

Vol. 2, Issue 1, 2016

How Prepared are Students for Global Citizenship? A Qualitative, Holistic Approach to Assessing Intercultural Competence

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Jun 29, 2016

Tags: social sciences

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Abstract

Due to trends in internationalization, today's higher education institutions are increasingly establishing intercultural competence as a key learning outcome for college graduates; yet, assessment of students' capacities for intercultural competence at an institutional level remains relatively rare. This conceptual article draws upon the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education to show the value of qualitatively and holistically assessing how students develop intercultural competence throughout their college experiences. Through a detailed example of using a qualitative, holistic approach to assessing intercultural competence, this article offers a concrete way to better understand how prepared students are to meet the demands of global citizenship.

To prepare students to be global citizens in the 21st century, colleges and universities are increasingly engaging in internationalization. Knight (2003) defined internationalization as “the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education” (p. 2). According to Knight (2003), “*international, intercultural, and global dimension* are three terms that are intentionally used as a triad” (p. 2) to capture relationships between and within countries as well as “the sense of worldwide scope” (p. 3). Knight’s definition of internationalization conveys that citizenship for today’s college students entails interacting with diverse others both within and beyond the United States. Based on results from the most recent Mapping Internationalization on U.S. Campuses Survey that the American Council on Education ([ACE]2012) conducted, the establishment of student learning outcomes related to internationalization is increasing. Also, according to a recent survey of chief academic officers, the top learning outcomes for today’s college students include knowledge of global and world cultures as well as intercultural skills and abilities (Hart Research Associates, 2016). In essence, institutions frequently seek to prepare students to be global citizens by fostering intercultural competence, which encompasses the knowledge and skills necessary to interact effectively across a range of cultural contexts (AAC&U, 2016).

Although institutions now widely espouse the importance of fostering intercultural competence, few institutions systematically assess students’ progress toward gaining intercultural competence throughout the undergraduate curriculum and co-curriculum (ACE, 2012; Ouimet & Pike, 2008). Individual programs or units may assess certain aspects of intercultural competence among particular groups of students, but assessment that remains only at the program- or unit-level does not allow institutions to fully examine the cumulative effect of campus-wide initiatives. For example, the ways in which students’ diversity-related general education courses connect with their study abroad experiences to foster learning about diverse cultures often remains unknown.

Currently, several survey instruments exist that can help meet the need for institutional-level assessment of intercultural competence; however, these survey instruments alone are not

sufficient for two main reasons. First, some survey instruments are narrowly focused, which results in a definition and measure of intercultural competence that applies to only certain students or particular aspects of an institution's undergraduate curriculum and co-curriculum. For example, the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS) focuses specifically on assessing "the affective dimension of intercultural communication competence" (Chen & Starosta, 2000, p. 5), which involves individuals' motivations to appreciate cultural differences. Chen and Starosta note that intercultural communication competence includes cognitive and behavioral aspects as well as affective aspects, but they argue that intercultural sensitivity should be confined within the affective dimension to ensure valid assessment of the construct. Although the 24-item ISS demonstrates validity, it remains inadequate for the purposes of institutional-level assessment because it excludes key aspects of intercultural competence such as the ability to interact effectively with diverse others. The narrow focus of survey instruments such as the ISS leaves institutions with only a partial understanding of how prepared students are for global citizenship.

Some survey instruments overcome the limitations of a narrow focus by taking a more holistic approach to the assessment of intercultural competence. In particular, the Global Perspective Inventory (GPI) assesses three dimensions of intercultural competence: cognitive (i.e., ways of thinking about cultures), intrapersonal (i.e., ways of understanding one's own culture), and interpersonal (i.e., ways of relating to diverse others; Iowa State University Rise GPI, 2015). Yet, the GPI highlights a second reason why existing survey instruments alone are not sufficient for institutional-level assessment of intercultural competence. Even when survey instruments take a holistic approach, they rarely (if ever) show how the range of educational experiences in which students engaged contributed to the development of intercultural competence. For example, the GPI does not indicate which educational experiences were most effective at helping students develop a global perspective.

Due to the gaps associated with existing survey instruments, I argue that institutions also need to take a qualitative, holistic approach to the assessment of intercultural competence. For the

purposes of this article, qualitative assessment involves use of naturalistic methods such as semi-structured interviews and focus groups. Naturalistic methods enable participants to bring forward experiences they deem relevant to the assessment topic, rather than responding only to specific questions that assessors initially thought to ask; also, students can articulate connections they are making among various experiences in which they have engaged (Baxter Magolda & King, 2007, 2008). Holistic assessment refers to assessment that encompasses the cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal dimensions of development. By focusing on all three dimensions of development, an assessment can help institutions examine how students' thoughts align with their actions and how their views of their own cultures influence their views of other cultures.

In this article, I use the term *institutional-level assessment* to indicate assessment that focuses on examining how the curriculum and co-curriculum as a whole influences students' progress toward meeting an institutional learning outcome. In this case, institutional-level assessment need not involve every student or a representative sample of a selected group (e.g., all degree-seeking undergraduates); however, it should be relevant for all types of students within the group and should span a wide range of curricular and co-curricular opportunities. Moreover, I situate intercultural competence as one key learning outcome students need to meet in order to be able to fulfill their global citizenship responsibilities. Yet, because intercultural competence does not focus on analysis of systems of privilege and oppression or actions taken to address societal inequities, I remind readers that preparation for global citizenship involves several other learning outcomes. (For a review of various approaches to and learning outcomes associated with multicultural education at the collegiate level, see Landreman, 2005.)

I propose using a qualitative, holistic approach to supplement—not replace—existing survey instruments so that institutions can gain a richer, fuller portrait of how students become prepared for global citizenship. To provide a concrete example of this qualitative, holistic approach, I draw upon the qualitative component of the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education (WNS). The WNS represents a multi-institutional

study designed “to explore the conditions and experiences” that promote achievement of a set of liberal arts outcomes, including one focused on intercultural skills and knowledge (King, Kendall Brown, Lindsay, & VanHecke, 2007, p. 3). I offer the WNS example to show one potentially useful way an institution can design and implement a qualitative, holistic assessment to understand how prepared students are for global citizenship, but I encourage readers to consider the benefits and limitations of the WNS example within the context of their institution’s particular assessment goals and needs. To conclude the article, I provide broad-based recommendations for effectively using a qualitative, holistic approach for assessing intercultural competence.

Multiple Conceptualizations of How Students Develop Intercultural Competence

Within higher education, no clear consensus exists about what intercultural competence entails. Among a study involving 24 U.S. institutional administrators of internationalization strategies and 23 intercultural scholars, a broad range of terms and definitions for the concept of intercultural competence arose. The group of administrators emphasized awareness, values, and understanding of cultural differences while the group of scholars emphasized communication and behavior in intercultural situations (Deardorff, 2006). In addition, multiple models exist for conceptualizing how students move toward advanced forms of intercultural competence. For example, Deardorff (2006) presented a pyramid model of intercultural competence with components such as openness, cultural self-awareness, listening skills, and empathy building up toward desired external outcomes such as behaving and communicating effectively in a new cultural environment. In the pyramid model, acquiring and developing more components leads to the potential for higher levels of intercultural competence. Operating under different assumptions, Bennett (1993) and King and Baxter Magolda (2005) respectively presented developmentally based models. In the developmental models, students gain greater degrees of intercultural competence by being able to make meaning of cultural differences in more complex ways.

Given the multiple ways to interpret intercultural competence,

effective assessment must begin with intentionally defining what intercultural competence means and how students demonstrate progress toward this outcome at an institution. In this article, I provide a rich description of the WNS research design and methods to share one specific conceptualization of how students develop intercultural competence and, in turn, how to assess students' development toward intercultural competence. Through the rich description of the WNS research design and methods, readers can determine whether or to what extent the WNS example fits with their particular assessment contexts and purposes.

An Example of How to Assess Development of Intercultural Competence

The WNS qualitative research design, which was longitudinal in nature, provides institutions with one feasible way to understand how students are making progress toward intercultural competence. Although the WNS qualitative component was designed originally for the purposes of a multi-institutional research study, it nonetheless can be adapted for assessment at a single institution. WNS researchers' conceptualization of how to assess students' development of intercultural competence stemmed from the constructivist-developmental tradition of educational psychology (Baxter Magolda & King, 2012). According to this tradition, students actively interpret—or, in other words, construct meaning of—their experiences and these interpretations develop over time to “allow individuals to manage more complex units of information, perspectives, and tasks” (King, 2009, p. 598). Within the constructivist-developmental tradition, WNS researchers used Kegan's (1994) theory of self-evolution to take a holistic approach to assessing students' development. Kegan's theory of self-evolution is holistic in the sense that it integrates three key dimensions of how students make meaning: how students see knowledge (i.e., the cognitive dimension), how individuals make meaning of their relationships (i.e., the interpersonal dimension), and how individuals view their identities (i.e., the intrapersonal dimension). Moreover, Kegan's theory of self-evolution, particularly the fourth phase known as self-authorship, spans into adulthood and therefore is relevant for

college student populations.

Based on the assumptions of constructivist-developmental theory in general and Kegan's (1994) theory of self-evolution in particular, WNS researchers conceptualized intercultural competence as a developmental capacity that requires students not only to gain more knowledge and skills but also to develop broader, more complex frameworks for making meaning of their identities, relationships, and beliefs (Baxter Magolda & King, 2012). According to Baxter Magolda and King (2012), development toward broader, more complex frameworks for making meaning represents "the foundation for achieving key collegiate learning outcomes" (p. 42). This link between developmental capacities and learning outcomes significantly shaped how WNS researchers defined and assessed degrees of intercultural competence.

Identification and Definition of the Intercultural Effectiveness Learning Outcome

Given the WNS's focus on examining liberal arts education, researchers initially worked "to produce a list of liberal arts outcomes that connected the qualities of mind commonly associated with developing wisdom with the responsibilities of citizenship" (King et al., 2007, p. 3). After completing an in-depth literature review spanning multiple disciplines, WNS researchers identified several liberal arts outcomes to explore in the study including one they termed *intercultural effectiveness*. King et al. (2007) explained:

Intercultural effectiveness includes knowledge of cultures and cultural practices (one's own and others'), complex cognitive skills for decision making in intercultural contexts, social skills to function effectively in diverse groups, and personal attributes that include flexibility and openness to new ideas. (p. 5)

The definition is holistic because it encompasses cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal dimensions.

WNS researchers chose to examine the liberal arts outcomes as an integrated set because they saw the outcomes as highly interdependent and as built upon the common foundation of development toward complex ways of making meaning (King et

al., 2007). Also, researchers recognized that some outcomes may be more relevant than others at given points during a student's college experience. Assessing the liberal arts outcomes as an integrated set—rather than focusing specifically on one outcome—provided maximum flexibility during interviews for students to discuss how they were making meaning of their college experiences.

Use of Semi-Structured Interviews to Assess Students' Intercultural Effectiveness

WNS qualitative research team members facilitated 60- to 90-minute in-person interviews with students for the first three years of the study (i.e., fall 2006, fall 2007, and fall 2008). Due to resource limitations, they conducted interviews via telephone for the fourth and final year (i.e., fall 2009). Each interview was audio recorded and then transcribed verbatim. Participants received a \$30 stipend per interview. When possible, researchers interviewed the same students throughout the four years of the study for consistency and to allow for prolonged engagement between researchers and participants (Baxter Magolda & King, 2012).

Guided by the constructivist-developmental tradition and research regarding self-authorship, Baxter Magolda and King (2007) constructed a semi-structured interview protocol that emphasized “tapping into real-life situations and allowing interviewees to choose the context and content of the interview to elicit their unique meaning making” (p. 496). In particular, the WNS interview protocol included three main segments to explore conditions that promote development toward the liberal arts outcomes on which the study focused. While the protocol provided a general guide for the interview, it did not provide a structured set of questions for each outcome. Rather, researchers engaged in active interviewing in which the researcher and the participant collaboratively created the specific nature of the interview as the conversation unfolded (Holstein & Gubrium, 2003).

In the first segment of the WNS interview, researchers sought to establish rapport with participants and understand their

background including personal history, prior experiences, and expectations for the current year. Researchers also invited respondents to reflect on how their college experiences were matching (or not matching) their expectations.

Researchers then turned to the second segment of the interview. In this segment, which spanned approximately one hour, interviewers invited participants to describe educational experiences they found meaningful; the ways they were making meaning of those experiences; and the ways those experiences were influencing how they saw themselves, built relationships with others, and decided what to believe. As necessary and appropriate, interviewers asked follow-up questions to encourage breadth and depth of reflection (Baxter Magolda & King, 2007).

Interviewers turned to the third and final segment when the previous segment drew to a close or as time ran short. In the third segment, researchers asked respondents to synthesize their experiences, identify themes within their meaning making, and discuss insights and/or questions they were taking away from their experiences. For more details regarding the WNS interview protocol, see Baxter Magolda and King, 2008.

As Baxter Magolda and King (2012) explained, the WNS interview provides a valuable assessment approach “by incorporating personal and environmental factors, using an open-ended approach that enables respondents to choose meaningful contexts, probing for meaning making, and including all three developmental dimensions” (p. 34). For the purposes of assessing intercultural effectiveness in particular, the WNS interview allowed researchers to explore how respondents were making meaning of intercultural experiences and to examine why respondents found certain intercultural experiences significant.

Analysis of Interview Transcripts to Assess Students’ Intercultural Effectiveness

To begin analysis, WNS researchers created a summary of each interview transcript that included important background characteristics and meaningful experiences that the participant discussed during the interview. The summary of each meaningful experience included the following information: a brief description

of the experience, an interpretation of the effect of the experience, and connections between the effect and one or more of the liberal arts outcomes on which the study focused. In addition, WNS researchers noted what role (if any) the institution played in providing and/or facilitating the experience (Baxter Magolda & King, 2012). For example, one participant described her study abroad experience in Shanghai, China, during her fourth-year interview. Because she spoke at length about this experience, WNS researchers identified it as meaningful. Then, for the effect of the experience, researchers closely examined how she made meaning of the experience and noted that the experience helped her begin to compare and contrast American and Chinese cultures and notice differences related to cost of living and quality of life. Researchers connected this student's study abroad experience to the outcome of intercultural effectiveness because she explained that the experience helped her gain knowledge of a culture different from her own. Finally, in terms of the role the institution played in the experience, researchers noted that the institution provides financial and human resources to support study abroad experiences. For complete details regarding WNS methods, see Baxter Magolda and King, 2012.

As a member of the WNS qualitative research team, I facilitated interviews with 10-12 students each year and participated in the initial process of creating summaries of interview transcripts. For this article, I requested permission from the WNS principal investigators to use data from the institution at which I interviewed students to focus more specifically on how students made progress toward the intercultural effectiveness outcome. I selected this institution for two main reasons. First, I believed my familiarity with the institution would enhance my ability to analyze interview transcripts. Second, my review of institutional documents and discussions with administrators indicated that this institution actively engaged in internationalization efforts.

For the additional analysis I conducted for this article, I began by reviewing 16 completed summaries from interviews conducted during participants' fourth year at the selected institution. Among these 16 summaries, I identified 10 participants who described experiences with an intercultural component (e.g., interaction with diverse others). In order to assess whether or to what extent

these 10 participants' intercultural effectiveness changed over time, I matched their fourth-year interview transcript and summary with their first-year interview transcript and summary. I chose to analyze only their first- and fourth-year interviews to make the assessment process more feasible for the practical realities of institutional-level assessment.

I then used King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) developmental model of intercultural maturity to assess each participant's level of intercultural maturity during the first year as well as the fourth year. As defined by King and Baxter Magolda (2005), intercultural maturity represents the developmental capacities that underlie the knowledge and skills associated with intercultural effectiveness. Because the qualitative component of the WNS was designed to address the conditions and experiences that promoted both students' development and students' achievement of liberal arts outcomes, the data spoke to both students' intercultural maturity and intercultural effectiveness. I chose to analyze students' intercultural maturity in order to better understand how students' development influences their ability to fulfill the responsibilities of global citizenship. Also, King and Baxter Magolda's model provided a clear yet substantive way to distinguish between an initial, intermediate, and mature degree of intercultural maturity.

At the initial level of King and Baxter Magolda's (2005) model, individuals view differing cultural perspectives as wrong and lack awareness of their own cultures. Individuals at the intermediate level demonstrate an evolving awareness of multiple cultural perspectives as well as an evolving sense of their own cultures. Additionally, at the intermediate level, individuals demonstrate a "willingness to interact with diverse others and refrain from judgement" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 576). At the mature level of development, individuals have the "ability to consciously shift perspectives and behaviors into an alternative cultural worldview" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 576), situate their own social identities within national and international contexts, and engage in meaningful relationships with diverse others. By interpreting the first- and fourth-year data with King and Baxter Magolda's model (2005), I was able to better understand where students entered college in terms of their intercultural maturity and how much (if any) development had occurred throughout

their collegiate experience.

A Rich Portrait of a Student's Development of Intercultural Maturity

From the additional analysis I conducted, I selected one student's story to show the potential that a qualitative, holistic assessment approach like the WNS holds for producing rich portraits of students' development of intercultural maturity. Although this particular student's degree of development was not typical compared with those of other WNS participants, his story—constructed through verbatim interview quotations—highlights the type of information assessors can gain regarding students' intercultural maturity through the WNS methods.

Throughout his first-year and fourth-year interviews, Andrew (a pseudonym the participant selected) described intercultural experiences that centered on examining his own and others' religious beliefs and values. Providing insight into his religious background during his first-year interview, he explained:

My parents brought me up to be Catholic, and you know, I've come up with the Catholic teaching like my whole life, basically, and I really think that religion is good for me...that's the reason why I came to this university. I knew that not everyone was going to be like me, but I knew that I'd be able to find more people like myself here rather than another public university. Like here 80% are Catholic. Other universities....a lot less!

Because Andrew expected his peers in college to share his religious beliefs and values, he was surprised to meet students whose actions and decisions differed from his own. When he encountered discrepancies between his actions and decisions and those of his peers, he attributed the discrepancies to differences in knowledge regarding the Catholic Church's doctrines. Andrew sensed that his peers saw him as being "an extreme Catholic," but he dismissed such perceptions by explaining, "I think that I'm a normal Catholic...like I try to just be a normal Catholic and try to do what I'm supposed to do."

During his first year, Andrew demonstrated an initial level of intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). He defined the Catholic Church's doctrines in absolute terms and thus saw

a clear right and wrong way of being Catholic. Moreover, he categorized his way of being Catholic as the right and “normal” way, which led him to view different beliefs or behaviors associated with Catholicism as wrong. When he encountered different ideas regarding what being Catholic means, he sought to defend his own beliefs and behaviors—an indication that differences posed a threat to his identity.

By his fourth year, Andrew had moved closer to a mature level of intercultural maturity (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). During his fourth-year interview, he described several curricular and co-curricular experiences through which he had deeply examined his own religion as well as other religions. He noted that an anthropology course regarding cultural differences and social change as well as a summer experience in Honduras piqued his interest in exploring other cultures. He also explained that a course regarding the Holocaust, which involved traveling to seven different concentration camps in Eastern Europe, helped him explore different perspectives regarding Judaism. Reflecting on the Holocaust course, he explained that he found it interesting “to see how Judaism was both a culture and a religion” and to see that Judaism “meant different things to different people.”

Andrew’s interest in comparative religion led him to study abroad in an Arabic-speaking country during the summer after his junior year. Through his experience abroad, he again recognized how culture and religion intertwine. He explained:

Getting to meet other people who have vastly different perspectives on life than my own, because of their upbringing and their past and their – the culture in which they were raised – the way in which they are raised – has shown me just how much I am also a product of my own upbringing, my own experiences, and my own kind of history.

His experiences in Eastern Europe and an Arabic-speaking country helped him see multiple interpretations of religion. In addition, such experiences fostered greater self-awareness as he explored how his own history and culture had shaped his religious beliefs.

During his fourth-year interview, Andrew shifted from using the term *religion* to using the term *faith* and recounted in depth the

ways in which his faith had changed during his college experience. His reflection suggests that he had moved well beyond the initial level of intercultural maturity with regard to understanding his own faith and interacting with people with different faiths. He explained:

One way that my faith has changed a lot since I've begun to study theology and especially comparative religions, particularly when compared to my faith as a smaller child, but even still in high school, is that I now see things in a lot more grays than black and white... as I've learned more about theology, I realize that a lot of theology is more of a theory and is more of a human creation than a black and white, infallible decree.

Reflecting further on college experiences that influenced his faith, he explained:

I think also my travels and my experiences, meeting people of other faiths, have led me to see things in a more open way, some people might say. Or maybe just in a sense of understanding how little I can really know for sure and understanding is just that; it's my perspective. It would be very different if I had been raised somewhere else, if I had had different experiences, and trying to – not necessarily – like, I'm not saying that everyone is right, but...instead of trying to evangelize my Buddhist friend, I can sort of see that she [has] an authentic experience of something divine in her religion and something that's healthy for her and something that helps her to be a better person....And I've come more to appreciate that and see that as real and an authentic experience of the divine instead of seeing it as I would growing up, as, you know, a strange religion or a false religion. And I think the same is true of my experience with Islam. Not that I agree with everything Islam, I don't agree with every[thing] Christianity either or in any religion, and I don't think that they're all equally valid; I'm not a pluralist, but I'm just more accepting of the possibility that people can have an authentic experience of the divine in a lot of different ways through a lot of different cultures and religious traditions. And so, yeah, it definitely has changed how I live my own faith-life.

Andrew's ability to appreciate that "people can have an authentic experience of the divine in a lot of different ways through a lot of different cultures and religious traditions" demonstrates his ability to use multiple cultural frames to understand faith. In addition, his desire to appreciate his friend's Buddhist beliefs and values reflects his willingness to engage with diverse others. In essence, Andrew's fourth-year interview reflects that he was moving toward a mature level of intercultural maturity with regard to faith (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005).

Strengths and Limitations of the WNS Qualitative, Holistic Approach

As Deardorff and Van Gaalen (2012) noted, “There is no one-size-fits-all in regard to assessing outcomes, given that assessment measures must be aligned with [the institution’s] mission, goals, and objectives” (p. 173). Moreover, each method has a particular set of strengths and limitations. Thus, semi-structured interviews similar to the WNS format are certainly not the only effective method for assessing how students develop intercultural competence throughout the curriculum and co-curriculum as a whole. Nonetheless, such interviews can offer valuable insights and thus help meet the demand for high-quality evidence of student learning and development. As Andrew’s story shows, one of the key strengths of using semi-structured, longitudinal interviews is the ability to gain rich portraits of students’ skills and knowledge and the ways in which their skills and knowledge have developed over time. Such rich portraits provide more useful data for understanding what conditions and practices foster intercultural competence than particular outputs of internationalization efforts. For example, counting the number of students who participate in a study abroad program would not show which study abroad programs or series of educational programs help foster development toward King and Baxter Magolda’s (2005) mature level of intercultural maturity.

Furthermore, the degree of detail that researchers can gain through in-depth, developmentally focused interviews helps mitigate some of the concerns regarding the use of students’ self-reported gains to assess learning outcomes. Gonyea (2005) explained that social desirability bias—which refers to respondents’ desire to present themselves favorably to researchers and which is more pronounced in face-to-face interviews than online surveys—can lead to “overreporting of socially desirable behavior (such as performing community service) and underreporting of socially undesirable behavior (smoking)” (p. 82). Because in-depth interviews, in general, and developmentally focused interviews, in particular, encourage respondents to go far beyond reporting behavior, they allow researchers to gain a deeper understanding of how and why students demonstrate

certain behaviors. With regard to Andrew's story, being open to different faith perspectives likely represents a socially desirable behavior, which could compel Andrew to overreport his openness. Yet, during his fourth-year interview, he offered specific examples of how he was open to different faith perspectives (e.g., appreciating that Buddhism allows his friend to have "an authentic experience of something divine") and thus provided evidence that lends credibility to his report.

Another strength of the WNS approach is the holistic assessment of intercultural effectiveness, which allowed researchers to examine the breadth of students' intercultural knowledge, skills, and capacities. For example, if researchers had focused only on assessing Andrew's knowledge of other cultures, they would not have been able to see how he applied such knowledge to interact effectively with individuals from other cultures. In addition, a holistic approach can enhance the efficiency of assessment by allowing assessors to collect data regarding the multiple components of intercultural competence through one 60- to 90-minute interview.

Although the WNS methods contain several strengths, they also contain several limitations. For instance, taking an integrated approach to assessing a set of liberal arts outcomes meant that some interviews did not contain data regarding a given outcome. Out of the 16 interview summaries I reviewed for this article, six did not include information regarding intercultural experiences. Lack of such information could indicate that students did not have an intercultural experience they found meaningful enough to discuss during the interview, but it might also stem from the interviewer and/or participant choosing to focus on other experiences. In effect, the integrated approach yielded a smaller sample of interviews with relevant data.

Similarly, semi-structured interviews in which researchers allow participants to decide the specific topics to discuss may not capture specific types of intercultural competence. For example, while Andrew's story reveals his capacity to interact with individuals from diverse religious traditions, his story does not reveal his capacity to interact with individuals with diverse social identities in terms of social class or sexuality. Because a student's personal

characteristics and developmental level as well as the institutional context shape which social identities are most visible and salient for students, some intercultural experiences will likely not emerge as topics of discussion unless assessors specifically ask about them. Thus, semi-structured interviews focused on intercultural competence are not well suited for examining how students understand differences associated with specific social identities or how they navigate systems of privilege and oppression (Jones & Abes, 2013).

Recommendations for Practice

The above strengths and limitations lead to four key recommendations for institutional-level assessment, which include the following:

- Build campus-wide partnerships to design and implement a qualitative, holistic assessment of intercultural competence. Such partnerships serve to create a shared conceptualization of intercultural competence at the institution and can ensure a wide range of stakeholders are invested in using the results of the assessment.
- Use a qualitative approach for projects that focus on assessing the how's and why's associated with intercultural competence (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2014). For example, a qualitative approach works well to examine questions regarding how internationalization initiatives influence students' intercultural competence.
- Recognize the educational as well as the assessment value of interviews when evaluating the cost-benefit analysis of qualitative assessment. In-depth, semi-structured interviews can serve as educational initiatives in and of themselves because they prompt participants to reflect deeply on their college experiences (Baxter Magolda & King, 2008).
- Take a holistic approach when assessment goals call for breadth of description and involve multiple dimensions of intercultural competence. For example, if your institution is interested in understanding how students interact with people from diverse cultures as well as how they make meaning of their own culture, a holistic approach would

allow for the examination of both dimensions simultaneously.

Collectively, these recommendations can help assessors effectively implement a qualitative, holistic approach to inform decisions regarding campus-wide initiatives focused on preparing students for global citizenship.

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