don't think it would be difficult to do that?

SPEAKER1G1: Right

MODERATOR: Alright! Last question: When I summarized the views on the open-ended questions which dealt with suggestions for improvement, some of the recurring themes included more international workforce education perspectives, more culturally diverse curricular content and that includes guest speakers, and more diverse faculty to include international faculty, and I think we can just sum up by saying or asking the question: **How would these or other improvements you may have, better serve your learning needs as**

students? Because we focused a lot on the issues, but these three recurring themes, there were others, themes that most recurred in the summary: more international perspectives, am, culturally diverse curricular content and diverse faculty

SPEAKER1G1: I would definitely, would love to see more African American or faculty from another group apart from the Caucasian because I think that they would have another set of experience to share that will just enrich the program, definitely. I would welcome that because, well Prof. W is here now and she, I really enjoy her classes and am just thinking, had she not come; she ended up being my advisor and I really, I really had a rich experience. The class was so much alive and rich. So, I wouldn't want to think that there are other persons could be out there that could come and bring such a rich experience.

MODERATOR: If you could just tell us a little bit about the richness.

SPEAKER1G1: OK.

MODERATOR: What made it rich?

SPEAKER1G1: Well what made it rich is that, am, she taught in way that she didn't, it wasn't more of a lecture format, it wasn't a format where you taught the instructor had all the knowledge; we were able to share our perspective and in doing that we learnt so ... (pause)

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER1G1: And, and a variety of activities in the class made it; so if you did not identify with one at least you can identify with another one so that helped.

SPEAKER2G1: I think the diversity in the classroom, you know, thru the instructor, it's not, I don't see it as needed just for international students. I mean, we're talking about education here. For me, it's needed also for American students to understand diversity and different cultures and to know how to handle students in the classroom, you know, even talking about the global trend in the world, you know, but I don't think that the U.S. leads in education in the world today, and we're talking about workforce education you see, so I'm not talking about technology. I'm talking about education and today they struggle, you know, I think it would be a good thing to open up a little bit; what is working, what is not working and by bringing also faculty and international students, other content, other type of research, just to see what's going on, and how this can work here or not. I'm not saying we have problem in Europe. I'm just saying that may be the education in the U.S., ah, the education in the U.S. need some change; research show that. I'm not the only one to say that you know; So and one of the part is related to diversity, you know, especially cultural diversity, because today we meet sometimes people in the classroom, they are K-12 teacher, sometimes they give some reactions that really scare me or be like

MODERATOR: Like What?

SPEAKER2G1: Can I give you an example?

MODERATOR: Yes sure.

SPEAKER2G1: One day we were talking about WED class about adult literacy and people struggle when they read

MODERATOR: Adult Literacy.

SPEAKER2G1: Yes, adult literacy. And then automatically someone says, “Oh may be they’re immigrant” you know, for me that show really ignorance because if they go and do research they would see that immigrant in the U.S., they have high qualification and high degree in general. So that type of reaction for me, and this person is a teacher, she’s teaching and she’s managing classrooms. So that type of reaction for me is like really dangerous, you know, when you manage a diverse classroom. So, that’s what I mean, diversity is not needed for me (pointing to self). I’m Ok, you know, I went in [other countries], in U.S. so I have a diverse life, you know, I don’t need it for me, but I think that American students should benefit from this diversity and bring more and more diversity because they need it, you know, to face those, ah, you know, extremist reaction, because you’re automatically immigrant, or foreigner, or the other; and if we go and look we know that many American they don’t know how to read for some reasons, you know, I mean, it will help to push people open a little bit their minds and see what’s going on around the world.

MODERATOR: OK. Any contributions from this side? These improvements, how do you think they would better serve the needs of students in their preparation, may be, am, for positions as faculty members?

SPEAKER3G1: Yeah!

SPEAKER4G1: Diversifying the faculty, I think would be a big step. Because, I don’t know who the faculty is that you said was part Native American. I have never heard that before. And I don’t know if I ever had that person in class? And I never knew that. Am, I know about the two African Americans. One

has already left us and it will be interesting to see who that faculty member is replaced with. Yeah, whether they would find another minority or it'll be a Caucasian male (nodding head to emphasize the point). But, I definitely think that diversifying the faculty would be a big step toward diversifying the curriculum.

MODERATOR: OK. We, am, we identified that that's the improvement, but how would that, yuh know ... (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER4G1: How would it happen?

MODERATOR: No. How would it improve your learning needs as a student? Just to say that we just have to diversify the faculty. Now, we could have a situation where you bring a racially diverse faculty and the opposite happens. This person is opposed (emphasized) to anything that is American. They may give a bias view.

SPEAKER4G1: Well you'll have two points of view. Now we only have one (putting up one finger) point of view (statement draws chuckles from rest of participants). You always need more than one point of view.

SPEAKER3G1: I think from the HR perspective is that, it is going to help me to prepare myself as a student when I enter the diverse workforce, you know, in corporation, I expect in the long run more diverse workforce in the American market; going to be more diverse, I would benefit a great deal If we integrate a lot of diversity elements into the curriculum content of workforce education. It's going to prepare me to work more effectively with, ah, people from different cultures.

MODERATOR: OK! Let's just look at the reality. We only have I think about two vacancies or something like that if you wanna look at what's gonna happen in the WED department. So, we have the majority of faculty being of U.S. Caucasian American or U.S. Caucasian. Am, what could we do in terms of improving the situation for students in becoming more diverse in meeting those needs because we can bring in diverse faculty, but does that translate, ah mean, automatically into all the classes being, you know, more culturally diverse in terms of the content or there'll be more internationally perspectives?

SPEAKER4G1: No. No.

MODERATOR: So what else could we do? Because, am, it seems as if people think, you know, just having the perspectives, having curricular diverse in terms of culture or just am ... (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER2G1: Ah, mean for example ... (moderator breaks in).

MODERATOR: Would that work for the rest, ah, for the majority of the ... (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER3G1: Well, if we have visiting faculty coming from other countries, European countries, from Asian universities like visiting faculties coming here on a semester basis ... (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER4G1: Yeah, talking about work

SPEAKER3G1: You know, to do lectures and stuff like that

MODERATOR: Could it happen the other way around?

SPEAKER4G1 and SPEAKER3G1: What do you mean?

SPEAKER2G1: Oh, send faculty there from the U.S. That's a good idea!

SPEAKER3G1: Exchange! Yeah! That's a good idea! They going to teach at Asian and European universities and people from Asian and European universities or African university for that matter, coming to teach here at SIU; and that is, I think we one program that take the students to China. That's a very good start right there, you know, but we also need to locate how to find the program and stuff like that and the financial issues. I don't want to touch that at all

SPEAKER2G1: I think if you are talking about, if you are talking about ...

MODERATOR: Improvements in general.

SPEAKER2G1: Base on what we have today. If the departments decide that international perspective or international view be included in all courses, you know, I think will be for me a first start. For example, in the concentration when I began, you have HR, now they change a little bit, but in any of them we have international perspective or you know, you know like, something that says we will have some course related to that or some course, you know, where we have international perspective; and I think that's when you do say that it's part of your curriculum; it's part of your program; it's one of the priority of your program. Because when you talk about international, when we talk about diversity, it's not just, you know, its diversity, just basic diversity in the classroom. How are you going to manage the different ethnicities in your classroom? If you don't even know what's going on if you don't even ask yourself about cultural differences or how can you approach the different students in your classroom? And the thing is that we have a lot of teacher in our program, and they don't even am, they don't

have the chance to, to ask themselves that question and for me that's sad because we have the opportunity to help them (hands gesticulating in a forward motion) to be more open and to know how to better ... (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER3G1: That's true.

SPEAKER2G1: ... at management, in class management; because you go to any school here in Carbondale and the classroom they are diverse.

MODERATOR: So you're saying that the students of themselves can help, the, the student diversity can work with the present faculty to help build that awareness

SPEAKER2G1: And we say that it's the foundation of our program. I mean even some faculty may not be open to do it, they will do it. That's my perspective because once you say its part of your program you ... (moderator breaks in)

MODERATOR: You have to do it. It has to be measured (nodding in confirmation)

SPEAKER2G1: Yeah!

MODERATOR: Any other perspectives? Well I just wanna thank you for a very rich discussion. It's all on tape, and I a lot of ... (participant breaks in).

SPEAKER2G1: Don't show them the tape (laughingly)

MODERATOR: ... Thank you so much for being here and please ... (pointing at the refreshments).

Focus Group 2 Video (DVD) Transcript

Conference Room at a Midwestern University

April 2, 2008 – 2:30 p.m. – 4:00p.m.

Moderator: I welcome you to our focus group this afternoon.... I'd just like to read a statement in this *Southern 150* document that really resonated with me; and it just spoke to who I am, where I'm from (smiling) and that's how my topic came into being.

It says here, "Diversity will drive our ability to attain our educational mission as our world increases changes so must we. We will not only respect but also value differences in all their forms of expression as necessary to the creation of a view of each other that is balanced and healthy. We will be known for a faculty and a student body that reflects the human and ethnic diversity and intellectual pluralism of the world."

-Participant introductions omitted for confidentiality.

MODERATOR: OK. Thank you very much. Now I know it's been a few months since you filled in the questionnaire, so I'm going to do some defining of terms so that you can get the context of the study and let me just define WED curriculum responsiveness: There are two parts to that term *curriculum responsiveness*. The first part of it, it means the equitable representation of ethnic groups and international perspectives in curriculum content whenever possible, and secondly the incorporation of different teaching strategies that promote learning in students. So within that context, when we talk about the different variables this is what we mean by curriculum responsiveness.

We may not always agree on some things and that's fine; just remember that what we say here is private; its confidential; so please don't discuss outside the room, that's what you signed out your life to (pointing to the consent forms on the table) when you signed the consent forms (smiling) and am if you have any other questions and go ahead and get right into it. Any other questions? OK.

And here's the question: **What are the preferred teaching strategies that most promote learning for you and are these strategies used in WED classes?**

SPEAKER1G2: It's kind of an individualized thing because you talk about individual learning styles. I think for me; the best way for me to learn is both auditorally and visually; so that if there's multimedia presentation or there's something for me to look at the same time that I'm listening to information, that's a good mix for me; but I also like the interaction between students and being able. May be begin on a topic and discuss things in a small group format because that way I learn from the other students as well as just from the instructor; and I don't think we do that as often in WED as I would like to do it. It depends on the instructor (hands gesticulating for emphasis). But I would see more engagement in being able to learn more from other students in the class because we have a wealth of older students with lots of different experiences, and I don't think we get to learn from each other as much as I would like.

SPEAKER2G2: Are you talking about ... are you focusing mainly on the online students?

SPEAKER1G2: NO, I'm talking specifically about class, in-class experiences.

SPEAKER2G2: Yeah, I prefer, am, face-to-face and interaction to but mine is mainly face-to-face because you can read a lot into somebody's expression. Am, for instance, when I start teaching , there were some parts (hands gesticulating for emphasis) that I knew were going to work; some of the things I was going to say were important for the exams, Ok; so, at one point I had to stop and tell my students "TQ", which means Test Question. As I say TQ, everybody pick up their pen and start writing (hand motioning as if to write) and they don't want to forget it (example draws miles from around the table). Am, after a couple of years, I noticed that my students do not really have to wait for me to say TQ. And I notice it was my expression, my hand motion shows when something is really important or when I'm just say something "out of the way." So, that's why facial expression, that's why the in-class; that's why I prefer the in-class because of the facial expression (hands gesticulating for emphasis).

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER3G2: Probably face-to-face, ah, online classes ... I mean I do it from other side differently (smiling); I don't think I would wanna be in, you know, the student end; it's not really my learning style you; you just get things handed, you don't get much out of it as far as I'm concern (pointing to self); am, probably interaction with classmates and also depending on if it came down or not; learning by doing, demonstration and practice; like for instance, a lot of those classes that have a project that you can actually see at the end of the class, ok

this is what it amounts to. You don't just have a whole bunch of lectures and then, you know, test and having no idea of how to actually go about doing it. I think that is helpful as well as interaction with classmates (pointing to participant at the side).

SPEAKER4G2: And I agree with AT. It depends on the subject. I learn best by reading about it and forming an opinion or forming at least a somewhat qualified opinion and then go to class and discuss it and see what other people ... how they interpret it and judge what I evaluate it to be and make adjustments mentally there; but then if you're; if there's like a model of something, I like to see examples of that; and when we're in Dr. P's class we talked about, am, his models. It's always easier to develop your own and then go to class and compare yours to everybody else's and make mental adjustments or actual physical adjustments to your model or picture and adjust your paradigm from there; the interaction, ah, I'm not an online person. To be honest, I've never had one. It just doesn't strike me as the way I would learn best. I prefer the face-to-face after I've read the material.

MODERATOR: Now were you ever required to take an online course? (Participant gestures "no") OK. So then, you had the option and you took what was best for you. Now do you find that some instructors tend to lean to one side; I mean do they approach the whole thing of teaching delivery, teaching strategies as a one-size-fit-all or there's a variety in the techniques that they use so that they can accommodate for the different learning styles in the classroom or do you find you get the variety across classes rather than within classes

(gesticulating with hands for emphasis); how does that impact on your leaning performance? Does it help you retain more; how do you cope when there's a mismatch between the teaching style and your leaning style?

SPEAKER2G2: I guess the variety is across, across the board, you know, with different instructors and not just one instructor; and I really like it because as a teacher, ah, at times I tend to get carried away, that is my way or no way. But, when I get to take different classes from teachers, they get across to me, "hey these teachers is teaching this way, and I never really agreed with it but now I'm in his or her class, it's not that bad." So it takes to learn things from all the different instructors and then put them together in my own way to am; I don't think I really like it if in one class the instructor comes in, comes in with different varieties, Ok; we're talking 60 minutes and a break in between. So, having different varieties we'll end up confusing the students.

MODERATOR: OK. When you say different varieties, are you referring to teaching strategies?

SPEAKER2G2: Yes, different teaching strategies.

MODERATOR: OK. And what do you understand by teaching strategies? I defined it as the methods and techniques used, in my glossary, to facilitate learning because, you know, we don't all learn the same way. Is that your understanding of it?

SPEAKER2G2: Yes, that's my understanding. Ok, let's look at several strategies: one is straight out lecture ...

MODERATOR: Yeah, face-to-face.

SPEAKER2G2: You know, yeah, face-to-face but the teacher talks and people would listen and take notes, Ok. Am, if that's the way he or she is gonna be teaching, that's OK if it's gonna start like that from the beginning of the semester all the way thru or ... if they gonna have group projects, OK, let it be group projects from the beginning until the end (statement draws smiles from around the table)

MODERATOR: OK (slight chuckle)

SPEAKER2G2: And, am, some people, some teachers like, am, starting off with individual projects and then ending up in groups. OK, what happens, am, something I don't like about that is, by the time the teacher starts with individual projects, the rest of the students get to see who is strong in one area (pointing for emphasis) and as soon as they get grouped together, everybody just relaxes (makes similar gesture) and wait for that strong person to take over (other participants nod in agreement); so that's what I'm trying to say, if it's going to be a group project, let it be a group project from the very beginning (nodding in confirmation).

MODERATOR: OK. Other views?

SPEAKER1G2: I just don't like group projects ... and (smiling)

MODERATOR: How do you cope, you know, when you're placed in a situation where the teaching style is different to your learning style or the strategy is different?

SPEAKER1G2: You know, I think I've been in school long enough that I adapt. I, I really do, and I have a combined learning style now. Am, what I don't

like is for the instructor to use one strategy throughout the whole class because I think it's tiring. I like it to be changed up. I don't mind lecturing for a while, they can break it up with multimedia or they can break it up with some in-class discussions kinds of things. I don't like the group work just because it tends to, am; the way it's usually focused is that one or two people do all the work, and there's always a couple people who don't do anything; and that's certainly what happens with our on-line thing ... (other participant stretches across table to take off a bug from her clothes)

SPEAKER2G2: Let me take something off your ...

SPEAKER1G2: You know, I have bugs, I'm sorry. I brought one in with me and that was my pet (participants all chuckle at participants' comments).

MODERATOR: Now SPEAKER1G2, how, how often would you say, you know, you're placed in that position? Is it like a one in ten times ... (Participant breaks in)

SPEAKER1G2: In a position where a, an instructor uses one method throughout?

MODERATOR: That you don't like ...

SPEAKER1G2: I think it depends, I really think it depends on the instructor. There are a couple of instructors, say probably two or three instructors, within the WED department who have one style of presenting information and that's all they use; am, and one instructor that I really, and for one class it's tolerable, but if you have a second class with the same instructor, am, I find that I learn less the second time because its seems to be a replay of

what I done before, so even if I really like the instructor, by the third class, they have, they use exactly the same methods in each class (hands gesticulating for emphasis).

MODERATOR: When you say you learn less, you're dealing with a different topic now (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER1G2: I'm dealing with a different topic right ...

MODERATOR: The learning less means you're able to retain less?

SPEAKER1G2: Am, I think I'm less interested (nodding in confirmation). I think the first time it's more novel, and I, and I'm more aware, am, of what's going on; I put more energy into it. By the second class it feels, am, like it's a repeat because some of the information is because the learning, the strategy is the same, but some of the examples are the same; and it feels like I'm taking the same class or a similar class two or three different times (nodding in confirmation).

MODERATOR: Go ahead ...

SPEAKER2G2: But am, some factors that decide what the teacher uses (palms slightly covering sides of face), am, is number one: the subject being discussed, I guess that's their primary reason let me pick a class for instance: let's say history class (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER1G2: Well if you're talking about WED; let's be specific (smiling)

MODERATOR: Yes.

SPEAKER2G2: Within the WED

MODERATOR: Yeah, within the WED program

SPEAKER2G2: It depends on the class. Is it a theoretical class, that deals mainly with purpose and presentations that have been made in the past?

MODERATOR: For you, how would you cope, because you like, you like mostly the face-to-face interaction, the in-class experience; so what would happen if am, you're given more project-led work and the instructor would just give you guidelines or something and most of the time you work in class in groups and then you do some work outside ...

SPEAKER2G2: I'd like, I prefer the hands-on project

MODERATOR: How do cope with that? I mean you just adapt.

SPEAKER2G2: Yeah, just adapt, you know, all I have to do is ... decide I'm needy, if I have to pass this class and do whatever I have to do to pass it.

MODERATOR: OK. But does it affect your motivation any?

SPEAKER2G2: It does, but it's not the same package.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER3G2: I'm inclined to agree with SPEAKER1G2. Granted some materials lend itself better than other to a certain way of teaching, I think there's always a way to vary a little bit, you know, vary slightly. So, yeah, if it's the same thing ... (moderator breaks in)

MODERATOR: You're less motivated?

SPEAKER3G2: Hm, I just go thru the motions and especially if I'm not too interested in the topic (smiling), ah mean, because I am conscientious, I'm

gonna make sure everything gets done, but I can't tell you that I'm really enjoying the class or anything, you know.

MODERATOR: What about you **SPEAKER4G2**?

SPEAKER4G2: Well, my other investment would be to read about it, so, I just adapt to whatever they're presenting to my learning style at that time. But then I probably, I won't say I'm unique in this; but I think I need more background information, then I'll go, I should read more and supplement what was shown in class just for my own education; am, but that's just me and as to the motivation thing; you know, how do I explain this?(smiling) (participant breaks in).

SPEAKER1G2: You're old and motivated (smiling).

MODERATOR: Don't put words in his mouth (smiling).

SPEAKER2G2: It all depends on what you come in with, on your own background: If you are used to theoretical, you know, building up, you are just used to it.

SPEAKER4G2: Right.

SPEAKER2G2: My guess ...

SPEAKER4G2: You know, speaking to the level of motivation: There's varying degrees of enthusiasm we all have depending on the course content. Some of that's, in my opinion, in my case, is affected by, you know, presentation style, or the tone, or is it multimedia or is it handouts or is it discussion, but ah ... (pause)

MODERATOR: But, could we take it ... Go ahead.

SPEAKER3G2: I was just going to say that, I guess what I meant, you know, motivation and stuff; I might be less interested but it doesn't mean that I learn less; ah mean, I get done what I need to get done very much like everybody here; but I meant in terms of really being, you know, interested and really enjoying the class; but we all have to adapt to pass our classes and getting something out of it to use it in other areas.

SPEAKER1G2: I think because we're doctoral students, we're motivated, we're gonna do what we need to do. Am, I think it would be different at, may be, a different degree level in terms of how much impact our learning styles and the instructor's facilitation styles interact. I think there would be more of a gap may be, because we're so motivated, we're gonna get it done; but in terms of really getting excited about a subject, ah, I think a lot that for me has to do with how it's being taught.

SPEAKER4G2: The other thing with myself, I find myself making mental notes about I wouldn't present it this way, and I would do it differently and then so in the future, when I'm up there standing in front the class, I'm like, you know I can remember when so and so taught this course, you know this course or taught this way, it didn't come over very well, so I can adjust in the future; you know making mental notes of things I don't like right now.

MODERATOR: OK. Just as a final question or a probing question on this topic: Have you observed any distinguishing features in terms of teaching strategies where, when the instructor's racial background is different? Do instructors with different racial backgrounds; have you observe any differences in

their teaching styles or they all use the same methods and so on? Because we are dealing with, you know, cultural diversity, so that's one thing, if you have observed, you know like, people use in terms of their racial diversity, it's distinctly different from the majority group. Have you observed anything, any differences?

SPEAKER1G2: You know, I think I probably, within our department, I think we only have may be three different, ah, differences; and I find that I am more excited by, am, an individual, well, this is all confidential so (comment draws chuckles from around the table) , actually the individual that probably gets me the most excited is most outgoing and gets people more participatory within the class is Prof. W, who happens to be a Black female; and, and who I think has a more am (pause); just a more interactive style in terms of the way she teaches classes and I love that, from day one I thought that's how I wanna teach because everybody stays awake and they're interested (gestures with hands and body movement accordingly) and asking questions. I love that. Am ...

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER2G2: So apparently ... (Participant breaks in).

SPEAKER1G2: But I don't know since I never had, I don't think I've had another, I don't know if I can say culturally that another Black instructor would do the same thing, I think it's more of a personal style ... (hands outstretched to show uncertainty).

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER2G2: So, apparently, it's not the race factor, so that person must have been a White, am, Native American or for the Far East ... (Moderator breaks in)

MODERATOR: So that's what I'm asking, if you have observed, am with the few minority instructors, if they teach differently to the American students because what happens is, am, sometimes the teacher s according to, you know, the cultural group, it's, it's like what the group is comfortable with and this is what they do, so ... (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER2G2: I' don't know if you heard about this saying that teachers teach the way they've learned.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER2G2: OK. They bring in with their ... they bring in their own experiences OK. Let's say, am if you have a Black teacher who lived during the Civil Rights days OK, his or her example would include many of the events that's happened during the Civil Rights days (hands gesticulating for emphasis) like am, "you thing you're having it hard now, if you were there" , you know, things like that. So, they have, they have things to bring into, am, into the class.

MODERATOR: OK. Yeah, so it does, am, play some on the cultural background but it's not like a dominant or distinct feature.

SPEAKER1G2: I do think instructors differently with different students.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER1G2: And my observation is, am, even in Prof. W class, I think ... [is] more playful and more, am, (looks up slightly in search of word)

MODERATOR: Engaging?

SPEAKER1G2: Engaging may be? I'm not even sure that's the right word ... with some of the other students. I mean, but it's not like you see she's "well I like this one better than that one." That's not it. It's a different kind of interaction; am, we do have one instructor, who happens to be male and White; ah, who is very ... less than engaging with, ah, students from other cultures I think; he's not rude necessarily but he's less than engaging; and I think am, he tends ... I, I, noticed students in that class not asking a lot of questions (leans back to make the point) because they're a little bit afraid of his response (hands gesticulating for emphasis).

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER1G2: So I think there is some of that; I think peop... do that

SPEAKER2G2: So am, let me try to say this. Is it kind of, am trying to see if we are thinking on the same line; if a student, a foreign student ask a question, he doesn't get into that much detail; he kind of like let me answer with a brief statement and let's move on kinda way; is it kind of the way he would ans...

SPEAKER1G2: I think that's it, you know, because, with my background, I was a counselor for 25 years, so I'm more kind a in tune of, "I don't think they quite understood what he said," because I think some individuals with English as a second language, am, need a little bit, a little more clarification to understand the concepts, and I don't see this particular instructor doing that (hands gesticulating accordingly).

MODERATOR: Now, this is not what somebody told you, you have witnessed this within the class.

SPEAKER1G2: I have witnessed this; I have witnessed this (nodding forcefully in confirmation).

MODERATOR: OK. Anybody else with those observations?

SPEAKER4G2: No, I never had them.

MODERATOR: OK. This brings us to the next question actually, and it leads right into the next question; so may be we may not spend that much time on the next question. Am, again, a preliminary review of the survey data indicate wide variances in students' perceptions on the consideration given to students' cultural differences in Workforce Education and Development teaching delivery, ... so this is the question: **Is awareness for students' cultural differences and we're talking here about language, race or ethnicity, and geographic or national origin, is awareness for students' cultural differences demonstrated in WED teaching delivery and what in your learning experience has influenced or shaped your view on this or has influenced your response on this?** And I think, you know, we can lead right into that and we're looking mainly at race and language as cultural differences or national origin because cultural differences, as you know, could include art, and religion, and dress, and music and whatever; but this is the three that we're concentrating on in this study.

SPEAKER3G2: I don't know if I'm answering your question right. You tell me if I've understanding it differently.

MODERATOR: OK. Let me, let me ... (participant continues to answer question)

SPEAKER3G2: Am, one, particular professor, I guess was concerned about the fact or with; you think what was it about? (Looking across at other participant) Whatever the word was (smiling); the fact that I didn't participate much in the class and was wondering if it was cultural; meaning because where I come from, am typically, am, the professor does lecture, deliver the class, and we just take notes and then that's it. You know, if you have a couple of questions, you may ask at the end of the lecture or go and talk to the professor about it. Typically, (hands gesticulating accordingly), you don't interrupt the class at the particular point in time you need more clarification; you just wait; well, me it's more personality wise. I mean, I'm not (smiling) one to, you know, I'll go if I have questions, I'll go at the end of the class and ask them, and I guess it's also a bit of the culture; but in that particular sense, he was aware of possible cultural, you know, difference that would make me interact differently in the class. And a couple of others mention it but overall I don't think there's much of it in our department, but then again there're so few of us international students in the department.

MODERATOR: OK. So, you're saying that there isn't enough awareness of students' cultural differences? Because that's what the question is asking: is there awareness and to what degree is it demonstrated or is it not demonstrated? In your sense, sorry, I got the sense from your comment that the instructor acknowledged that there was some difference in terms of how you reacted or

responded or contributed to the other probably dominant cultural students in the class, students from another culture, the dominant group and so, are you saying that there is not enough awareness? Or the awareness that is shown is am ... (participant breaks in).

SPEAKER3G2: Well in terms of, if my learning standard would be the only one, but you often have questions like, OK, how would you this, you know, we do this, this way when we go home, well if that's what you mean by awareness, yeah there is a bit of that; am, but as far as, making sure, you know like, enquiring about the way people learn, like said, that's not an example; but I didn't have many professors, you know, yet in the department, I just had a few, so I cannot generalize (nodding in confirmation).

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER2G2: It's difficult to know, to actually, when it comes to awareness; being aware is different from showing awareness ...

SPEAKER3G2: Yes.

SPEAKER2G2: You can show it, you know, in different degrees. Am, take for instance; take a number let's say ... (moderator breaks in).

MODERATOR: In your experience in the WED class; in your experience, if you want you can draw an example from that.

SPEAKER2G2: OK. A class has forty students and only three that are from; three international students OK. I am sure that the instructor was, you know, had some awareness, but having to, I don't know if to use the word, hold back on the rest of the students (hands gesticulating backward movement) just to

attend to those three students; if he or she does that, that may hold everybody back; so it's left for those three students to become just like ... [she] said, you know, they have to speak up at that time, which I'm sure the teacher would agree with or wait until the end of the class OK.

And, many, am, this instructor that I'm talking about right now, am, this person has been able, has travelled to many parts of the world, and this person understands that at times, am, foreign students do not speak up because it's their culture not to talk when the teacher is talking. So, now again, we back to: is the instructor aware, and is he showing awareness and if so, to what degree?

MODERATOR: And that's, that's what I want you tell me from your (smiling); and let me just find out if I am summarizing what you're saying: the awareness is not intentional or deliberate; you don't get the sense that they come to class with a deliberate intent to cater to, they know that you're there, is that what you're saying? Well, I shouldn't say they, in your, in this one example that you used (pointing to participant).

SPEAKER2G2: The foreign students were there, and they didn't speak up, but it wasn't because they were being ignored; it was because of their cultural background; they are not used to speaking up; they have to wait and go to a corner (pointing) to ask the teacher the questions.

MODERATOR: Now ... (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER1G2: I just think there's one professor that has a very strong intent in terms of learning about other cultures; and sometimes it's in the classroom, but if it's a large class, it's more terms of engaging students outside of

the classroom and finding out more about the culture and how that might, how the subject might relate in their home country. So, I know of one particular professor that makes a very strong effort to do that. I've seen that.

MODERATOR: One.

SPEAKER1G2: One that I see makes a strong effort.

MODERATOR: OK. ...

SPEAKER1G2: I, I think it, it's depends on the instructor and the individual person's intent. Yeah.

MODERATOR: What about you ...?

SPEAKER4G2: Am, I agree with ... [**SPEAKER2G2**]. In my mind, it's hard to measure their awareness because if they don't make it obvious; am, but I've never seen anybody, you know, display any kind of, am, outward appearance of taking into consideration or in other ways not taking into consideration. I mean, I'll be in classes where they'll ask a probing question, ah, "based on this particular discussion, how is it done in your country," you know, to draw them into the discussion if they are not, you know, kind a saying anything just to see a different perspective on the ah, on the discussion, but I've never seen anybody, or never really thought about it, where they took into consideration the cultural differences in the classroom.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER3G2: I don't either; but then again, like **SPEAKER4G2** said, also have to deal with numbers. When you have one or two out of 15; yes they're there but you have to acknowledge that but can't just do everything to

cater to them because, you know, you have a majority of students, you have to think about (participant breaks in).

SPEAKER2G2: Let's go back once more to **SPEAKER4G2's** opinion when the teacher goes Miss or Mister; how do they do that in your country? And see that that may alienate some of the other students. Ok, they may be going: Why is; if he or she is here to learn with everybody, the teacher is taking up some time, some precious time to focus on that particular student. I'm not saying that may happen but there's a tendency that somebody may think because people come into classes, into the class, with different backgrounds and different ways of thinking; you cannot stop them from thinking the way they do.

MODERATOR: Ok....

SPEAKER2G2: Let me try and narrow it down some, using myself as an example. I wanted to, ok, this subject came up in such a way that I had to talk; actually the teacher ask me exactly how we did it in my country; but as it turns out, it wasn't a short-answer question; what the situation called for (statement draws smiles from around the table) and one point when I continue talking, something went into my head. I said, may be some people may be thinking, "Why doesn't he shut up?" because ... (Moderator breaks in).

MODERATOR: But what made you think that? Did you look at their facial expressions or body language? Did they seem interested in ... (participant breaks in).

SPEAKER2G2: No, it's just me (pointing to self). It's just me. I'm kind of; my ego, that superego (hands gesticulating to make the point); just being self-

conscious you know saying, “what are they thinking I’m saying, may be they’re saying shut up Reggie,” you know so (response draws slight chuckle from around the table).

MODERATOR: Anybody observed anything else?

SPEAKER4G2: I think the opposite view from what Reggie was saying (pointing to student) about people may be thinking they taking up too much time focusing on a country. It may be also that some people, soon as you asked them, they may be intimidated that they may be asked that question: How is it in your country? They may not want to talk about that, ah; there may be a language ... (pauses to search for word).

MODERATOR: Barrier?

SPEAKER4G2: Or may be who knows, ah some people don’t like to speak in public about things the teacher is trying to draw out and so it could work both ways where they may not tune in; don’t talk about that because it’s not pertinent to the majority of the class, or don’t ask me because I don’t want to have to answer that question because of language barrier or cultural barrier or who knows what kind of mental barrier? (Lifts hands up in the air, smiling).

MODERATOR: OK. Now, am, have you found that in, in the interaction with cultural differences and the teacher interacting with the students that preference is given or some students are overlooked because of their cultural background in terms of ethnicity or national origin? Do you find students; is everyone treated equitably? ...

SPEAKER2G2: It's not, it's not intentional. It comes back to what we've been talking about, Ok. May be the student, they weren't from the minority culture. Ok, may be he or she may want to elaborate or may be he or she didn't even want the teacher to elaborate, so they presented a question in such a way that the teacher would have to answer the question: "Yes or No." And move one; so when the teacher focuses in that breadth with somebody else situation and doesn't in that breadth with the other person situation, I don't think it's the teacher's fault, It's just the subject that brought about it.

MODERATOR: OK. Any other views on that?

SPEAKER3G2: I personally, I can't say that I've experienced it or probably I didn't pay attention to it. But, I know somebody who complained, that, and that person felt that it was because of his or her ethnicity and cultural background that what really she said was automatically discounted and that she did not get the same attention as, am, everybody else in the class.

MODERATOR: Do you want to share any details about the complaint or the nature of the situation?

SPEAKER3G2: Am, I guess, it was you know, voicing some, some opinion about something that was done in the class, and I'm not sure if ah, may be it was for the sake of time, I'm not exactly what, because it again, I tend to give people the benefit of the doubt so didn't jump to that conclusion, but she personally thought that the person was short with her and it was because, it was related to that; that's her personal perception of it; now is it what happened?
(Hands outstretched) You know, everybody sees through their own eyes; but the

person said it was related to their cultural background and race (nodding in confirmation).

MODERATOR: Now we turn our attention to the actual content, and I'm looking here for the inclusiveness of the curriculum content, and inclusiveness here means a concerted effort to eliminate cultural bias in higher education curriculum; ...

So the question is, **judging from your exposure to the WED curriculum content, how would you characterize or describe WED curriculum inclusiveness? That inclusiveness is defined as a concerted effort to eliminate cultural bias in higher education curriculum.**

SPEAKER3G2: I don't think there is any ah cultural, I mean, I can't think of any single class that the mainstream (fingers make invisible quotes), whatever that means, view, was not the only view mentioned. I'm not saying it's good or bad, it's just you know, stating a fact. I can't think of any.

MODERATOR: OK. You're saying you get an, an equitable representation.

SPEAKER3G2: I would say so because I, at least, you know, the instructor did not point to people's attention, you know, in the content that there was other than whatever the textbook, you know, or whatever the material there is, you know, which has the dominant view. Am, I might have missed the class whenever that was done (hands go up to show regret) me personally, I did not see it.

SPEAKER2G2: I haven't witnessed or observed anything in that area. Am, I guess it's because of the nature of the program. Am, this course, Workforce Education and Development, when you think about it, the original name for WED used to be vocational education, then they call it technical education, and now they call it workforce education, so when you are considering, am, things in that nature, the emphasis is more on the hands-on training, so there's no giving any parameters to get around into creating a culturally, am, inequitable method of teaching because everything is focused mainly on the hands-on.

SPEAKER3G2: You know ... (moderator)

MODERATOR: We're focusing mainly on the content and not so much the teaching methodology, but just on the curriculum material, on the textbooks, the journal articles that you read or the people who come in to give you probably lectures.

SPEAKER2G2: All of the above. They try to make it as general as possible.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER2G2: Ok, unlike other colleges in the school, WED is one of those that you can do your PhD in with almost any other degree Ok. So you, so like, Ok, take a case of everybody ...

SPEAKER3G2: You should still be able to include, am, you know, other cultural (hands gesticulating to suggest uncertainty)... how do you define that? Am, because, I mean that's everywhere any workforce you can go, so that

should be acknowledged somehow in the class and also, well look am, well look at all departments including WED have international students, many of whom or most of whom will go home and used this particular material. Are they taught anything to make them aware, I guess just to integrate the material with whatever area they come from? Not really. Am, like a particular, well let's say HR concentration, that would be very easy to include a couple of articles, you know, may be one lecture on HR perspectives, I don't know in Europe, HR perspectives in Africa or Asian (hands go up for emphasis).

SPEAKER2G2: How many countries you have in this world at this time?

(Question draws slight chuckle from around the table)

SPEAKER3G2: I'm not talking country wise.

SPEAKER2G2: Because Serbia just broke off and become its own two months ago. Well, cul, culture is ... (Moderator breaks in).

MODERATOR: Let her finish.

SPEAKER3G2: You don't have to include just everything, but we just mentioned that you don't have that many international students in your class; you don't have to talk about the whole world, you can just address those particular ones that would be good enough, as far as I'm concerned (voice slightly raised and nods head in agreement).

SPEAKER1G2: Because you would have examples then, because they can talk about what it looks like in their country. I don't think we do that. It's the dominant culture is what is taught and we talk about the global economy, but I

don't think we, we pursue examples of other cultures and look at a wide breadth at that.

SPEAKER3G2: And it's not just for us international students. Some of those American students would want to work overseas, and they would need some awareness of how it is elsewhere. I think. At least that's my impression.

SPEAKER2G2: In that case, they should wait after the class and then go and ask their own questions.

SPEAKER3G2: Why? (In a serious tone)

SPEAKER2G2: Because, because (participant breaks in)

SPEAKER3G2: Why can they not benefit within the class? (Question draws laughter from around the table)

MODERATOR: Let's here why **SPEAKER2G2**.

SPEAKER2G2: Let's say student XYZ is interested in going Egypt, Ok. What makes the instructor think that talking about South Africa, am, and covers something about Egypt. So, by the time teacher gets on deciding where to focus or where not to focus that should take the time out of teaching the class and out of the class. So, the student in question should wait.

SPEAKER3G2: OK. How about the international ones then that are already in the classroom, what do you say?

SPEAKER2G2: They could either speak up or wait to

SPEAKER3G2: Why can't it not be in the context of the curriculum? That's just what I'm asking. I'm not saying that it's good or bad. Why you think it shouldn't be address for the whole class (hands making a semi-circle)?

SPEAKER2G2: Exactly what the teacher is doing, the teacher addresses everything for everybody, if you are interested in going and finding you own niche, as suits you best, then you go at the end of the class and say, “Ok instructor, how does this pertain to me, my goals, and what I want to do with what I learn?”

MODERATOR: When you say RA that the teacher addresses everything to everybody, what do you mean by everything to everybody? Because that sounds very inclusive.

SPEAKER2G2: Exactly.

MODERATOR: So are you saying that the teacher delivers content in a generic way?

SPEAKER2G2: In a generic way.

MODERATOR: So then if it’s generic, it should apply to all the cultural regions or national or geographic regions represented in the classroom?

SPEAKER2G2: Then it’s up to us to decipher the teaching, and apply it to what suits us best. If we cannot do it, that’s what the teacher is for that we go back and say, “Ok, teacher can you narrow it down a bit the way it suits me best.” And I’m sure he or she would.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER1G2: And I guess I see it as, you know, as, ah ... only having had one view point in living in the States and being educated in the States, I see that as an opportunity to learn from the other international students in my class and I do that outside of class more than in class. I don’t see the instructors am,

utilizing that as much as they could; am, to look at different ethnic groups and look at different students where they come from and what they bring with them.

MODERATOR: OK. Now within the United States population, we have, am, diverse groups: Hispanics, African Americans, you have Asians, am, just taking it within the U.S., do you find, there's a representation, a fair representation of all the ethnic groups in the U.S.?

SPEAKER1G2: I don't think so (In a low voice).

SPEAKER3G2: I agree.

MODERATOR: OK. What do you think TH? Have you observed that kind of growth representation of all the ethnic groups? Is there an imbalance? ...

SPEAKER4G2: Across the United States, the population as a whole is not representative of all ethnic groups but, in, am, how do you fix that, that's the most; you can go and recruit, you know, they have to apply and come in and stay, so ... (moderator breaks in).

MODERATOR: But we're talking about the content, the curriculum content of itself.

SPEAKER4G2: Well, I listen to **SPEAKER2G2** talk and you take into consideration the multiple cultures that may be in the classroom, ah, it may be, I'm just theorizing here, it may be that the instructor is not capable of incorporating multiple cultures because they've never been exposed to it; they don't know what questions to ask; it may be they have taken into consideration in developing the curriculum but they also look at the time line and say there isn't enough time to incorporate you know generic culture and any other one, two,

three, ten other cultures they also need to address; am, and I, you know, I guess in my view point, the instructor, you know, I would think would say Ok, if I'm teaching HR, something to do with HR and let's say I know someone going back to Egypt and apply these principles, I wouldn't know anything about Egypt; but hopefully that person would be interested enough to work on their own, ask question, research the background and find other things about it. Because, if you're relying on the instructor to deliver that kind of content; develop that kind of curriculum, I just don't see that as, as going to happen (shaking head in agreement).

SPEAKER2G2: Feasible.

SPEAKER3G2: OK. Let's go back to what I was saying, that those international students that is a specific country talk about the U.S. with all the different cultural backgrounds why is that what's not mainstream is perceived as added on (making invisible inverted commas with fingers) when it should be part of the curriculum. You see what I mean, because the way we're looking at it, is mainstream and then we add a little bit of the cultural. The way I see it, cultural should be across, because these are American, they do live here, their viewpoints or their backgrounds should be represented in the curriculum. I mean, that's just the way I see it. It's not something that people should think of as a super effort to just go and add as an extra part.

People should be aware of that. And even if you go in the workforce, you have to be open to people different from you; everywhere you go in this country, except ... I don't know, most everywhere, so that shouldn't, to me that should be

a given that the instructor, it's not necessarily a whole lesson, not like that, but mentions of it when it's appropriate, so that students are aware of differences, that's what I'm saying, you know, saying (motioning with hands not so) to have like a whole two hours a whole period or whatever part of the semester just focused on, you know, whatever is not mainstream. I guess wasn't clear the way I said it (pointing to self). Do I make more sense now?

MODERATOR: OK. Anybody wants to respond?

SPEAKER1G2: I want to respond. I know what she's saying. I wouldn't expect an instructor to specifically address and culture and bring that in or specifically address ... our culture and bring that in, but I think just being aware of all the students in your classroom; it's coming to teach in the moment; if you know the students in your classroom and you know what they bring, then you somehow weave that into teaching and, and it's not like it's done in a real structured way but it's just a part of your teaching (gesticulating with hands accordingly). Or as you're planning a particular unit Ok, how do you pull out this information from everyone in the classroom? (Murmurs about agree to disagree come from around the table).

MODERATOR: ... when you have the limited representation of other cultural or ethnic groups in the curriculum content, how do you think that would impact learning, ... how does it impact your motivation to learn or class participation or your interest in the subject, does it have any impact ...? (Participant breaks in).

SPEAKER3G2: I don't know that I can give you an example because

MODERATOR: OK. I just want for you to talk about you.

SPEAKER3G2: I have left home twenty, fifteen years and even when I was home, I was not in typical community classroom. I've always been in schools that were; all my instructors were White male, female , as far as I can remember, or 90% and a lot of the students were so that's mostly what I have known, so you adapt, it doesn't, it's not that I don't pay attention to it anymore, but you know, I did fine so far, so that I can't say that it affects my, if it did affect my learning style, it's been corrected since whenever, does that make sense to what I'm saying ?

MODERATOR: This is not in the U.S. This is not in the United States you're talking about?

SPEAKER3G2: Well no, that's before, but that's to say this context is not any different. I've experience this before so it wasn't, you know, a shock for me: "how am I going to adapt my learning style." No I've been doing this for many, many years (hands go up in the air).

MODERATOR: Is there case where you do additional reading, you know, to make it more relevant to you; you just, you know that's how you have to adapt and you do that.

SPEAKER3G2: Yeah, yeah when there are specific topics when I know it's needed for me and where I may go I will do it.

MODERATOR: Well, I think we've exhausted this topic enough. The other question deals with the international responsiveness of the curriculum.

SPEAKER3G2: As in measuring the curriculum with something other than something than the U.S.

MODERATOR: Yeah, like if you have, am, pieces by international authors on issues; what kind of range do, response , **how would you characterize the international responsiveness of the WED curriculum and what in your learning experience shaped your view on this?**

SPEAKER1G2: I think it's somewhat limited, I know in the list of articles and things that we read, a lot of times there'll be articles by individuals in the U.K., may be Danish. I get some limited exposure to, ah, international authors and perspectives in articles; but in terms of authored textbooks and those kinds of things, I don't see any, ah, attempt to integrate any of that. There are, perhaps, two classes I've had and, ah, two instructors who actually had international speakers, which I found absolutely wonderful because they brought new perspectives to the class ... (Participant breaks in).

SPEAKER2G2: If I may ask, what was the course about?

SPEAKER1G2: Well actually it was the diversity class.

SPEAKER2G2: OK. So it was called for. Same thing when we had, am, a course called am, ... Cultural Relationship or something about Cultures of the World, Ok, so it was imperative that the books that they used books that came from many parts ... (participant breaks in).

SPEAKER1G2: Was that a WED class though?

MODERATOR: The Cultural Foundations, the seminar class, its higher education.

SPEAKER2G2: It was imperative that books came all over the world, which of course they did OK.

MODERATOR: But, it wasn't a WED course, but, but ... (Participant breaks in).

SPEAKER1G2: But, a lot of students have to have it

SPEAKER2G2: Yeah, it's not a WED class, but it was required. At the same time, I had a WED class that focus mainly on technical education, Ok. When it come to technical education, book is book, if the book focuses on what it suppose to discuss, then we go with it. The author is secondary to the function of the book, so that's my take on it.

MODERATOR: We haven't heard from you **SPEAKER4G2** on international responsiveness. How would you characterize the responsiveness in the material in the content?

SPEAKER4G2: Am, I agree with SPEAKER1G2. Most of the time I've seen, there are very few international articles or international authors used or course material ... (Participant breaks in).

SPEAKER2G2: Ask yourself for what course and for which course, Ok. (Hands outstretched for emphasis).

SPEAKER1G2: Actually Prof. C class in HR, after she came back from her trip in China, then there was a discussion on, on perspectives and things that she had learnt there

SPEAKER3G2: I'm taking a different class but that's I can say the only class really where there's a conscious effort to address, or she's not gonna focus

on it specially but she's gonna make you aware, you know, for this particular topic, be aware that this is the U.S. perspective and in other countries, for instance, this person, this process is different; and I think to me, even that mention is enough. Now if you want to probe into it, you can go on your own and ask but she does mention it and I think.

MODERATOR: And so, the mentioning, in terms of learning transfer, how does that help if you wanted to transfer that knowledge to a Non-U.S. setting, and there's just a mention of it?

SPEAKER3G2: You would have to go and ask and get more theory.

SPEAKER1G2: You'd have to do your own research.

MODERATOR: So then the learning transfer would be very limited.

SPEAKER3G2: Yeah

SPEAKER1G2: It would be limited; although it would ... (Participant breaks in).

SPEAKER3G2: Bring it to your attention.

SPEAKER1G2: Yeah, there's a certain aware, awareness level that's been facilitated but, for any depth, you'll have to do your own research (nodding in agreement).

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER2G2: It all depends on your drive. If you just scratch the surface in class and something clicks (snaps fingers), now this is what I wanna do, head on to the library, head on to the Internet and let your drive take over.

MODERATOR: OK. Are we saying here that the onus is on the student and not the instructor to pursue a Non-U.S. **SPEAKER4G2** setting in terms of learning transfer?

SPEAKER1G2: That's what exists now, but ... (Moderator breaks in).

MODERATOR: But you don't necessarily think that is how it should be.

SPEAKER1G2: I think it could be better facilitated by instructors.

SPEAKER3G2: But shift it to the instructor. Yeah (nodding in agreement).

SPEAKER2G2: But, as much as I'd like to agree you know, from the continuum, let's shift across to the other side of the continuum. What about, how would the instructor know that if we the students do not tell the instructor? So, let's not leave it totally for the instructor, Ok.

SPEAKER1G2: You know that's true. That's true.

SPEAKER2G2: Let the student pick up: "instructor I like what you said. You know, you brought up the subject and I like it. Can we do some more investigation?"

MODERATOR: Mm, hm.

SPEAKER4G2: I had an experience in one of our WED classes, with the international students; we were given choices of articles you had to go and find that are representative of certain aspects of WED; and they actually went and found articles from their home country and used them, which was perfectly acceptable to the rest of the class; am, so they actually did go, because it was (hands separate) a free for one, you could find whatever article you wanted to

support your opinion, your position and they did. They went and researched articles from their home country, am, and presented them in class.

MODERATOR: OK. Am, do you get the sense from your instructors that there's need for a global view in terms of the global economy and so it is like, it is incumbent upon them (hands gesticulating accordingly) as people preparing you for a global economy, ... (Participant breaks in).

SPEAKER3G2: I don't think they do that but they should. They provide information all the time, they are in vacuum in their own little world (hands forming invisible globe).

MODERATOR: In a rapidly growing global economy, do you get the sense that they think it's important that they, without have international students in the class for instance, that they at least give a global view or global perspective and if so, am, is that perspective shown in an interest for developed countries as opposed to developing countries? ...

SPEAKER1G2: Didn't we have one class; you might not be in it with me, but somebody brought in some video tapes kinds of things from other countries ... like a German perspective and a Japanese perspective.

SPEAKER4G2: Yes.

SPEAKER1G2: I just had to think of that. That was really interesting. Was that Prof. Q?

SPEAKER4G2: I'd don't know if it was Prof. Q or Prof. M? He had videos from various countries.

SPEAKER1G2: Yeah!

SPEAKER4G2: About the children and how they were raised in schooling and things like that.

MODERATOR: Does this happen, I mean like regular, or it's a once in a lifetime; it's done sporadically?

SPEAKER1G2: it's his curriculum class. Ok, he did talk some about the German perspective; cause he had some experience; he's been in Germany, so he brought that into the classroom, cause it's been his experience in sharing it; so we did have that. I forgot about that.

MODERATOR: RA? In terms of the initiative from the instructors presenting material, probably choosing articles and so on; if there weren't any international students in the class, how would you characterize their interest in international perspectives?

SPEAKER2G2: I think in many cases from my experience, they either want to do it or tend to do it or they would have done it if they had the opportunity, Ok. In my case, I am a U.S. citizen, so you can either classify me as international student or a U.S. student Ok. I say they should do it because even though from my experience they do not come in and focus on the subject from a worldview; but at the end of the class, they want to know where I'm from and how do I feel about what they just discussed and how does it apply in my country?

MODERATOR: Alright. I think I got a sense it's there; it's done but it's not done as a concerted effort; but there is some sense of awareness. Alright, the last question deals with improvements; the open-ended questions at the end of the survey, and I summarized, you know, I looked at some of the themes and so

on; and some of the recurring suggestions include more international perspectives, workforce education perspectives, that does include guest speakers; more diversified curriculum content in terms of the representation of the different ethnic groups and so on, so you need more diversification of the content culturally and more diverse faculty and this is to include international faculty.

How would these improvements or others that you may suggest better serve your learning needs as students, as doctoral students? ...

SPEAKER3G2: We need more international faculty to give that, I mean it could be from here, but most people in the department have travelled and it's such interesting, in that, they didn't bring those experiences to the classroom, and that again, that could be enough (nodding in confirmation).

SPEAKER1G2: Yeah, I think it's that global perspective that I'm looking for because I really don't know much about other cultures, and I'm really interested in that somebody does bring that in then I'm very interested; so more of that, so more of that would be, it would be a better perspective.

SPEAKER3G2: And you don't know where your future assignments may take you. Who knows, you might be in another country; you might be working with people from other countries; you might be working for a company that might be based overseas ... (Participant breaks in).

SPEAKER1G2: And I think that would improve my comfort level, so when I don't understand another culture, I feel awkward, I'd don't know how much to

ask; I don't know how much probing I should do and to be polite at the same time.

SPEAKER4G2: Am, I guess I have a different perspective on this, the exposure to the cultures in the classroom is all fine and well; but you really it's barely scratching the surface; you are not really immersed in it; you don't have to, for lack of a better term, survive in it. I think if you really want to get the international exposure, people really should go to the countries. At least one, in some other foreign country, it doesn't matter, as long as you see a different culture from what you're used to or what you grew up in. This would at least open your eyes to there's different ways to do things; there's different language, there's different money system, there's music, dress, food, housing, transportation, weather; and ah, to be honest with you, I travelled extensively, ah in Europe, Asia, all over places in around the map. You know, you see an amazing difference in people by going there that you would not get by watching a film, having a presentation or reading a book.

SPEAKER3G2: It is true thought, but short of that, what can you do?

SPEAKER4G2: That's the thing. You know, it's going to be very expensive to send somebody to country.

SPEAKER3G2: As long as they come here (smiling)

SPEAKER4G2: But ah, you know, the films, the videos, the Internet, books, the pictures are all fine and well; that just basically intrigues your mind; but you don't get the temperature differences, the smells, the sounds, and all the other things blended together to get the full experience.

MODERATOR: OK. But in terms of improving your preparedness for a global economy or at least responding to cultural and international diversity ... are you saying that's that not enough and it's like why are we gonna spend money in the WED department to even beef up the curriculum and put this in it, when what you really need is to go there. Are you suggesting we should have maybe faculty exchanges?

SPEAKER4G2: Faculty exchanges would be a good program. Am, short of actually getting to go there, it could be have the students function as the ambassadors for their countries. For example, you can have ... her come in and talk about life in ... [her country] and, you know, how WED either is affected or will be affected by what she's doing here. ... you may or may not be able to do something on Nigeria, you know ... (student responds).

SPEAKER2G2: Gee ways ... (comment draws chuckles from around the table).

SPEAKER4G2: Ah mean, if you look at the international flavor that WED has, I mean we have students from a wide variety ... (Participant breaks in).

SPEAKER3G2: Even, you talking about places you've been;

SPEAKER3G2: No seriously, that's what I'm saying; it does not necessarily have to be an international person doing it. Whoever is aware, you know, and knows about it could talk about it.

SPEAKER1G2: I'm just saying, in terms of looking at ways of doing that I would love to have classes start with getting to know people in the classroom, where they're from, ask some of those classes just to get things started.

SPEAKER4G2: There was one lady; it was a class I took last summer: WED 566 with Prof. M. She brought in an actual selection of ethnic foods one time, am, in the summer session we took.

SPEAKER1G2: She did, ah ... (Moderator breaks in)

MODERATOR: That's OK.

SPEAKER4G2: Yes.

MODERATOR: You don't have to remember the name; but the thing is, how did it enhance the experience in the class or the learning? did it add ... (Participant breaks in).

SPEAKER4G2: I think it opened people's eyes to a different kind of culture, because to be honest, she was pretty closed-mouth in class.

SPEAKER1G2: She's very shy.

SPEAKER4G2: Actually she didn't say much in class; and I attribute that to her culture, but when she just unbeknownst to anybody else, she just brought in this selection of food. And I'm thinking, this is pretty nice.

SPEAKER1G2: And we can interact with her, and we can engage on a level that was different ...

SPEAKER4G2: Yeah, very informal. So this was, what I thought, a very natural experience for that class that wasn't going to happen with people in a more formalized setting asking her questions. But she really opened up.

MODERATOR: Did that change your view of her or did, ah mean, did you think of her differently?

SPEAKER4G2: Am, well since I'd never been exposed to that kind of culture, it didn't affect me.

SPEAKER1G2: I think may be it did in terms of she was so quiet, I didn't know she was in the classroom; but because of this, then I focused more attention on her and asking her question.

MODERATOR: Did it make easy for you to interact with her?

SPEAKER4G2: Yes. Well because it opened up a whole avenue of communication: "oh yeah, you're the one that brought in the whatevers."

MODERATOR: What about you ... ? On improvements, how do you think, if you have other improvements to suggest because we discussed a lot about the issues?

SPEAKER2G2: Gee, I think may be sick (laughing). I agree with everything that was said on improvements.

MODERATOR: Anything else **SPEAKER3G2?**

SPEAKER3G2: No.

MODERATOR: OK. Is there anything that am, that I didn't touched on through the discussion that probably came up, or you didn't mention it or you think it's something it's not important but still you had the thought. Is there anything I left out; probably within the discussion remembered something and wanted to share it. Anything before we close, because we gonna end in a few minutes?

SPEAKER1G2: You know the only other thing is, you were focused on international students, but I was thinking about the discussion last night in class,

in terms of even within the States, the different ethnic groups, the different ethnic groups we don't know about enough about, we don't know enough about each other.

MODERATOR: OK. In terms of helping us to know more what do you recommend? What would be a suggestion for improvement?

SPEAKER1G2: I think it's the same in terms of the international population; an opportunity to sit around and talk with each other and learn more about where people are from and how they learn and better assist each other in that process.

MODERATOR: OK. If nobody has anything else to add? OK. I want to thank you for 90 minutes of very informative discussion. ...

Focus Group 3 Video (DVD) Transcript

Conference Room at a Midwestern University

April 3, 2008 – 2:30 p.m. – 4:00p.m.

Moderator: I welcome you to our focus group this afternoon...

I looked at the document, this one statement stood out for me. The goal of Southern 150, as you know, is for SIU to become a top public research university, at least in the top 75 nationally in the U.S.; and one of the core values in terms of meeting that goal or the mission to shape the mission to meet that vision of becoming one of the top public research universities is diversity. And, under the core values in the document, this is what it says about diversity:

Diversity will drive our ability to attain our educational mission (to become a top public university). As our world increasingly changes so must we. We will not only respect but also value differences in all their forms of expression as necessary to the creation of a view of each other that is balanced and healthy. We will be known for a faculty and student body that reflects the human and ethnic diversity and intellectual pluralism of the world.

And, the definition of curriculum responsiveness, in the context of the study, has two parts to it. The first part is, it means *the equitable representation of ethnic groups and international perspectives in the curriculum content whenever possible, and secondly, the incorporation of different teaching strategies that promote learning in all students*. So when we discuss our issues, it will be in that context we're referring to curriculum responsiveness: teaching

strategies and also the inclusiveness of the curriculum in terms of the representation of ethnic groups and international perspectives...

And here's the question:

What are the preferred teaching strategies that most promote learning for you and are these used in the WED classes? WED being Workforce Education and Development classes and just reflect a little bit on your learning experiences and tell us what works best for you in terms of teaching strategies and if they're used.

SPEAKER1G3: Face-to-face instruction, that works for me as a method, you get more, more, you get more responses (hands gesticulating for emphasis) from looking at that speaker: verbal and non-verbal.

SPEAKER2G3: I agree, and with the face-to-face I prefer lecture and discussion rather than just lecture. I like multimedia too. I like visual aids that go along with everything; but definitely face-to-face.

SPEAKER3G3: Ah, sought ah agree, am, with ah face-to-face, but at the same time, it feels like we're going in a different direction with the new generations, especially like online, computer-based learning, so.

SPEAKER4G3: One of my courses last summer was am, it was online learning class, and ... (Participant breaks in)

SPEAKER1G3: Did you like it?

SPEAKER4G3: I did, I enjoyed it, but I can do self-study. I have a friend that says no, that she wouldn't, that wouldn't be acceptable for her because she doesn't want to hold herself to those standards. She wants somebody face-to-

face; but to me, I think I can do either one. Face-to-face helps, the visual learning; I'm a visual learner, so maybe that's why I like that format. I can read, apply it, because that's what it was; you read it; you read the lesson, you applied it, and you submitted your assignments. That works for me.

MODERATOR: The online, yeah.

SPEAKER4G3: The online (nodding in confirmation).

SPEAKER1G3: Also for people who are still holding their jobs, you know, it may be the only link, yeah (nodding in confirmation) to get online whenever, wherever and finish their assignments. So maybe a combination of face-to-face and online would be the best for today's ... (Participant breaks in)

SPEAKER2G3: As far as my preferences go though, it's face-to-face. I think online is very convenient. I enjoy when an instructor; well you know, in Grad school all my classes have small enough you get one-on-one if you want; and ah I prefer when an instructor can explain something to me and look at me and notice if I understand it or if I'm kinda still trying to get it and then they can see on rather than, ah, in an online course where you have to initiate the fact that you may not fully understand, and some people are a little more introverted and may not want to do that, so that's one of the biggest things I see that's helped me in certain classes.

SPEAKER5G3. Yeah, I agree. I was just gonna say. It's kind of a combination, I love definitely face-to-face more than anything, you know, I think that is, you know, when you ask the instructor questions face-to-face and stuff, it's much nicer. I think that online, in classes where there's no video, there's no

interaction whatever with the teacher; it's just e-mails and stuff like that. It's just kinda like independent study really. This class we're actually taking right now 505, it's called distance learning and that's a combination; so it's gonna be classes with video, you're gonna be able to see the instructor and you're gonna be able to interact, am in real time, you know with it right there, so that's probably gonna be really popular; instead of just ah, you know, e-mail correspondence with an online class, which is, you know, that's really studying on your own. You get the book, you read it yourself; and may be you taking classes, I mean, the tests and stuff; but that's really not instruction; you know, cause I can go to the library, get the books for free, test myself (smiles draws slight chuckle from around the table), yeah, so (nodding in agreement).

MODERATOR: OK. ... The second part of the question ask if the strategies that you most prefer that promote learning for you, if they're used in WED classes and you said that; I got the sense that face-to-face is your preference. But what I'm asking now is with what consistency is it used in the delivery of WED classes. When you're in classes do you find that one instructor may not use a lot of face-to-face and you're placed in a situation where you're learning style doesn't match the teaching style of the instructor? ...

SPEAKER5G3: Yeah!

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER1G3: I had a combination, all sorts of, I mean, I had face-to-face most of the time. I had also class completely online; and online it took me

much, much longer than face-to-face in the class, you know. And I don't know, I mean what else are you asking?

SPEAKER4G3: It seems to me, like you're asking if the instructor may be uses different methods during that one class.

MODERATOR: Or, for all classes for WED

SPEAKER4G3: I think it depends on the instructor. I've found that the courses I've gone to, am, seems like the instructor has a format: may be its Power Point and then, you know, going over the Power points or may be it's a certain curriculum they follow; may be no Power Points at all but bring in extra media items and things like, so, but I think it's consistent within that course, that's what I've found that it's consistent within that course. If that teacher uses that, they seem to use it consistently. I don't see then swapping around to different types of methods. Is that what you're getting at?

MODERATOR: OK. Yeah.

SPEAKER2G3: I don't know if I'm answering this correctly.

MODERATOR: Oh, just, just, spill it out.

SPEAKER2G3: Sometimes, ah with a lot of my courses, we do a lot of social interaction, a lot of group work and am, I enjoy that for the most part. You know, I also get a chance to meet others, to intermingle. But am, in possibly one or two of my courses, it seems as though, the instructor wasn't, this may be the first they taught it or they weren't completely 100% comfortable teaching the subject, and they put a lot more of the actual learning objectives on the students; in terms of: Ok, next week we're gonna cover chapter 7, so this group learn

chapter 7, teaches in class, then we will discuss openly afterwards; and the teacher may have some input, but it seem like for the most part, the teacher really didn't instruct us on any of ... (Moderator breaks in)

MODERATOR: Its student-centered learning you'd say.

SPEAKER5G3: Right! Yeah, exactly! And I enjoy that too but that was just a little different from other instructors who have us do smaller types of projects; well maybe a paper project but it's not covering all the objectives on the syllabus. The teacher meets those objectives, teaches them to us and we do side projects that relate to that and I think I get a little better; a little more out of those type of ah teaching strategies but; and then like you guys said, some instructors they don't do group projects at all. It's strictly an open dialogue; or a lecture, I seemed to; I like them all, that's what I'm trying to say, but there are inconsistencies.

MODERATOR: OK. Does that, the inconsistency, does it affect your learning retention or performance at all? Or may be the motivation to learn in the class or class participation... **SPEAKER3G3:** Well, I think it should be a mixture; cause one area, you might not be all that good in it; but somebody else they might need that particular area. Ah, for example, one I first started the program, I'm not gonna quote names or anything ... (Moderator breaks in)

MODERATOR: No, you don't have to.

SPEAKER3G3: When I first started the program, they laid out a rubric for you am all you know point by point and you pretty much had no visual aids, they didn't even send you an e-mail; no e-mails; none of the computer type stuff. Am, the second class I had that particular semester, am, tend to use a lot of slides

and Power Points and stuff like that; and as I am, progressed, I started seeing more Power Points than ah more face-to-face lecture. Also, I tried online, it just didn't work to well for me, you know, so ...

MODERATOR: What am, what were some of the challenges?

SPEAKER3G3: The problem was ah, online you don't, you don't get much feedback, you don't feedback when you want feedback; it's like you have to, am, post a comment wait or you have to wait to get on at a certain time of the day, which am, I don't know, I kinda like going to class at you know, be there at 6 to 8:30 and am face-to-face, like you say, sometimes they see if you're struggling a little bit, it's like ah, we might have to introduce some more points or something or am, present it in another way...

MODERATOR: OK. So, it works for you in the classroom better. Do you find you perform better or your grade is better when you have the in-classroom instruction face-to-face as oppose to the online?

SPEAKER3G3: Well, I do better when I have face-to-face instruction, but when you am introduce it in different ways; like I said, Power Points and when the teacher also interact it with sending out the e-mails and ah, am, what you call it, sending out the reports or whatever they want you to read; stuff like that, but am, a lot of times I'm, I'm not good with paper either. So, the professors chop down all these trees and hand us all these handouts (hands gesticulating accordingly); you know for some reason, I read them, but I misplace them; and you know, when it's time to go back to them it's like ah. So I'm just not that well organized when it comes to keeping notes and paper, but online you know it's

there; when I check my e-mail; such and such sent this and save it in such and such file; that's easy.

MODERATOR: OK. Any other feedback in terms ... (Participant breaks in)

SPEAKER2G3: I like the inconsistency, differences, like ... he said. Some students learn differently. Yeah, I don't like going to the same type of class. I prefer differences.

MODERATOR: Does that affect your, your learning motivation in any way, when you get the same thing?

SPEAKER2G3: I don't know. I never thought of it (smiling).

MODERATOR: OK. That's fine. Anybody else?

SPEAKER3G3: More is motivation for me

MODERATOR: The mixture.

SPEAKER3G3: Well when its am, just one simple way, you use to it, it's dry, the same professor; you know it seems like the same person each semester or whatever. Then, I am, I kinda get unmotivated. I kinds lose my motivation (hands gesture made to suggest boredom).

MODERATOR: Does that reflect in your grade at all or your learning performance?

SPEAKER3G3: Well my grades are pretty much am, they pretty good so; I started out rough the first semester, but after that, it's been pretty consistent; like I said, I like the different methods and stuff.

MODERATOR: OK. I think we've exhausted that question in terms of teaching strategies. If there's anything else that you want to share at this point, I'll just leave the table open before we move on to the next question.

Alright, OK. The next question deals with cultural differences, and from what I have gathered so far from the data, it indicates wide variances in the students' perceptions on the consideration given to students' cultural differences in WED teaching delivery. So this is the question; I've had wide variances in terms of looking at the data. **Is awareness for students' cultural differences demonstrated in WED teaching delivery and what in your learning experience has influenced or shaped your view on this?**

SPEAKER1G3: I did have a, most of the teachers, they don't you know, discriminate in the classroom, or if you, for me because I look different and I have an accent, so there's one, one time I just felt that when the teacher, the instructor, when we had to give a speech; like a paper at the end of the class, reflect on our views, and then the teacher we are three of us he would delay us at the very end of class because you might be slow, that's my perception you know, so I mean, he didn't give us a choice just to participate like anybody else in class but he said those of you, the three of you come forward and I will let you go at the end of the class; and so that's, I guess we didn't feel comfortable with that; but otherwise, ah, I mean, the instructors, I mean they treat us fairly.

MODERATOR: OK. How did it make you feel when you say you weren't comfortable, you know you weren't comfortable with the fact that the instructor preferred for you to go at the end?

SPEAKER1G3: Makes you feel lesser than the other students, that you're stupid or not well, it just felt that way to me (talking in a low tone of voice).

MODERATOR: OK. And in giving your presentation at the end, am, did it affect your performance any?

SPEAKER1G3: No. Not at all. No

MODERATOR: OK. So, it didn't affect your performance, but it did make you feel, you know, a bit uncomfortable.

SPEAKER1G3: But, I didn't say anything (smiling).

MODERATOR: OK. Anybody else?

SPEAKER1G3: May be the teacher didn't notice anything (smiling)

SPEAKER4G3: I've noticed some of the workforce education teachers or instructors, bring, something that's am, may be would be known to somebody living in the United States or have grown up in the United States, they would know right away what they were referring to, and they would explain that concept to the international students; and I'm like, "that's great, I'd wouldn't have thought to do that, I'm glad they did," and so I've noticed that more often than not, which is really impressive for me (pointing to self). But am, unfortunately, you know, that's a bad situation to be in, you know.

MODERATOR: And you know, it's just the reality of the situation. We're not pointing fingers, we're not on a witch hunt here, but if we are to improve the system with the increasing diversity in the university campus population, we need to identify some of these issues so that research can show; you're doing everything else fine, but these are the issues we need to improve on, so please

don't feel uncomfortable; your experiences will be both positive and negative and so we share both of them.

SPEAKER5G3: I was just going to say, I was thinking ... (Moderator breaks in).

MODERATOR: Just hold on. I thought I saw a hand go up (pointing to participant at the lower end of the table)

SPEAKER3G3: You can go ahead. I'll go next.

SPEAKER5G3: Well I was gonna say, I was wondering if the instructor thought, they were doing, am, the students a favor (hands gesticulating to make the point).

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER5G3: Like saying, you know, at the end ... (Participant breaks in)

SPEAKER1G3: So that way, he can give us time but it still feels not good for me, because once you're there, you're competing with the other students, same level, you are, I mean equal, you know ... (Participant breaks in).

SPEAKER5G3: I understand.

SPEAKER1G3: You shouldn't be, you know, subordinate ... (Participant breaks in)

SPEAKER5G3: What it be better if they came up and asked you, "Say hey, would you like to go at the end you have one more time and stuff?" Instead of just putting you in that slot.

SPEAKER4G3: Yeah!

SPEAKER5G3: Would that have been Ok with you, if the instructor came up and said, you know, asked you, if you would be comfortable going in the end?

SPEAKER1G3: Yeah. That would be OK. If they ask me that yeah, before hand (responds in a soft voice, leans back and smiles).

SPEAKER5G3: It sounds crazy.

SPEAKER1G3: But still, it feels batty... (Audio not clear)

SPEAKER3G3: I've noticed that am, most of my professors, they try to make conscious effort to be am, culturally sensitive like, one example is like she was saying, like how they put her at the end, well they have us to pick slots or whatever, you know. Sometimes if you are at the back of the class, you might get a bad slot, what not; but am, I think it's, ah, you know, that's a good way, you know, solve that particular situation or pick numbers out the hat, something like that and am, work out the time for each day if it's on different days, what not; but that particular incident wow! I probably would have been sad too (leans back with sad expression), you know, it probably would am, I don't know, cause you competing like you said, you're competing on the same level, am, everybody should be an even playing field, you know, and the professor should am, I guess went to her with that issue, you know:"Is there a problem with you competing or you know," that should have been addressed; you know, some people, if you shy or what not, then you could a say, "may be I need to go last, you know." If not, you know, I wanna go first. So, at least the option should've been presented.

MODERATOR: OK. You said that your instructors, am, make an attempt to be culturally sensitive ...

SPEAKER3G3: Mm hm.

MODERATOR: Am, could you share any other experiences, I mean apart from reflecting on **SPEAKER1G3** situation and how that should be handled?

SPEAKER3G3: OK. Am, about my second semester or so, I jumped into the Diversity class, that's when I really started paying attention to it; if I'm not mistaken, we had it together ...

MODERATOR: Yes, we did,

SPEAKER3G3: But am, that's when a lot of the issues started come to me; and what I notices, a lot of professors am,, is like, you know they like to discuss the customs in different cultures and what not; what's appropriate; cause I'm forever learning about cultures and stuff. That's what, is it clear enough or?

MODERATOR: Well, you were made aware of the cultural differences by that one instructor because it sought a fit her subject, she was actually teaching ...

SPEAKER3G3: Right.

MODERATOR: But, what about other classes?

SPEAKER3G3: That's what I'm saying, once I was made aware of it; am, in the other classes, you noticed, like I said, am the number system, you wonder why can't she just say, you know, "you three, you three, you know" (hands gesticulating accordingly); so am, that type of stuff; am, we might be in a lecture what not; like I had once professor, he always referred to the Germany, you

know, the German or what not and then we had another one refer to Korea, cause I use to always relate with him with Korea cause I spend a little time in Korea, you know, I was in the Army, so I kinda understood some of the differences.

SPEAKER2G3: I've ah, I've never seen any type of discrimination or bias, like consciously; am, but again, I don't know; I've never studied the research; the learning or teaching strategies of any other countries or customs. I may blindly, I may not be seeing things that foreign or international students are being exposed to through an instructor, and I don't pick up on it because they're teaching the way I was grown up to be taught. Do you know what I'm saying?

MODERATOR: Yes. OK.

SPEAKER1G3: That's true. I think, I may suggest, may be in future, they may have to in our schools today, American schools especially, they may have to incorporate cultural education into the curriculum.

SPEAKER2G3: Right, and I would have noticed; that would have been clear. There may be little nuances that are different that I don't see because I don't know of them.

SPEAKER1G3: And how they act. Yeah, if you are the instructor yourself.

MODERATOR: Any other comments on that?

SPEAKER3G3: May be we need, am, like more diversity amongst the professors what not, cause they're mostly American professors; like we had a discussion in one class about, what's that am? English as a second language; taking the courses and what not; cause a lot of the spouses, they take the

courses but, it's like ah, if you speak a native language of ah Koreans, am, you may have somebody teaching they know English, but they don't know any other native language than Korean, you know, so they don't know how to break it down. Sometimes, you got to refer to that native language to know what you mean, what you're saying it; and am, another good example: you teaching Spanish but you have ah; well, you teaching someone Spanish but they're French, but you don't know any French. So, it's like when you refer to them in a French language, it's like Ok, this means *hello*, or this means such and such, then, you know, they get it, but (Participation breaks in).

SPEAKER2G3: Loss of translation.

SPEAKER3G3: Right! It's like, I don't understand your language but I'm trying teach you my language, you know. So, may be they need more bilinguals like am, when I say bilinguals, once again the Korean language; you need somebody to know the Korean language and English to teach English to the Korean.

MODERATOR: Well, we don't teach the ESL classes in WED.

SPEAKER3G3: Well I kinda got off, I refer to it in that manner because am, in am WED, we have a whole bunch of cultures.

MODERATOR: Yeah, we do.

SPEAKER3G3: So sometimes, the professors from other cultures, even if it's like, ah, some type of assistance, you know, just so we can see different views or whatever of how certain cultures teach, how certain cultures reach out.

MODERATOR: Have you noticed any differences in, I think we may have a fair range here: ... We have at least three other ethnic groups that are represented within the United States. We have the Native Americans; we have the Hispanics; and we have the Asians. Have you observed any differences in the way the instructors would interact with those students because of their cultural differences? ... might find well, "you're too quiet, speak out or something." And, I'm not saying that's deliberate, but I'm trying to get a sense of, since am some of you may not have thought about it, but has this ever happened in your reflection with the different cultures represented amongst the students?

SPEAKER2G3: I haven't noticed it. Every course I've had with every international student that I shared a class with has been pretty much the same plane as myself; just as interactive and open, open dialogue as myself. I haven't noticed really any (emphasized) difference.

MODERATOR: OK. Any other contributions? This is for the United States, the other ethnic groups.

SPEAKER4G3: I, I noticed one, well I guess shy student in my very first class, but I kind of, I'm that way too until I really get to know the instructors, I'm pretty shy too, so I didn't really pick up on it as an international difference, I guess you would say, just a personality ... (Moderator breaks in).

MODERATOR: Was it an international student?

SPEAKER4G3: It was an international student (nodding in confirmation), very quiet, and the instructor kept trying to pull her out of her shell I guess you'd say; by asking her questions like you said, and interacting.

SPEAKER1G3: You're asking this question specifically to WED or ...?

MODERATOR: Yes, specifically to WED and awareness demonstrated by the instructors in their teaching delivery for the cultural differences

SPEAKER1G3: Not, not by instructors, I have noticed, but may be my classmates I do.

MODERATOR: OK. You can share that with us. It would help because we're here ...

SPEAKER1G3: They don't say it but you can feel it (statement draws slight chuckle from around the table).

MODERATOR: What in their body language makes you feel that they are indifferent?

SPEAKER1G3: The instructor would assign you group work, you know, immediately the Americans, Ok they pick their group and you'll be left out, unless you, you, (hands making a forward movement) you jump in, I mean ...

MODERATOR: Well you have to be placed in a group so ...

SPEAKER1G3: Yeah, asked to be in the group.

MODERATOR: OK. And am, was it easy for you to integrate into the group then or did you feel like you know an outsi?

SPEAKER1G3: Usually my classmates were nice, you know, they will accommodate you (smiling), they have too (in a soft voice). May be it'll be different in another, another situation, you know, not in school.

MODERATOR: OK. Well let's turn our attention now to the actual curriculum content. And I have found that the preliminary review of the data

shows that ethnic groups are not always equitably represented in WED curriculum content. And this is the question: **Judging from your exposure to the WED curriculum, how would you characterize or describe WED curriculum inclusiveness” And curriculum inclusiveness means a concerted effort to eliminate cultural bias in higher education curriculum.**

SPEAKER2G3: Hm.

SPEAKER5G3: That’s a tuff one.

SPEAKER2G3: That’s a good question.

MODERATOR: Well, you can take some time to think about it.

SPEAKER1G3: So like research. They don’t am, they don’t get a lot of research on international researchers, so you could read about it

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER1G3: So, that’s one.

MODERATOR: And ah, do you draw that to the attention of the instructor or do you do additional research outside your class?

SPEAKER1G3: I’m sorry?

MODERATOR: When you find this gap in terms of international representation in the curriculum, how do you cope with it? ...

SPEAKER1G3: They could ah, because this is a university, on diversity as you said in the opening; they could invite (hands gesticulating accordingly), I mean to say, more renowned international speakers, I’m sure they’re all around the world; but we don’t see any. I never had any speaker from outside. May be that’s the design, we don’t because of the design of the class.

MODERATOR: Am, in terms of it's ah design of the class in terms of the structure of the curriculum how it's taught: you have to do this in so many weeks; these are the topics and it doesn't call for anything outside of that.

SPEAKER1G3: Uh mm.

MODERATOR: OK. What about another perspective?

SPEAKER2G3: So for instance, when we're discussing a training module, a way of training in a certain organization, when we're learning about that in the course, are you, do you mean, am, we don't see a lot of outside influence, another individual come in from another country and describe their training at their, at their ah business. Yeah. (Nodding in agreement).

SPEAKER1G3: Uh hm. We never see it.

SPEAKER3G3: Yeah, that's hardly done.

SPEAKER2G3: However, if am, if the training is that much ... I don't know how to put this ... if the company, if we can get the same resource here for a much cheaper cost, the same type of training, then obviously we would just hire someone to come in, or ask someone from the United States or in the area to come in, but you don't see business references or organizations from another country.

SPEAKER1G3: Even from the States you know.

SPEAKER2G3: Right!

MODERATOR: OK. When you say even from the States, we're now looking at the ethnic groups within the United States ... Hispanics; the Haitians are an ethnic group but am, but it's not a dominant ethnic group, for example,

African Americans would be a majority group within the different ethnic groups in terms of minorities; then you have the Native Americans, you have Asian Americans, and Hispanics. Do you get that range of representation, ah, in terms of the research or the texts that are offered or supporting material that's given to you?

SPEAKER4G3: Am, I had a communications class, and although the teacher didn't cover those things, or the instructor didn't cover those things specifically, she had us do presentations on, just pick any culture or country that we wanted to and describe how you would go about am putting together a cultural presentation if you were to travel there on business. What are the types of things you would look out for? W what are the mannerisms you would avoid? Do we eat together? Is this a culture that eats while they have a business meeting? Just how you would interact with another culture; and it was very interesting for me. I wish more classes could incorporate that type of may be even to have the students go out and do the research on and bring it back and present it to everyone, instead of the instructor having to you know ...
(Participant breaks in).

SPEAKER5G3: Especially in business; that's a huge factor.

SPEAKER4G3: This was an organizational communication class. I enjoyed it, you know, I enjoyed looking up the country that I studied and presenting and listening to the other presentations as well. They had a pretty wide group of other countries and cultures represented (nodding in confirmation).

MODERATOR: OK. Now that communications class is within the WED department.

SPEAKER4G3: Yeah.

SPEAKER3G3: Well, most of my classes, what come to mind is am, building trainer programs, am like curriculum and all that type of stuff so I'm just kinda lost when ... I guess am you saying how we build the training program and tailor it to another culture?

MODERATOR: Well ... (Participant breaks in).

SPEAKER3G3: We haven't, this to me is more am, I guess, self-centered because am, whatever training program you come in with in the beginning, if you work that program (hands motioning up and down) throughout the whole WED program, you pretty much can ease through; but the problem that I see is that WED is designed for professionals, more people already in the business world that wanna come back to school and you know; but am, people that may be come from undergrad to grad, I think we have, well they have a little bit harder time because by putting a training program together you technically, you haven't had no on-the-job experience.

So, I've seen people putting programs together like maintenance worker and stuff like that; am, one of the tasks: I mop the floor and then I sweep, you know, that's not a real, I don't know, I think it's built for professionals and it's more self-centered. So, if am, if you are from another culture, and you had a field that you're in, I think it'll be, am, it would be good for you at that point, and it would work out; but if you from another culture, you're really gonna get lost;

cause I was lost. I came from the Army and drove trucks but that's not necessarily what I wanted to do in my training program. I was trying to get away from that so that caused a huge problem for me.

MODERATOR: Anybody else?

SPEAKER2G3: I got one last thing.

MODERATOR: Yes sure!

SPEAKER2G3: And this is just a suggestion. Since this is a global economy, I think we would benefit to have, you know, guest speakers or things like that in the curriculum that came and taught us about different styles of workforce education and development in different countries, different cultures.

MODERATOR: OK. What about you ... ? Have you observed in terms of ... (Participant breaks in)

SPEAKER5G3: Well am, when you first ask the question, I was kinda thinking well in terms of strictly the curriculum ... (Moderator breaks in).

MODERATOR: Yeah, the content, the curriculum content.

SPEAKER5G3: Yeah, and the first thing that popped into my head, I was just thinking, most people they are never gonna question the curriculum. If you start a class and you know the teacher starts, you know using their curriculum or their design or whatever, am. you know, nobody questions that you just keep going with it, and you know, hardly anybody is gonna say "you know, we should teach this, this way, you know, its gonna have to start with the teachers, the instructors I mean, you know, teaching them that you need to integrate this and this and this; you know what I mean?"

MODERATOR: Yeah. Am, the whole thing about even recognizing that there are different ethnic groups or their perspectives and how they represented in material, it's just not brought to your attention or you are not aware of it? You just go with what is given.

SPEAKER5G3: Pretty much that's the way it is ...

MODERATOR: Is that the view of everybody else's perspective, because he's saying like nobody... (Smiling) and everybody ...

SPEAKER5G3: Typically I mean. You would?

MODERATOR: I think in my case because I am from another country (pointing to self). Yeah. I would be more aware of it, you know, a different perspective, at least, outside of the U.S. would help me in terms of relating, but that's just my perspective.

SPEAKER2G3: So, you'll get this paper published and run throughout the department (statement draws laughter from around the table).

MODERATOR: Well, you do the research to inform what's going on so that things can be improved; that's the whole point of research, I think. Yeah.

SPEAKER1G3: Yes, having research.

MODERATOR: Ah we touched a little bit, ah in this question to the other question, in reference to the other question; and the other one deals with the international responsiveness of the curriculum content. So the question is, **do WED curriculum materials adequately address international perspectives and what in your learning experience has shaped your view or influence your response on this?**

SPEAKER1G3: I don't see it.

SPEAKER2G3: I don't see a lot of reflection, the only input I really get is from the actual students telling their stories, their experiences and you know, during the discussion, then I pick up on that stuff; but had they not mention that or talked about it wouldn't have learned that or gotten that in the course.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER5G3: I agree. I was just going to say, you get most of it from the students; every once in a while, you get a horror story from the instructor or something.

SPEAKER4G3: Similar to you, I spent some time over in ... [country X as well in ... [country Y]; and you do, as a student you think, well, "oh, well this is true here, but its different may be in Korea or it was different somewhere else I think; so I think the individual students might, might trigger to them; but yeah, as far as the curriculum, I did not see a lot of references to other countries in our curriculum or cultures..

MODERATOR: What do you think could account for that inadequacy in the representation of international perspectives; I mean just ... (Participant breaks in)

SPEAKER2G3: The inadequacy of representation of different ... (looks in a questioning way at moderator).

MODERATOR: Yeah, what do you think could account for it?

SPEAKER2G3: Instructors ... Well in the various types of cultures from instructors; that's something, I'm sure that's why we're missing that, is because

the instructors are usually one type of group rather than, ah, international (hands gesticulating accordingly).

MODERATOR: You don't have a lot of cultural and international diversity among the teaching staff, Ok ... Or faculty.

SPEAKER4G3: Yeah, I agree with that and I think the change is hard anyway; and we talk being in a global economy which we are, but it's sometime hard to move from point A which is centered around the United States to point B, which is a more global economy. I think that, you know, the curriculum just hasn't been tweaked along the way. It's probably been tweaked in other areas, but probably not culturally.

MODERATOR: OK. Now how do you think that would impact your readiness for a global economy, because when you graduate, you are gonna be working in a global economy, even though you're here in the United States (smiling), you know, it is a global economy out there that you're dealing with. How do you think that would impact your readiness for the workforce?

SPEAKER2G3: Not greatly.

MODERATOR: It would not impact your performance or readiness greatly for ... (Participant breaks in)

SPEAKER2G3: Not, I mean the way it is now, would not greatly affect it.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER2G3: Global economy: it would put me in a position where I'd have to do my own research to learn different nuances I'll need to know; unless I work for a company that puts me through training about diversity.

MODERATOR: OK...?

SPEAKER3G3: I think it's am; it's a real task to try incorporate all the different cultures in our system. Am, for the simple fact that it's a huge melting pot; we got people coming from everywhere (hands moving in and out) and am, to accommodate every single culture, I think it's a task; but what I do learn from being in this program, ...

MODERATOR: Any other views on that, the international responsiveness of the curriculum or how it would impact your readiness for the workforce or your own knowledge of what you can expect to face in a global economy as workforce educators? Now you would be going out there to train people or you may be working in an educational institution working with a diverse group of students, international students; you'd be developing programs for a diverse group of people, how do you think the inadequacy of the am international responsiveness within the curriculum affect your readiness to undertake a task ...

SPEAKER4G3: It would be a hindrance, depending on the type of situation you were in (nodding in agreement)

SPEAKER5G3: You might not even know until you get there

SPEAKER4G3: Exactly.

SPEAKER5G3: You know, so ... (nods in agreement smiling)

MODERATOR: Are you comfortable with that? Do you feel short-changed at all with what you're and what you're paying for? Does it matter at all?

SPEAKER4G3: It matters, but I think, I guess I have enough confidence in myself that I would educate myself, when I come to that point.

MODERATOR: OK. So it's not a big issue

SPEAKER4G3: It is a big issue, but ... (Shrugs shoulders and pauses)

MODERATOR: And I meant, in your opinion, for you it's not going to impact you greatly in terms of getting a job or performing to a required standard in terms of diversity and so on, its, you would do your own research ...

SPEAKER4G3: I don't think so now. I think so in ten, twenty years down the road. I think growing kids in that perspective, yes, I think it would hinder them more so than myself at the present time.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER3G3: Well, I was just going to say am, just like the diversity class, it helped us get to know each other, but am its really big, cultural sensitivity. If we had ah course let you know what not to say, if it was specified around cultures; you know, diversity is sex, age, you know it's everything; so ah, if it was, one focused on culture, what not, cultural sensitivity, it would be hard to do all the different cultures; but I pretty sure we can am, get some of the major cultures out. But am, I don't know, you never know where you're gonna end up, you know. I might catch a job in China, Africa, who knows? So, either way you gotta learn; but with sensitivity training, you have some general idea what to do and what not to do.

MODERATOR: OK. John you were gonna say something?

SPEAKER5G3: Actually I was going to make a statement, but I'll change it to a question: because I don't know if it's ...

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER5G3: Am. I was going to say that the international community might be able to know, they'll be able to sense out, you know, "here comes another American and you know, with his arrogance, here's what he knows," you know, or what he thinks he knows and come into our culture and just gonna tell us or teach us something," so might question; I would turn that into a question, am, can you guys, can you tell, just the international students here, can you tell when you go back to your country, the Americans and how arrogant may be they are or do they come across? You know, I don't even want to use that word. I see it all the time, it just drives me knots.

MODERATOR: OK. I can't answer the question because I'm the moderator, so I'll throw it out to (Pointing to the other international students)

SPEAKER1G3: Can you repeat the question please?

SPEAKER5G3: I feel like Americans are really desensitized to other cultures, you know, at different levels and my question was: Do you see that a lot, not just here in WED, but when you go back home, is it like here's another desensitized Americans coming into our country?

SPEAKER1G3: Yes, they are. That's the word in town (responds draws a burst laughter from around the table)

MODERATOR: Let's bring it back to your interaction, with the students in the WED program because that's the focus of the discussion ...

SPEAKER3G3: What I was gonna say, I think that was a really good question, because I noticed that when I am, in ... [country x], I'd like take the taxi and the taxi drivers, they'll be real mean to you. They'll snatch the money from

you, throw it at you, you know, because they think we are rude, so they have to respond to that; so with cultural sensitivity, if we had some type of training before we went over there; it's like wow, don't mess with the taxi driver, you know (comment draws more laughter from around the table).

MODERATOR: If you were to go back to your country, do you think that would impact the way, you know, your preparedness to work in a Non-U.S. setting?

SPEAKER1G3: I don't think it would really.

MODERATOR: So you think you would be able to apply your U.S. ah, knowledge and training across the board?

SPEAKER1G3: Because, may be my major. Yeah

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER4G3: Am, I have seen in most of my classes, if I'm in a class if it's a more research class, yes I have seen, because she'll give examples and she'll talk to the international students, you know as a class because, there're several in our class and she'll say you know, she'll bring international –type issues that pertinent to that country in that study they're doing the research with, so I've noticed it there; but as far as most of the WED courses I've taken, I haven't seen the teachers, he said earlier he'd seen international students make comments about how things are in their culture, but I haven't seen it in the curriculum

SPEAKER5G3: The instructors, they're passive and kinds neutral when it comes to addressing international issues and stuff; since the instructors aren't

really trained to deal with that, you know, some of those issues, you know, so that probably why they can't really, you know, extrapolate anything (making a hand motion to emphasize point).

MODERATOR: Now, now, we're making the assumption here on your part, how do you feel about that? (Question brings a burst of laughter from around the table). We don't want to generalize, that's JF's opinion.

MG: At least, we haven't seen the proper training.

SPEAKER5G3: That was the question.

MODERATOR: OK. They may not be you think. But what do you think? Do you think it's something with training or do you think it's an attitude? Or what?

MG: Yes and Yes (response draws loud laughter from participants).

SPEAKER5G3: I hope it's more just the training. I hope it's not their attitude

SPEAKER4G3: Right.

MODERATOR: OK. .. these were like three open-ended questions; and these are some of the trends that I've found in or frequently recurring suggestions for improvements in the data. Students feel that ah, more international workforce education perspectives are needed, they feel that more diverse faculty, and this includes international faculty should be hired; they also feel that culturally diverse content needs to be increased and that includes different guest speakers. These were some of like the frequently recurring suggestions for improvements.

How would these or other improvements that you may suggest better serve your learning needs as students at this point or in the future, students to come?

SPEAKER2G3: Well, I think am, at the most simplest, you have, very base bottom line, you have a course on international workforce education and development, where it's completely centered on students' reading literature or studying various cultures in workforce education or, you know, he's in human relations?

SPEAKER3G3: Human resources.

SPEAKER2G3: Human resources, I'm in educational, training, and development, you're in e-learning?

SPEAKER5G3: Uh Hm.

SPEAKER2G3: So, why not have another course of international workforce education available with all the course tailored toward that so students can have a degree in international workforce and development.

MODERATOR: In terms of meeting your learning needs, it would be for if you wanted to specialize

SPEAKER2G3: Right! And that doesn't really open up to all the others but may be have a requisite course in which everyone has to take, like we had to take 460; the introductory courses; and then you have that introduction course, which may open people up in taking that type of curriculum, that field, that discipline; but at least have that offered.

MODERATOR: OK. Ah are you saying if it's offered, it would be an option as oppose to or would it be a core, as you know we have the core classes 466 and so on.

SPEAKER2G3: Right.

MODERATOR: Are you saying it should be a core?

SPEAKER2G3: May be the introductory, it should be a core requisite, required class; but then, now like I said, I chose the one in educational training and development; now to get in I still have to take this international workforce education and development, this foundation course and then but teaches you a little bit; but then I chose education and development and you can choose the international one, or may be there should be more than one foundation course that should be incorporated.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER2G3: This is just off the top of my head, so I'm sure there'll be more to go into it than that.

MODERATOR: Yeah!

SPEAKER3G3: I agree with that. I think we should have, am, an international course come into the program. Am, it should be am, may be, I guess that's what I meant by cultural sensitivity; and then am, it should may be mandatory one or two am, guest speakers, which you mentioned something like that ...

MODERATOR: In terms of, when they mentioned diverse faculty that includes international faculty not only racially diverse faculty from the U.S.

SPEAKER3G3: Well, depending on the subject, may be one or two different am, multicultural professionals; you know, somebody that's am, in a particular field, especially for the programs where you building programs and trying the programs and that type of thing; and then you get see, am, another perspective on it, you know, other than the American perspective.

MODERATOR: And that additional perspective or another perspective would help to build a program that's more responsive, you think, to your diverse group?

SPEAKER3G3: Well, just like going back to am, like a professor might have a whole list of programs that they want you to take a look at, you know, it's sought ah, that same concept; we're going back to look at those and when you got somebody coming in, they'll be able to see what program they put together and what not; and am, have them explain to you how they did it; and along those lines.

MODERATOR: Other suggestions for improvements?

SPEAKER2G3: May be incorporating, we all have to do research for different programs or mostly training programs; at least have one objective in one course or one entire course where each individual student has to research and do an individual project based on a different organization or different company outside of the U.S. or may be inside the U.S. that's a culturally different company in the U.S. and then, you know, everyone shares that once they do that project; and you know, everyone takes the time to present and share what they've learnt and so that kinda open up thinking different.

SPEAKER4G3: Yeah. That would be easy to incorporate into the curriculum. Yeah, it wouldn't cost extra resources if resources is an issue.

SPEAKER3G3: I would be kinda scared of it because everybody is not am, I guess wouldn't want to go in that direction per say; but am, if you wanna be in the WED program and you know that it's outlined across cultural sensitivity, you know you gonna have guest speakers and that type of deal, but just to come out and do a global project; it might not, because some people would never want to leave the United States at all, so I'll be scared of it, but I also think may be we need to come out of our shell, so it may be a good idea.

SPEAKER5G3: But it's not just going abroad to teach in foreign country; it's also pairing up with international students; American student and international student so that they can integrate, bring all the different perspectives, that'll be cool.

MODERATOR: But what if we don't have the equal numbers to pair off, what do we do? But you touched on something in the last response, so I'll give you an opportunity now to elaborate on that.

SPEAKER5G3: Training the trainers; yeah, so, well if you didn't have enough to pair off, making sure that the instructors are trained culturally in all the gamut of cultural diversity, you know, that's about it

SPEAKER4G3: Guess you're talking about guest speakers and such, I know that on this campus, we have access to lots of professionals and instructors that are international that would come and talk to WED students.

SPEAKER3G3: Or former students.

SPEAKER4G3: Right, or former students; right, former international students or what have you who are still in the area. I don't think you would have to fly somebody in, you know, your home town or anybody else's country to make that happen. I think it could happen very easily just by them asking you know, making contact with other departments, "Would you like to speak to my class about XYZ?"

SPEAKER5G3: Definitely, we won't run out of international students at the university, you know.

SPEAKER4G3: Students or professionals, doctorate, people in the doctoral program or anyone basically.

SPEAKER5G3: Yeah!

MODERATOR: Well, let's shift a little bit from the international perspective, what about the other minority groups, the other ethnic groups that make up the student body or student clientele in WED, within the United States I mean, you have the Hispanics, the Native Americans, the African Americans, how would ah, WED improve their delivery, suggestions for improvement to meet the needs of those students? ...

SPEAKER5G3: Start with the constitution

SPEAKER2G3: Do you mean when they plan to return to their home country, when they go back to their workforce?

MODERATOR: Within the U.S.

SPEAKER2G3: While, they're here in the program.

MODERATOR: How could we better facilitate because, as you know, the *Southern 150* initiative has diversity as a core value, ...

SPEAKER2G3: I don't know, I couldn't see because to me everything's fine I don't have that perspective, so I don't know what individuals are missing out on; you'll have to have a different focus group for that one.

MODERATOR: OK. Let's say to get a perspective from an ethnic group that's represented here (Pointing to student).

SPEAKER3G3: Well (smiling with face in palm of hands).

MODERATOR: Will you volunteer a suggestion? Do we need to do anything different?

SPEAKER3G3: My biggest thing is that am, I think its understanding the misunderstanding when it comes to minority groups and majority groups; am White and Black, Hispanics and so on. Am, this program, how it relates ah, that's really a tuff question because, like I said, the biggest thing we have to do is just create some system; may be some sensitivity thing, where we understand each other, because we got people with extremes, like am, that's racist and that's that, but it's really not racist you know, or it may not be racist what such and such may have said, you know, it's just a misunderstanding.

It's like, I don't know if you all heard Barak Obama speech or what not; you got these old trends of thought versus the new trends of thought. And am, like I know a lot of African Americans where I'm from, we don't see a lot of Caucasian Americans, it's like very rare, am, White people, like I was telling somebody, they come down, they use to come down to take us to Indiana to go

to church and stuff like that. But, for the most part am, I had not one White student in my school. We had a couple White teachers or what not; so when we come to SIU is like am, it's a sought of culture shock to us; it's like you coming from Sudan to America, it's like "wow, this is different," you know. When we come from ,am, the south side of Chicago, inner city, is like, well I've never really been around White people like this and then you hear these old trends of thought from the barber shop, from the Church you pass (Audio not clear), you know, you thinking like that, but it's really not; but I don't want to sit here and say that racism doesn't exist because it does you know; but I think, what most of us think as racism, it's mostly pure hatred, so if we learn to understand each other and understand the differences and may be ask questions; and create a system where people are open to am, asking questions within WED; you know, cause of you see me wear a Dew rag it's like pull me aside, "what's going, why do you wear a Dew rag?" you know, cause am, you don't see a lot of White Americans wearing a dew rag; You know, it's like, "what's the purpose of that thing?" (Question draws laughter from around the table).

But, but, it's sought a lays your hair down and then you know, make it wavy and all that. But, however, it's just the sensitivity of the whole thin, understanding each other, am, getting knows what right, know what's wrong; just like we need to know what's wrong, I mean, what are we saying wrong or what we doing wrong to ah somebody from Sudan, Korea or not, we still need to understand each other within this country, you know, I think that's our biggest problem going global, we don't really understand each other, so...

SPEAKER2G3: You mean like professional development workshops or an international lounge where you meet together in open discussion. I don't know how you could give credit to that though.

MODERATOR: She mentioned something earlier, ah, I think it was about the groups coming together and a lot of times, when a professor gives freedom to pick their own groups, ... You know, it's groups of such and such and a lot of the people from other countries and other cultures, they're like, why are not being included, but it's just people tend to gravitate toward people that they know and they comfortable with.

SPEAKER3G3: We need to encourage to am, integrate more in groups and stuff. We shouldn't have ah, as much freedom just to pick whoever you want to be in your group and that type of stuff.

SPEAKER1G3: But, this is not only a WED problem; I mean you cannot blame anybody;

MODERATOR: We're not blaming anybody.

SPEAKER1G3: I mean we're minority will still be an ethnic group ...
(audio not clear)

SPEAKER3G3: Well I think the objective would be just familiarization, we get to know each, we get to know am, what's right, what's wrong, even if they am, the professor has to assign certain roles, let them alternate roles depending on how long the group goes; you know, how many different groups they're gonna put them in.

MODERATOR: Any other suggestions?

SPEAKER2G3: Food. (Statement draws chuckles from around the table).

MODERATOR: What about food?

SPEAKER2G3: Well, we can have cultural cook outs, once a week, or once a month where it's a different cultural food, and everybody gets together and meet and greet

MODERATOR: So this would be like a co-curricular activity

SPEAKER2G3: Yeah, it has nothing to do with the actual curriculum.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER3G3: Well, it may be sponsored events; like I know you got these, where you sit there for eight hours, I guess there's different readings or something; what is it called? 590 or something.

MODERATOR: Yeah, the foundations seminar.

SPEAKER3G3: But, if they create a cultural awareness program where we meet, and we all have to sign and sit there for a couple minutes or whatever; may be get one credit or so, you know, something going to make a difference throughout the curriculum, something real simple; and am something that would bring us together and what not.

MODERATOR: OK.

SPEAKER3G3: I notice the business students; I seen them have like ah, you know, bar-b-ques, cookouts and that type of deal, so may be we need to do that, not necessarily bar-b-que though, you know, we got different cultures (smiling).

SPEAKER2G3: We just do it one week.

SPEAKER3G3: Although I love bar-b-que.

MODERATOR: Any other suggestions or comments may be came up while we were discussing, or something I may have overlooked or didn't include in the discussion? Anything you could think about?

SPEAKER2G3: I'll definitely think more about it now you ... (statement draws smiles from around the table).

SPEAKER4G3: The diversity class; that's like you, the diversity class really brought out things in my teaching; things that I didn't experience as well, now I know what my classmates would experience.

SPEAKER3G3: But it's not mandatory either.

SPEAKER4G3: No it's not.

MODERATOR: Well, I'd like to thank you very much for 90 minutes of very interesting and informative discussion....

Appendix J: Focus Group Member Checking Responses

From: Focus Group Participant (pseudo name)

To: Debra Ferdinand

Date: Wed, Sep 16, 2009 at 12:16

PM

[hide details](#) Sep

Re: Member-Checking Focus
16 (9 days ago)

Subject: Group Summaries and
Context

mailed-by: gmail.com

signed-by: gmail.com

Debra:

As a participant, I verify that the summary tables and accompanying descriptions of this follow-up focus group discussion is an accurate representation of what was discussed and the context in which these are used in the dissertation study: "WED Curriculum Responsiveness to Culturally and Internationally Diverse Graduate Students."

Good luck with your dissertation defense,

Focus Group Participant (name omitted for confidentiality)

From: Focus Group Participant (pseudo name
used)

To: Debra Ferdinand

Date: Wed, Sep 16, 2009 at 2:44 PM [hide details Sep 16](#)

Subject: Member-Checking Focus Group (8 days ago)
Summaries and Context

signed-by:

Debra,

As a participant, I verify that the summary tables and accompanying descriptions of this follow-up focus group discussion is an accurate representation of what was discussed and the context in which these are used in the dissertation study: "WED Curriculum Responsiveness to Culturally and Internationally Diverse Graduate Students.

Focus Group Participant (name omitted for confidentiality)

From: Focus Group Participant (pseudo name used)

To: Debra Ferdinand

Date: Wed, Sep 16, 2009 at 4:11 PM

[hide details Sep](#)

Subject: RE: Member-Checking Focus

16 (8 days ago)

Group Summaries and Context

mailed-by:

Hi Debra – It is so good to hear from you and I am delighted to see that your dissertation has progressed so well.

As a participant, I verify that the summary tables and accompanying descriptions of this follow-up focus group discussion is an accurate representation of what was discussed and the context in which these are used in the dissertation study: "WED Curriculum Responsiveness to Culturally and Internationally Diverse Graduate Students."

Congratulations and best wishes.

Regards,

Focus Group Participant (name omitted for confidentiality)

Re: Member Checking Focus Group Summaries

From: Focus Group Participant (pseudo name used)

Sent: Monday, September 28, 2009 2:07:32 PM

To: Debra Ferdinand

My name is Focus Group Participant (pseudo name used) and I participated in the focus group discussion "WED Curriculum Responsiveness to Culturally and Internationally Diverse Graduate Students." that was conducted by Ms. Debra Ferdinand. I am verifying that the summary tables and accompanying descriptions of the follow-up discussion are accurate representations of what were discussed and the context in which they is used in the dissertation study.

Focus Group Participant (name omitted for confidentiality)

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Major Professor: Dexter Wakefield, Ph. D.

Publications:

Ferdinand, D., & Onyebadi, U. (2009). One style does not fit all: Facilitating
cultural differences in teaching. *Illinois Committee on Black Concerns in
Higher Education*, 25(1), 7-16.

Ferdinand, D., & Lianbin, C. (2006). Integrating cross-cultural elements into
workforce education curriculum design. *The On-Line Journal of Workforce
Education and Development*, 11(1).