

December 2014

The Transition to College: an Acculturation Comparison of Domestic and International Students

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THE TRANSITION TO COLLEGE: AN ACCULTURATION COMPARISON OF
DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

by

Kim M. Omachinski

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

Doctor of Philosophy
in Communication

at

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

December 2014

ABSTRACT

THE TRANSITION TO COLLEGE: AN ACCULTURATION COMPARISON OF DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

by

Kim M. Omachinski

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2014
Under the Supervision of Professor Mike Allen

Domestic and international students face challenges when transitioning to college. Researchers believe first-year intervention programs and orientation are important in successful transition to the university environment. Student involvement from the beginning of the first semester helps create a connection to college and a sense of belonging. Domestic and international students traverse homesickness, financial issues, lack of social support, changes in routine, and academic issues while navigating life away from home. Additionally, students experience a turning point that can often create a change in educational trajectory that results in continuing in college, transferring out, dropping out, or seeking help. The turning point can be a part of collegiate culture shock that students experience during the acculturation process. Schlossberg's Transition Model (1981) serves as a foundation for how students adapt to change in college. The current research study investigates the resources used by first-year students to navigate the on campus journey as well as factors that affect college students' adjustment to campus. Results indicate students use the library, academic advising, computer labs, the on-campus gym, and financial aid. A sense of belonging at the institution and social connections on campus are two elements that help students make it past a turning point

and continue academically. Results additionally found that domestic and international students from outside of the institution's area experience more collegiate culture shock than students originally from the suburbs of the institution's perimeter. Implications are discussed, and recommendations for future research are offered regarding the transition to college.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincerest appreciation and gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Mike Allen. His patience and kindness guided me through the dissertation process with ease. I appreciate his unconditional support throughout my graduate school journey.

Thank you to my dissertation committee members, Dr. Simone Conceição, Dr. Tae Seop Lim, Robert Ricigliano, JD, and Dr. Kristin Ruggiero. Your suggestions and encouragement were invaluable.

A special thank you goes to the late Dr. Renee Meyers who originally served on my dissertation committee, and was an incredible professor, mentor, and friend. I think of you and your teachings often, Renee, and the wisdom you shared with me I will never forget.

I would like to thank my parents, Dave and Carla, for their love, support, and encouragement during my non-traditional path to graduation.

Additionally, I would like to thank the Center for International Education and all of the international students I work with who enrich my knowledge of intercultural communication every day. You have all helped me become a better higher education administrator and advisor through our interactions.

Finally, I thank all of my local, national, and global friends around the world who have been my social support during the academic journey of a lifetime. Your compassion, friendship, and love have proven to be most effective in my quest for academic success.

The Transition to College: An Acculturation Comparison of Domestic and International Students

Every year thousands of students head off to college with hopes of earning a degree. The transition of life at college becomes influenced by previous academic and personal experiences, as well as the experiences at the university. Several factors influence the adjustment and success of students seeking degrees in higher education. Previous academic performance, extracurricular activities, relationships with people outside of college including parents, friends, and employers all shape the college transition process (Tinto, 1993; Weidman, 1989). The transition to college represents a particularly difficult challenge for many first-generation students (London, 1989; Terenzini, Springer, Yaeger, Pascarella, & Nora, 1996), as well as for international students. Adjusting to a new life at college warrants further research and exploration to foster academic success for both domestic and international college students.

First-generation college students often experience multiple transitions to college including social, cultural, and academic (Terenzini et al., 1994). The university environment offers ways to become involved, make friends, socially and culturally integrate, and resources to succeed in the classroom. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) found that involvement in the campus community during the transition from high school to college helped students negotiate the cultural change more effectively. Hertel (2002) suggested that programming for first-generation college students acculturating to campus focus on the social environment. Students require social networks to traverse the college experience successfully.

Throughout the college journey, students not only acculturate to the new surroundings, but also experience a turning point that impacts how to continue forward in the educational quest. A turning point illustrates the transformation students make and modifications made in the current educational path heading towards a new outlook (Yair, 2009). Turning points occur at any time during the academic year, and influence how students make choices regarding the future. Limited research on turning point analysis has been used in the educational realm, and to date, none has considered acculturation to college.

Researchers from various disciplines have studied the transition to college from an educational, psychological, communicative, and counseling perspective. Many agree with Astin's (1985) idea that being involved helps students learn. In fact, studies support the involvement theory through the use of first-year intervention programs and learning communities (e.g. Clark, 2005; Inkelas & Weisman, 2003; Schrader & Brown, 2008). Despite the recommendations made to date, studies have not addressed the factors that affect college students' adjustment to campus and how turning points play a role in the acculturation process. Resources are offered on college campuses throughout the U.S.; however, to facilitate retention efforts, it is important to identify the services needed most to acculturate to the university. Social, cultural, and academic adjustment (Terenzini et al., 1994) all play a role in the college experience. To date, no research has examined the transition to college from an acculturation perspective, nor compared domestic and international students in the same study. The purpose of the current study is to compare domestic and international students' acculturation processes in the transition to college to determine what factors help navigate the on campus journey during the first year.

Additionally, the study explores resources students use to adjust to college and if students experience turning points while transitioning to life on campus.

The current research study investigates the resources used by first-year students to navigate the on campus journey as well as factors that affect college students' adjustment to campus. Additionally, the investigation compares domestic and international student cultural experiences at the university and if collegiate culture shock is experienced. The following section summarizes the literature regarding the transition to college and the acculturation process. Next, a correlation between Schlossberg's Transition Model (1981) and the transition to college is provided. Third, the methods and data collection are described. Fourth, the results of the research are interpreted and explained. Finally, the discussion explores a synthesis of the results and suggests areas of future research.

Chapter 1 - Literature Review

Domestic and international students adjust to college campuses each year.

Previous research has not examined the two groups in the same study to determine if the process of adjustment is similar or different when comparing groups. The present study seeks to compare the transition to college using both domestic and international students. Using the Eric EBSCO host educational database, the search terms used for literature include: first generation college students, first year experience, international students, transfer students, social support, acculturation and assimilation, peer mentors, student success, living learning communities, culture shock, transition to college, and turning point. The search terms were used in combination with each other to generate over a thousand articles pertaining to the listed topics above. Through the articles the primary researcher used snowballing with the references in the literature to find more sources and research examples to narrow the literature specifically to the research topic of the current study.

First Year Experience and Transition

Many students find the sojourn to college difficult, setting off by themselves for the first time. There exists a sense of “not belonging” for many students while living on campus (Solomon, 2007). The transition from home to campus includes many changes in day-to-day life habits, eating differently, spending time establishing new friendships, creating a new daily routine, and loss of immediate and daily support from family members at home. Many researchers believe that first-year intervention programs are important in successful transition to college. White, Goetz, Hunter, and Barefoot (1995) believe tailoring each first-year experience (FYE) program to the specific college campus

needs. Schrader and Brown (2008) suggested that intervention programs be developed to help students both personally and academically. Inkelas, Daver, Vogt, and Leonard (2007) stated that successful transitions “bridge the students’ home environment with the collegiate environment” (p. 406). Tinto (1993) asserted that students must socially integrate to campus and separate from home to be able to succeed in college. Astin (1984) found that students that were involved on campus by joining organizations, working on campus, or making other connections were more successful at transitioning to college than those who lived at home. Research consistently reflects the need for student involvement from the beginning of the first semester to create a connection to college and a sense of belonging.

Intervention programs help facilitate a smooth transition from high school to postsecondary education (Schrader & Brown, 2008), and oftentimes build students’ first connections to campus and form new friendships. Many first-year programs provide new incoming domestic students with the resources and support needed to survive and thrive through the first year, lasting until graduation. Such programming increases retention rates (Barefoot, 2000). Several researchers highlight the importance of involvement with academic advising and social activities as elements of collegiate success (Ting, Grant, & Plenert, 2000; Turner, 1992; Zhao & Kuh, 2004). In addition to academic and social involvement, Terenzini and colleagues (1994) found that variables such as socioeconomic status, academic preparation, family background, and peer group play a role in college transition. Peck (2011) suggested a center on campus, such as an Involvement Center, as a resource for first-generation college students to use in order to connect with university resources they may not find on their own. Clark (2005)

recommended a mandatory two semester first year seminar be implemented on college campuses to provide access to resources, faculty, staff, and support for students to navigate the journey towards a degree.

During the first-year of college, a number of students face challenges to negotiate the shift from home to living on campus. Students devise strategies to manage experiences (Clark, 2005). Events off campus affect students as much as on campus, and influence students' ability to transition to college. There exists a need for structure and support for students, whether at-risk (Wilson, 2008) or not, to adapt to the new environment. Van Schalkwyk, Young, Ruiters, and Farmer (2012) discovered that several factors impacted students' inability to adjust and prepare for assessment exams including the academic workload, residence hall activities, sports activities, and poor time management. Using peer mentors in the form of upperclassman has been helpful in providing programming events for first-year students (Alexitch, 2006). Programming improves academic achievement (Campbell & Campbell, 1997) and aids with adjustment (Andrade, 2008; Cosgrove, 1986). First year experience programs provide new students with available resources to navigate the academic landscape, and to find fulfillment during their college education.

In addition to living on one's own, first-year college students need to speak the "language" of higher education (Chaskes, 1996). Even native speakers of English need help translating words such as *Bursar*, *Registrar*, *Provost*, and *FAFSA*. Professionals working on college campuses use vocabulary unfamiliar to new incoming students, causing confusion and misunderstanding. To make matters worse, international students are typically not native speakers of English. English proficiency is mandatory for foreign

students to succeed (Trice, 2001). The jargon barrier for first-year students operates much like a foreign language (Chaskes, 1996). The difference in vocabulary between colleges and universities as well as semesters and terms must be explained to students at orientation (White et al., 1995). An explanation of terms is required for all students to meet requirements to graduate, as well as a translation of expectations from the university.

In order to help incoming students with the first-year experience, courses and living-learning communities and programs were developed in the 1970s (Purdie & Rosser, 2011). Research demonstrates that such courses in the first year yields the most impact on academic achievement and persistence of students (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Upcraft, Gardner, & Barefoot, 2005). Ryan and Glenn (2004) found that FYE courses that focused on academic skill building helped with student retention more than FYE courses focused on integrating into the academic community. Academic success is one of the most important factors in students' retention. In addition to FYE courses, living-learning communities can assist with improving college students' experience (Shapiro & Levine, 1999). A learning community helps integrate students with each other, faculty, and resources to build connections and structures the curriculum to a specific cohort of students (Gabelnick, MacGregor, Matthews, & Smith, 1990). Many benefits have been discovered as a result of participating in a living-learning community including higher retention rates, better academic achievement, greater satisfaction at college, and the ability to bridge academic and social worlds together (Lenning & Ebbers, 1999).

Living-learning communities, frequently referred to as LLCs, purposefully attempts to create three types of involvement including academics, faculty, and peer groups (Inkelas & Weisman, 2003). In addition to living on campus, students can interact with peers and faculty, causing them to develop more meaningful relationships and to adjust to college life. Living on campus causes more social interactions among students (Wilcox, Winn, & Fyvie-Gauld, 2005). This develops a social support network and in turn students feel more “at home” in the new residence. The FYE constitutes an important part of students’ academic success and adjustment to college.

College Student Adjustment

Moving from high school to college requires cultural adjustment (Hunter & Murray, 2007). With a change in routines, new friendships, and daily interactions, students need to cope with a new lifestyle. Student success research looks at retention rates, academic success, and persistence. In addition to such topics, the adjustment process is of equal importance. Domestic and international students experience adjustment issues when moving to institutions of higher education as they navigate a new way of learning. One way to integrate to academic life involves forming relationships with academic staff (McGivney, 1996; Tinto, 2002). Wilcox, Winn, and Fyvie-Gauld (2005) found that students connecting to at least one academic staff member and knowing fellow students felt more linked to campus. Additionally, peer mentoring has been valuable in providing support and advice to new students (Hill & Reddy, 2007). Forming connections from the beginning represents an important part of college student adjustment.

Many of today's college students are from Generation Y, born between 1981 and 2001 (Tsang, 2011). This generation has grown up with technology, which in turn has changed the way students manage learning (Prensky, 2006). They are multi-taskers and express themselves online freely, expecting instant gratification (Skiba, 2005). Since online environments may be easier to learn in, and online socialization is more desirable than face-to-face interactions (Connor, 2003; Prensky, 2001), an online peer mentoring program to provide support to college students is worth exploring to help with adjustment. Collaborative learning and peer mentoring have been the result of online reflective group discussions (Tsang, 2011). This approach to helping students adjust may be beneficial by providing coping and social support, and inhibiting social isolation.

Astin (1985) believed that when students are involved they learn. When moving from high school to college "the transition involves adaptation to a new set of academic and social systems" (Terenzini et al., 1994, p. 63). One way to adapt to the new systems is through involvement. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) found a higher likelihood of persisting in college with student involvement in the new community. Universities must offer students ample opportunities for involvement on campus to integrate and to feel as though they belong, starting at orientation and continuing throughout the first semester for a successful transition.

International Students

A growing body on college campuses consists of degree seekers called international students. Almost three-quarters of a million international students attended institutions of higher education in 2012 (Institute for International Education (IIE), 2013). This dynamic group of students brings diversity to schools across the U.S., as well as

revenue in terms of tuition paid, and the cost of living within each community.

International students face daily living challenges and a new culture (Mori, 2000), which parallels a domestic student traversing college for the first time. Academics differ for many international students unfamiliar with U.S. college (Chun & Poole, 2009; Misra, Crist, & Burant, 2003). International students and domestic students experience many of the same stressors in the U.S. (Klomegah, 2006).

Research shows that the main challenges for international students going through the transition to college in the U.S. include academic issues, lack of English proficiency, homesickness, financial issues, lack of social support, and difficulties in daily activities (Carr, Koyama, & Thiagarajan, 2003; Leong & Chou, 1994; Mori, 2000; Pederson, 1991). Part of the adjustment of international students to life in the U.S. requires learning appropriate patterns of behaviors (Tanaka, Takai, Kohyama, Fujihara, & Minami, 1997). International students experience culture shock in several ways including physically, emotionally, and psychologically. Emphasis has been placed on using counseling services on campus for international students. Research has shown that such amenities are underutilized (Byon, Chan, & Thomas, 1999; Mori, 2000; Nilsson, Berkel, Flores, & Lucas, 2004). However, there exists a lack of research with international students using the same resources as domestic students, such as first-year intervention programs, student involvement, or residence hall assistance. Although English is not the native language of the majority of international students in the U.S., the sojourn is congruent to that of domestic students. Comparing the acculturation process of domestic and international students constitutes an important topic for higher education administrators.

The majority of international students in the U.S. originate from Asian countries (IIE, 2013), and have collectivistic upbringings. The U.S. classroom employs individual work and initiative, differing greatly from many international student backgrounds (Baron, 1975). In addition, many U.S. universities are a competitive learning environment, challenging international students' abilities to succeed (Craig, 1981; Edwards & Tonkin, 1990). International students study for long periods of a time uninterrupted (Light, 2001), although having time for recreational activities is important (Abel, 2002). Educating international students about U.S. culture, the classroom, and academics mitigates the challenges they encounter and prepares them for what they experience and witness throughout their studies. Bridging this through the use of orientation programs teaches international students strategies to navigate education in the U.S.

Orientation

Orientation often serves as the first time students start to make decisions about a future career. Orientation programs provide new incoming students with resources needed to adjust to college life, and to transition from high school to a university setting. Typically much of the content consists of general information, testing and assessment, social/interpersonal development, academic information, logistical concerns, and transitional programming (Smith & Brackin, 1993). Personal adjustment and increasing awareness of the transition to college may be included (Cook, 1996; Perigo & Upcraft, 1989). An explanation of the academic structure and expectations is included in most orientation programs and helps support adaptation issues (Gardner & Hansen, 1993; Smith & Brackin, 1993; Strumpf, 1991). White and colleagues (1995) suggested that

linking orientation and advising together helps support the institutions' retention efforts, provides students with essential information about academic advising, indicates trends in new incoming students, and improves faculty and staff experiences with students.

Pitkethly and Prosser (2001) stated that "orientation to university teaching and learning is part of the process of academic adjustment" (p. 190). Part of academic adjustment is the motivation to learn (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994), and this is enhanced through effective orientation programs. New student orientations influence students' expectations and attitudes by including them from the beginning of the college journey in activities and academic programs that influence their initial feelings about the campus (Barefoot, 2000). Orientation can include any effort made by the college to facilitate the transition for new incoming students (Upcraft & Farnsworth, 1984).

Orientation programs are typically offered weeks to months prior to the semester starting. In addition, orientation for students' parents occurs simultaneously to answer questions about financial aid, safety, and additional concerns parents have about the university. In some cases, universities offer orientation programs for transfer students, adult/returning students, and international students. Each of these student populations warrants a specific look at the university through the offerings of orientation that are specialized to unique needs. Online orientation provides students with the tools needed to interact and succeed in an online environment (Cho, 2012). Lifestyle changes, such as the "freshman 15" myth, become part of educating students about the change in eating habits that develop when entering college (Freedman & Waldrop, 2011). The new student orientation seeks to integrate students academically and socially (Tinto, 1993), and

orientation courses are typically developed to address both topics to help with retention issues (Cueso, 1997).

Students need a new source of support in college and orientation offers an opportunity to make new friends to alleviate the stress of moving away from home without knowing anyone. Taking a first year seminar or orientation course during the first semester mitigates the uncertainty and allows students to meet others in the same position. Higher education administrators should appraise orientation programs to determine the effectiveness on overall campus retention rates (Marcotte, Bailey, Borkoski, & Kienzl, 2005; Sax, Gilmartin, Keup, DiCrisi, & Brayant, 2000). Orientation programs are geared to help incoming students experience success (Barefoot & Gardner, 1993; Cohen & Jody, 1978), which in turn should lead to higher satisfaction and retention.

First year courses for incoming students are typically geared to augment both social and academic integration to campus (Barefoot, 1992). First year courses are also called first year seminars or freshman seminars, and have become a common intervention tool for first year students across the U.S. (Keup & Barefoot, 2005). First year courses enhance the orientation experience by delving into topics more thoroughly, and at times during the semester where they may apply most to students. The pioneers of the first year seminar in the U.S. are the University of South Carolina who introduced the first University 101 course in 1972 (Dwyer, 1989; Upcraft, Gardner, & Barefoot, 2005). The first orientation program recorded took place at Boston University in 1888 (Bonner, 1972, quoted in Gass, 1986). The process of supporting students through the integration to higher education continues to evolve each decade.

Orientation programs are designed for specific groups apart from the traditional domestic student who attends college immediately after high school. Commuting and online students require orientation even if they do not spend as much time physically on campus. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) found that when commuters and online students have a sense of place within the college campus, they perform better academically. Carruth, Broussard, Waldmeier, Gauthier, and Mixon (2010) discussed how online orientation, in particular, helps online students develop the e-learning strategies needed to overcome academic barriers. Using student testimonials in an online orientation is beneficial to demonstrate the perspective of the university or program (Dixon et al., 2012). To supplement orientation, online options can benefit international students who might arrive late to campus (Valosik, 2014). Valosik describes how online orientation is used by many universities as a “make-up” orientation when students miss the face-to-face version so they receive the content and know the appropriate rules. Most frequently, international student orientation is tailored to specific needs such as cultural adjustment, U.S. academics, maintaining immigration status information, and how to navigate the U.S. classroom.

First generation college students may be more apprehensive about attending college without family or friends to support their academic endeavors. Providing information on resources and support services such as a Student Success Center empower first generation students with the tools needed to be successful. Outdoor orientation programs help students transfer adventure skills to college life (Bell, Gass, Nafziger, & Starbuck, 2014). Program specific orientations, such as nursing, offer innovative ways for students to be prepared for the upcoming semester (Carruth et al., 2010). Peer-led

orientations initiate a new support system for incoming students (O'Shea & Vincent, 2011). Since peer interaction and support assist with the transition of first-year students (Yorke & Thomas, 2003), using peer-led programming during specialized orientation programs could alleviate the stress of going to college and foster a smooth change to an institution of higher education. Specialized orientation programs are important to students to develop the skills needed for college, discover resources, and build trust in the campus in order to be successful.

While orientation programs introduce students to services and opportunities, student engagement and participation in campus activities foster greater student satisfaction in college. If higher education administrators actively engage students, they are more likely to participate in extra activities (Ahlfeldt, Mehta, & Sellnow, 2005). Tinto (1998) stated that when students join in and involve themselves in academic and social activities at college, there is a higher likelihood students continue with their learning. Therefore, orientation programs need to provide incoming students with opportunities to join social and academic organizations to cultivate greater satisfaction and success. Furnishing students with a chance to make friends and join social activities while continuing to engage academically is paramount to retention.

The transition to college begins at orientation, and provides a welcome to students and parents for the academic journey ahead. Students participating in orientation programs performed better academically from students not attending (Busby, Gammel, & Jeffcoat, 2002). Such programs promote personal relationships with other students and supplies information for academic achievement (Nadler & Miller, 1997). The combination of orientation, the first year experience, living learning communities, and

campus support are invaluable in retention of new incoming students and their success in college. The following section discusses turning points college students face once they integrate to campus during the first year.

Turning Point

Once students enter college and face adjustment, there comes a point when times may be tough, and critical decisions are made. Students may decide they are not cut out for college, want to transfer to a new school, regress from classes and stop attending, hang out with the wrong crowd, or possibly decide they need to do better if they want to graduate. This concept is known as the turning point. Turning point describes the change in trajectories students face and alteration of the current path leading to a new future (Yair, 2009). Turning points are “any event or occurrence that is associated with change in a relationship” (Baxter & Bullis, 1986, p. 470). Turning points have described life changes in careers (Hareven & Masaoka, 1988; Wethington, Pixley, & Kavey, 2003), organizational shifts (Hunter & Benson, 1997), developing romantic relationships (Baxter & Bullis, 1986; Baxter & Erbert, 1999), maintaining friendships (Becker et al., 2009), college teacher-student relationships (Docan-Morgan, 2009), and the point that brings about a shocking change that is unanticipated (Gladwell, 2000).

Communication scholars have studied relational turning points primarily as they pertain to friendships and romantic partners. Bolton (1961) first used the term to understand the processes by which romantic relationships developed. Graham (1997) stated that “turning points capture a critical moment, an event or incident that has impact or import. Turning points trigger a reinterpretation of what the relationship means to participants” (p. 351). Relational turning points were a point in time that was crucial in

the relationship itself. Turning point analysis is used in studies such as romantic relationships to understand the participants' point of view (Bullis & Bach, 1989). Through this type of analysis, researchers are able to identify common turning points between participants. In addition, Retrospective Interview Technique is used to elicit accounts from participants in recalling turning points in relationships (Baxter & Bullis, 1986; Baxter & Erbert, 1999). Typically, qualitative research is used with turning point analysis and allows researchers to listen for specific cues that demonstrate change in relationships.

Research between college teacher and student relationships has also employed relational turning point analysis. The concept itself is taught in communication textbooks (e.g., Guerrero, Andersen, & Afifi, 2001). Docan-Morgan and Manusov (2009) and O'Neill and Todd-Mancillas (1992) examined undergraduate student perceptions of turning points regarding relationships with instructors. Wang (2014) found that first generation college students used teachers as a resource to cope with the transition to college. In some cases teachers hindered the transition, while others went above and beyond to help students build the skills needed to succeed at the university level. Positive and negative turning points have also been identified between college students and the relationship with instructors (O'Neill & Todd-Mancillas, 1992).

Docan-Morgan (2009) utilized the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) to analyze relational turning points of college students. Flanagan (1954) developed CIT to identify common experiences that were "critical" among participants. Researchers can listen to participants' stories and explanations of why a situation was significant (Kain, 2004). From an academic perspective, college students can identify situations or incidents that

were meaningful in a positive or negative way that affected how their education unfolded. Docan-Morgan and Manusov (2009) found turning points that affected students' instructional outcomes, indicating the influence instructors have in guiding students to success.

Relational turning point research includes the teacher perspective in college settings. Docan-Morgan (2011) found success, transgression, and consultation turning points affected teacher outcomes. Teacher-student relationships, teacher motivation and job satisfaction, and teacher outcomes are examples of turning points instructors experience with college students. Halquist and Musanti (2010) posit that small events and unnoticed situations can be turning points and critical incidents. In college, students undergo an extraordinary change of life and the relationship with instructors is important in coping with the transition. Palmer, O'Kane, and Owens (2009) discovered that students felt they did not belong in college and that transitional turning point experiences revealed several reasons why students felt they should not continue in school. Academics created initiatives to help students conquer transitional issues (Barefoot, 2000); however, students report feeling they do not belong in the university environment (Solomon, 2007). To date, there is little research on the academic and transitional turning point for college students.

Despite the lack of literature regarding turning points in educational settings, the concept is one of importance in college student success and transition. Students make choices moving through the academic journey that affects the outcome of whether or not they graduate. The turning point of making a critical decision that affects their success (or failure) may happen in the first semester, first year, or at any time throughout a college

career. Students may not be equipped to deal with the changes experienced in college, causing a negative turning point, or find strength to make a positive shift. Additional studies need to be conducted with respect to college students' turning points as to how this affects adjustment to campus and transition to college.

Acculturation

Moving to college requires cultural adaptation. Students need new social support, translation of university vocabulary, help navigating the campus, and assistance with finding available resources. Adjusting to a new environment happens to all incoming students in college including both domestic and international. Students who come from the suburbs of a large urban environment experience collegiate culture shock but it may only come in the form of assimilation if familiar with the area or campus due to previous proximity. Berry (1974) described assimilation as “willing to adopt the patterns of the new society” (p. 19). Students merge one identity into another and pursue new academic endeavors while living on their own for the first time. Adjusting to college life and adhering to new rules can ease the transition for students. Even if students know the area, cultural adjustment is inevitable once on campus and the familiar high school experiences are in the past and the unknown college life begins.

Several definitions of acculturation have been provided by researchers across varying disciplines. Poyrazli, Kavanaugh, Baker and Al-Timimi (2004) believed acculturation encompasses social, physiological and psychological aspects. Berry, Kim, Minde, and Mok (1987) defined acculturation as a process of cultural change. Immigrants experience acculturation through the culture of origin and the culture of the host society (Berry & Sam, 1997). Berry, Trimble, and Olmedo (1986) developed tests to measure

four types of acculturation including integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization. Gudykunst (1995), on the other hand, studied cultural adaptation in terms of uncertainty reduction to reduce anxiety and seek information. Kim (1988) proposed the term “cross-cultural adaptation” to denote the method of completing the socialization process in the home culture and then experiencing an extended period of time in the host culture. Ward and Kennedy (1992) posit that cultural knowledge, time in the host culture as well as contact with host patrons affects socio-cultural adaptation. The concept of acculturation, also known as cultural adaptation and transition, affect individuals who travel, work, or live in another environment other than the host culture. The transition to college is a form of acculturation that is understudied in terms of adjusting to the new (host) environment. The definitions of acculturation, however, apply easily to college transition.

Each university enacts a unique culture that students learn and adapt to through the transition process in the first year. The adjustment of cultural change includes academic, social, and psychological aspects for new students. The first-year transition yields positive and negative experiences for students while undergoing cultural adjustment. Courses are taught differently, schedules vary each day, and managing time become part of venturing through college. The process requires new patterns of behaviors, social norms, and university values. Acculturation is part of the transition to college, and comprises an important topic of research for academic success for college students. Previous research has not looked at the transition to college as an acculturation process. Acculturation studies include topics such as study abroad, relocation,

organizational culture, and international students. The transition to college deems an important topic of research from an acculturative perspective.

Culture Shock

Various forms of culture shock exist. Most commonly the term is used for those sojourning to another country. Oberg (1960) coined this term to describe the adjustment process one goes through in successfully transitioning to another culture. Acculturation, the process of adjusting to cultural change (Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987), encompasses social, psychological, and physiological aspects (Poyrazli et al., 2004). As domestic and international students begin a journey at institutions of higher education, they experience a form of culture shock. For the purpose of this study, the term collegiate culture shock describes the process of adjustment students go through to successfully navigate the transition to college life. Adjustment can come in several forms, and varies person to person. Modeling appropriate patterns of behaviors, learning new cultural norms, and finding new sources of support are all part of this collegiate cultural adjustment period.

Several models have been used to describe how individuals experience culture shock. The U-Curve by Lysgaard (1955) shows how individuals start at the honeymoon stage of an experience, then hit a low point of disorientation and anger, and finally move to a stage of accepting the changes that surround them. Students most likely experience the honeymoon stage during the initial weeks of school, and when mid-semester arrives, stage two sets in. It's up to each individual student to cope with the academic and social changes to adjust and continue forward during their collegiate career. Part of culture shock is transition shock, which is addressed in the following section.

The Transition Model and Transition Shock

Individuals face many transitions throughout life including graduation from high school, marriage, birth of children, job change, and retirement. The Transition Model developed by Schlossberg (2011) looks at the roles, relationships, routines and assumptions through life transitions. Schlossberg (1981) explained how individuals adapt differently to change, and the same person may react differently to a situation depending on the time in one's life that it occurs. Going to college is a life transition. Students live on their own, with a change in routine, lifestyle, and social support. College students must seek help and resources themselves, and adapt to a new way of life. The Transition Model helps explain how students experience the transition to college through three sets of factors that influence adaptation including: characteristics of the transition, characteristics of the pre and post transition environments, and the characteristics of the individual going through transition (Schlossberg, 1981). The life change going to college is the commonality between all students, but each student has his or her own history and background that affects how each adapts to the new environment through behaviors and relationships.

In addition to the Transition Model, transition shock can be used to describe the disorientation caused by the change in environment and communication issues that develop as a result of such change. Bennett (1998) described transition shock as a result that happens with marriage, divorce, a change in residence or job. The transition can be "shocking" and lead to the need for adjustment. Culture shock is a subset of transition shock and can be identified more easily according to Bennett. Both are "defense mechanisms in reaction to cognitive inconsistency" (Bennett, 1998, p. 218). With exterior

changes, such as going to college, values and beliefs are challenged and individuals become defensive when experiencing a new culture. Although students understand the concept of going to school, once in college, life is much different and requires greater change. Campus culture, students' personal backgrounds and experiences, resources available, and each individual situation all affect how college students adapt to life on their own. Both the Transition Model and transition shock parallel the concept of college students living on their own for the first time, and how they adapt to a new way of life. Schlossberg's (1981) Transition Model serves as a framework for this research study to identify the nuances that students experience during their sojourn to college, whether domestic or international, and to encapsulate the concept of life transition.

Research Questions

Martin (2013) qualitatively analyzed the first semester experiences of incoming freshman. Martin suggested that additional research is needed in the second semester of college to see how changes are made throughout the year, and to include international and domestic students. Several variables affect the acculturation process for each individual student. However, if trends are found, higher education administrators can use this knowledge to develop appropriate orientations, programming events, and resources to help respective college campuses. Factors such as first-generation students, ethnic minorities, international students, military background, and gender may influence how each of these groups acculturate to college. Discovering themes with each group compared to the overall new incoming population helps explain the needs students have that are not being met. Comparing both domestic and international students in the

college transition journey of acculturation deems an important area of research for retention on campuses throughout the U.S.

The transition to college has been studied from a first-year student perspective, and from an international student perspective. Research to date has not compared the acculturation process of these two groups together. Although international students are mainly non-native English speakers at U.S. college campuses, native speakers in the first year of college must also learn to speak the collegiate language. First-generation college students experience academic and social adjustment issues due to a change in culture (Terenzini et al., 1994). International students face challenges in traversing a new academic system (Chun & Poole, 2009; Misra, Crist, & Burant, 2003). The parallel experiences warrant further exploration to determine how college campuses can unite efforts to help all new incoming first-year students originating from around the home state, country, and globe. With this in mind, the following research questions are examined:

- RQ1: Do first-year students experience a turning point (if at all) during the first year in college?
- RQ2: What resources do first-year students use to help navigate the on campus journey?
- RQ3: What factors affect college students' adjustment to campus most?
- H1: First-year domestic college students experience lower cultural differences going from high school to college.
- H2: International students experience greater cultural differences going from home country to U.S. college.

H3: Domestic and international students from outside of the large public urban city in the Midwest experience more collegiate culture shock than students originating from the large public urban city in the Midwest.

Chapter 2 - Methods

Participants

Domestic and international students were recruited through email solicitation, online survey advertisements, and from communication courses at a large, public, urban Midwestern university. International students were recruited through the immigration advisor via email solicitation and one-on-one advising sessions. Some students received extra credit for participation.

The sample consisted of 313 domestic students, and 103 international students. International students originated from 22 countries (see Table 1). The average student age was 24.23 years old. More females ($n = 205$; 61%) participated in the study than males ($n = 133$; 39%). Over half of the participants work more than 20 hours per week during the semester ($n = 184$; 54%), while almost half of the participants originated from 20 miles or less from the campus ($n = 151$; 45%). More than one third of the participants reported transferring to the current institution ($n = 131$; 39%). Just over half of the participants reported coming from families with members earning a college degree or higher ($n = 214$; 51%).

Participants reported additional information regarding college education and background. The majority of participants lived off campus ($n = 298$; 88%) and over half paid for college without parental assistance ($n = 179$; 53%). Respondents indicated spending the majority of time with college friends ($n = 104$; 31%), roommates ($n = 91$; 27%), or alone ($n = 65$; 19%).

Instrument and Measures

Participants received one of two versions of the same survey, depending on the answer to the question, “Are you a degree seeking international student?” If respondents

answered yes, they were directed to complete a modified version of the survey to include language regarding “home country” and “U.S. college.” Participants that responded no, were directed to complete the version of the survey that included language regarding “high school” and “college.” All participants were directed to complete: (a) the modified 21-item Acculturation Index (Ward & Kennedy, 1994), (b) 12 items regarding turning point, (c) the 67-item SACQ scale (Baker & Siryk, 1999), and (d) basic demographic questions as well as resources utilized on campus.

Modified Acculturation Index (AI). The Acculturation Index (AI) was developed by Ward and Kennedy (1994) to measure 21 cognitive and behavioral items pertaining to adjustment. For the purpose of this study, the original index was modified from a host and co-national comparison to a high school and college comparison, and home country and U.S. college comparison. Domestic students participated in the high school and college scale comparison. International students participated in the home country and U.S. college scale comparison. Additionally, items in Ward and Kennedy’s Acculturation Index were modified to address the comparison of high school to college (and home country and U.S. college) instead of host and co-national comparisons (e.g., perceptions of other high school students, perceptions of other college students). The central measurements of acculturation remained intact to compare place of origin with current location. Items and scales on both surveys were identical in the current study. The index originally had a 7-point scale ranging from *not at all* (1) to *extremely* (7) for both host and co-nationals. The index was modified to a 5-point scale ranging from *not at all similar* (1) to *very similar* (5) for both high school and college, and for home country and U.S. college. The responses to this survey were used in conjunction with whether or not a

student was from the U.S., and if so, was from the surrounding community (i.e. originating from 20 miles or less from the college campus). Cronbach's α coefficients for domestic students ranged from $\alpha = .92$ for high school, and $\alpha = .91$ for college. Cronbach's α coefficients for international students ranged from $\alpha = .95$ for home country, and $\alpha = .94$ for U.S. college.

Turning Point (TP). A turning point questionnaire was developed by the researcher and committee member to determine how participants rated themselves in terms of their low point during the semester and college. Nine questions asked participants if they agreed or disagreed with statements such as "I have not had any low points this semester, I am very happy at college," "I think I am at my lowest point of college right now," "I was not happy at this college, but I have found strategies to cope, and resources to help me continue at this college." Additionally, participants were asked who helped them recover from the low point, actions taken to feel better, and other ways used to recover from a turning point (low point) at college.

Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ). The Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ) was originally developed by Baker and Siryk (1984) as a 52-item scale to measure adjustment to college, and was revised to a 67-item scale producing four features of adjustment: (a) academic, (b) social, (c) personal-emotional, and (d) attachment (Baker & Siryk, 1989). Several clusters make up each of the four dimensions. Academic adjustment contained motivation, application, performance, and academic environment (i.e. "I have been keeping up to date on my academic work."). Social adjustment contained general, other people, nostalgia, and social environment (i.e. "I have several close social ties at college."). Personal-emotional is comprised of

psychological and physical (i.e. “I am experiencing a lot of difficulty coping with the stresses imposed upon me in college.”) while attachment has general and this college clusters (i.e. “Lately I have been giving a lot of thought to transferring to another college.”). Cronbach’s α coefficients for academic adjustment ranged from $\alpha = .73$ for the motivation cluster, $\alpha = .60$ for the application cluster, $\alpha = .82$ for the performance cluster, and $\alpha = .78$ for the academic environment cluster. For the social adjustment dimension, Cronbach’s α coefficients ranged from $\alpha = .80$ for general, $\alpha = .50$ for other people, $\alpha = .64$ for nostalgia, and $\alpha = .26$ for social environment (which was eliminated). In the personal-emotional dimension, Cronbach’s α coefficients were $\alpha = .83$ for psychological and $\alpha = .69$ for physical. Finally, Cronbach’s α for the attachment dimension varied from $\alpha = .79$ for general and $\alpha = .78$ for this college. The scale is scored on a nine-point Likert scale ranging from “Applies very closely to me” to “Doesn’t apply to me at all.”

Procedures

Data collection was conducted between April and early August of 2014. The survey was administered and delivered via Qualtrics online system. The first screen of the survey provided an online informed consent where participants could indicate they agreed to consent through clicking the button and continuing to the first page of the survey. After determining if participants were an international or domestic student, participants were directed to the AI survey. Participants responding “yes” to being an international student were asked for country of origin. A “no” response received a prompt asking which state students were from, and if from Wisconsin, whether they attended high school in the vicinity of the host city. The survey took approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

Data Analysis

Several statistical tests in SPSS were used to address the hypotheses and research questions. Reliabilities were run for each scale. In addition, scale sums were calculated for the AI survey (used to answer each of the hypotheses), and each of the clusters within the four dimensions of the SACQ. The original SACQ used pen and paper computations for each of the four dimensions (Baker & Siryk, 1989), however, using t-tests in SPSS created more accurate calculations and was less time consuming.

Research Question One, do first-year students experience a turning point (if at all) during the first year in college, was answered using the TP survey. Turning point questions were grouped into three categories including: individuals who did not experience a turning point, individuals who had already experienced a turning point, and individuals who were still facing a turning point. Survey questions were grouped together to fit into one of each of these categories, and scale sums were calculated.

The second research question, what resources do first-year students use to help navigate the on campus journey, was answered through the demographic and on-campus questions using a list of the main resources available at the university. Domestic and international students' use of the resources was separated from one another to compare groups for significance.

Research Question Three, what factors affect college students' adjustment to campus most, was answered using the SACQ and TP surveys. The means were calculated for each cluster of the SACQ and for each of the three groups of turning point scenarios including no turning point, already experienced a turning point, and currently experiencing a turning point. Standardized canonical discriminant function coefficients

were calculated combining the scales. Eigenvalues (.068) determined the variance for each of the scales. Wilks's Lambda test demonstrated which variables were significant in terms of the discriminant function (.94). A classification summary showed that socialization ($M = 10.64$; $SD = 5.40$) and attachment ($M = 7.99$; $SD = 5.55$) variables were significant, and helped predict if students were experiencing a turning point.

Chapter 3 - Results

Research Question One

The first research question seeks to understand if first-year students experience a turning point during the first year in college. Statements were divided into three categories: (a) not experiencing a turning point at all, (b) having experienced a turning point and were already past it, and (c) currently experiencing a turning point. Results show that only a few students had experienced a turning point and ultimately wanted to transfer to another school or drop out (11%). The remainder of students indicated they found strategies to cope and were happy at the university (See Table 2). In addition, students indicated they relied on family members (71%) and college friends (61%) to help recover from low points at college.

Research Question Two

The second research question explores what resources first-year students use to navigate the on campus journey. Over half of the students reported awareness of most of the resources offered on campus (65%). However, only one-quarter of students used resources available (25%). Overall, students used the library (56%), academic advising (49%), computer labs (46%), the on-campus gym (44%), and financial aid (41%) more than other resources available (See Table 3). Domestic students used the library (61%), academic advising (57%), computer labs (50%), financial aid (50%), and on-campus gym (49%). International students used similar resources including the library (40%), computer labs (34%), international student and scholar services (32%), the on-campus gym (29%), and academic advising (24%).

Comparing the awareness and use between domestic and international students, several significant differences emerged (See Table 4). For example, it is not surprising that international students were aware of and used the International Student and Scholar Services office as well as the Graduate School more frequently than domestic students since their welfare often depends on these resources. Domestic students, on the other hand, were aware of and used the on-campus health center, gym, library, and student organizations greater than international students. These resources are common in the U.S. and domestic students are familiar with such amenities.

Research Question Three

The third research question investigates what factors affect college students' adjustment to campus most. Correlations and discriminant analysis were used to compare the SACQ and TP surveys to determine which variables affected whether a student experienced a turning point or not. The overall Wilks's lambda was significant, $\lambda = .94$, $\chi^2(2, N = 416) = 14.72$, $p < .01$, indicating that attachment general (to the college) and social general predicted if students experienced a turning point. This test is significant at the .05 level and indicates that there are differences among groups across the 11 predictor variables in the population. A single significant function generated a canonical correlation of .25.

A total of 11 measures of college adjustment were used as dependent variables in the stepwise discriminant analysis. Both attachment general and social general were significant (See Table 6). Nine variables were not significant including (1) academic adjustment motivation, (2) academic adjustment application, (3) academic adjustment performance, (4) academic adjustment environment, (5) social adjustment other people,

(6) social adjustment nostalgia, (7) personal-emotional adjustment psychological, (8) personal-emotional adjustment physical, and (9) attachment to this college. While academics typically plays an integral part of student success, this study found that social ties and the sense of belonging at the university were most important in determining if students experienced and made it past a turning point.

Using discriminant analysis, it was possible to predict 82% accuracy if students experience a turning point. In addition, to assess if a student did not experience a turning point, it was possible to predict 71% accuracy. Both predictions are based on two variables: attachment-general and social-general.

Hypothesis One

Hypothesis one predicted first-year domestic college students experience lower cultural differences going from high school to college. Domestic students' level of high school acculturation ($M = 65.93$, $SD = 15.82$) was not significantly different, $t(284) = 1.86$, $p > .05$, from college acculturation ($M = 64.03$, $SD = 14.27$). In this study, over half of the domestic participants come from suburban areas around the campus, which could account for the lack in cultural differences going to college. Additionally, since many participants lived off campus and have a higher average age than the typical college student, this may also attribute to the acculturation process of domestic students.

Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis two predicted international students experience greater cultural differences from home country to U.S. college. International students' level of home acculturation ($M = 61.16$, $SD = 17.62$) was not significantly different, $t(62) = 1.37$, $p >$

.05, from U.S. college acculturation ($M = 57.94, SD = 16.16$). Many of the international students in the current study transferred to the institution from elsewhere in the U.S. which may account for the lack of acculturation. Additionally, the large urban public city in the Midwest offers most amenities large global cities have that may affect the adaptation process.

Hypothesis Three

Hypothesis three predicted domestic and international students from outside the large public urban city in the Midwest experience more collegiate culture shock than domestic students originating from the area where the university is located. Domestic students' level of collegiate culture shock originating from outside of the large public urban city in the Midwest area ($M = 5.44, SD = 15.43$) was significantly different, $t(284) = 3.40, p < .05$, from domestic students originating from the area ($M = 2.06, SD = 18.57$). In addition, international students' level of collegiate culture shock ($M = 3.72, SD = 18.7$) was significantly more, $t(62) = 1.83, p < .05$, than domestic students originating from the large public urban city in the Midwest ($M = 2.06, SD = 18.57$). Domestic students who originally came from suburbs of the university area most likely have interacted with daily life in a large community, and are familiar with the city and campus. The familiarity and having support such a short distance away from school may have helped students in adjusting easier to campus life. Domestic students from smaller towns further away from the university may not be accustomed to life in the big city, causing greater adjustment to the campus and community. International students on the other hand, have language issues as well as cultural differences to navigate which most likely caused greater need for adjustment.

Chapter 4 - Discussion

This investigation compares the transition to college for domestic and international students in the U.S. Students often experience a turning point during college that affects whether they continue, transfer, or drop out. The present study discovered that a sense of belonging at the institution and social connections on campus constitute key elements to students achieving successful negotiation of a turning point and continuing academically. When students perceive strong social ties to campus and become involved in activities and events, they begin to feel accepted. Additionally, students feel pleased about the decision to attend the particular institution and stop considering dropping out or transferring and feel a part of the campus community. To navigate the first year journey on campus, students use the library, academic advising, computer labs, the on-campus gym, and financial aid. While domestic students use financial aid, international students use the international student and scholar services office. Not surprisingly, both sets of students depend on each of these offices to continue to earn a degree.

Students originally from the suburbs near the institution adjusted easier to college than domestic students from other areas of the state or U.S. International students report greater difficulty adjusting to campus when compared to domestic students from the local area. In a large urban area, students make different decisions from small towns and international capital cities. Academic adjustment serves as part of collegiate culture shock as students transition from home to college life.

Theoretical Implications

Social integration to campus improves the ability to succeed in college (Tinto, 1993). Student involvement in organizations, on campus employment, and forming other

on campus connections help with adjustment to college (Astin, 1984). Previous research reports that academic advising and involvement in social activities improve college success (Ting, Grant, & Plenert, 2000; Turner, 1992; Zhao & Kuh, 2004). The current study echoes previous findings. Research question three investigates what factors affect college students' adjustment to campus. One of the two findings demonstrates social ties to campus become integral in surviving a turning point. Social ties specifically relate to joining social activities, events, and the social life created during college in general. Obtaining social support helps students acclimate even in difficult or stressful times. Students in the present study relied heavily on family members and college friends to recover from low points at college, explaining how students manage past a turning point as research question one asks. Involvement in the campus community helps students persevere in college (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Participating in university events is part of how social ties materialize as students engage in activities and form new relationships with other students.

Orientation programs constitute the first time students receive exposure to information about the resources available on campus. Designed to facilitate success for incoming students (Barefoot & Gardner, 1993; Cohen & Jody, 1978), orientation programs typically explain the academic structure of the institution to help students adapt (Gardnes & Hansen, 1993; Smith & Brackin, 1993; Strumpf, 1991). First year courses are a part of the academic and social integration to campus (Barefoot, 1992). Students are introduced to the Student Success Center and educated about innovative ways to succeed in college. Peer-led support and interactions assist with the transition to college (Yorke & Thomas, 2003). In the present investigation, research question two explores what

resources first-year students use to navigate the on campus journey. Students typically attending orientation should become aware of the resources. Over half of the students reported awareness of campus resources, supporting the idea that orientation benefits incoming students. Academic advising, one of the core components of collegiate success (Ting, Grant, & Plenert, 2000; Turner, 1992; Zhao & Kuh, 2004), was one of the most used resources by both domestic and international students. Academic advisors benefit from getting to know international students during arrival events to help students learn the value of advisors in the transition to college. Advisors explain valuable resources that students may want to use to help adjust to college life. However, the current research study found that most students report awareness of the Student Success Center on campus, but very few utilize the service. This contradicts Peck's (2011) suggestion to have a center as a resource for new incoming students to find resources on campus. The results suggest that students are aware of resources on campus, including the Student Success Center. Additionally, the results support the importance of such facilities for students and educate administrators about how places such as the Student Success Center can improve students' well-being at college. When assistance is crucial, students use available resources. Furthermore, some students in the study transferred in, potentially knowing what services were essential and sought out usage as needed. Results likewise demonstrate students use the on-campus gym facility, computer labs, and library the most. All resources are integral in student success, and are accessible when students resolve to utilize such means.

Turning point analysis has been used with romantic partners (Baxter & Bullis, 1986; Baxter & Erbert, 1999; Bullis & Bach, 1989), friendships (Becker et al., 2009),

organizational changes (Hunter & Benson, 1997), and career changes (Hareven & Masaoka, 1988; Wethington, Pixley, & Kavey, 2003). Turning point analysis applications in academia consider the student-instructor relationship (Docan-Morgan, 2011; Docan-Morgan & Manusov, 2009; O'Neill & Todd-Mancillas, 1992; Wang, 2014), and whether students feel they belong in college (Palmer, O'Kane, & Owens, 2009). Research question three uses discriminant analysis to predict the accuracy if students experience or do not experience a turning point. Results demonstrate that attachment to the university and social integration to campus are the two main variables that predict the positive navigation past a turning point. Previous studies used qualitative research to conduct turning point analysis. The present study is a first using quantitative research methods to compare what affects students' ability to successfully transition to college. The current investigation compares the results of the SACQ to a TP survey. In previous research, specific situations were found through thematic coding that affected how students proceeded in college. This study discovered that two main factors, including attachment to the university and social integration, play an integral part in traversing the first year of college.

Domestic and international students experience turning points throughout the academic sojourn to a university. Predicting the variables that affect achieving positive turning point navigation assists administrators to find ways in educating students at orientation about the changes in college life that occur and provide preparation strategies for students to traverse the first year on campus. International student advisors are able to find ways to collaborate with academic advisors and other campus facilities to offer programming and events where domestic and international students meet one another.

Not only do students make friends and form a new social support system, but begin to feel the sense of belonging to campus through interactions with one another.

Practical Implications

The transition to college inevitably requires cultural adjustment. Domestic and international students must find ways to adopt the patterns of the new society (Berry, 1974) to assimilate to academic endeavors. Acculturation involves social, psychological and physiological aspects (Poyrazli, Kavanaugh, Baker, & Al-Timimi, 2004). The cultural change process (Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987) happens when students transition to college. Students adapt differently from one another, but awareness and use of resources reduces collegiate culture shock during the transition. The current study demonstrates both domestic and international students acculturate to life at college in a similar way. Previous research has not compared the two student groups in the same study. Results show that both types of students use the same resources to adjust to campus. Domestic and international students share common tendencies in terms of adjustment, and future research should not separate groups to determine what campus resources are needed to acculturate and build social networks.

The current study is a first of its kind with a quantitative turning point survey used with college student adjustment. Despite previous research using qualitative measures to identify turning points, having a quantitative measure to establish when students experience turning points is invaluable to institutions of higher education around the world. Higher education administrators benefit from knowing when students experience difficult times and need resources. College campuses can prepare for typical tendencies students undergo during the first year so that students have the needed support to

negotiate turning points and continue on to earn a degree. Academic advisors, international student advisors, and faculty members are able to use turning point survey results to improve advising, counseling, and instruction by providing students with resources that are helpful in adjustment and places to build social networks.

Results of the current study show that on campus locations such as the library, gym, computer labs, and advising offices are used most frequently by all students. Higher education professionals must use this knowledge to create environments on campus that foster social engagement between students. Social ties and the sense of belonging are two key factors for students to negotiate turning points and continue in college. Knowing this information helps architects to design a campus blueprint to help students initiate social networks at the library, the gym, or in an advising waiting area. In a social setting that initiates conversation and discussion amongst students, social ties will naturally grow, and eventually form social support for each other, ultimately what is needed to survive and thrive in college.

Fundamentally, domestic and international students share the same common problems and adjustment issues when acculturating to college. Although issues such as language deficiency or financial aid may be separate for international and domestic students respectively, all students need social ties in college to provide comfort and support on the journey to graduation. Higher education professionals need to provide social networking opportunities that include both groups as well as ways to integrate students together in the classroom to facilitate conversation and form friendships amongst students.

Finally, college campuses provide an extraordinary amount of resources to students that are underutilized. The current study shows that while the majority of students are aware of the Student Success Center, very few use the resource. Campuses are investing thousands if not millions of dollars into infrastructure and centers, such as the Student Success Center, to provide students with the best resources needed to succeed during programs of study. There is a gap between the availability and utilization of campus resources by students. Even if students are using resources, it may not be creating social ties to campus which are imperative to the acculturation process during the first year. Integrating students to campus must include socialization and build a sense of belonging. Student Success Centers provide resources that indirectly help students in adjustment, but should also foster socialization to support students during adjustment. Continued research on adjustment to college for both domestic and international students determines additional factors and resources students need in the transition from high school and home country to university life.

Limitations

No previous quantitative turning point survey has examined college student adjustment. The current investigation compiled a number of factors used in previous qualitative studies for students to rate where they are at in adjusting to college in relation to experiencing a turning point. Students rated themselves as agreeing or disagreeing with statements related to turning points during college. Using a Likert scale in the future to rate where students are at in regards to each statement would improve the analysis. Some statements in the current study were similar to one another and only slightly different. Having the ability to rate oneself in terms of each statement and the feelings at that

moment may pinpoint more closely when turning points occur for domestic and international students. Additionally, more statements based on which semester students are in (e.g. first, second, third, etc.) may help narrow down exactly when the turning point experienced occurred and why. Knowing when students are most likely to experience turning points is advantageous to higher education administrators, such as academic advisors and international student advisors, who can help intervene when problems occur. Students benefit from advisors who show concern and offer guidance on how to overcome turning points throughout the college career.

An additional limitation is the lack of diverse backgrounds of students participating in the study. Although both domestic and international students participated, the responses predominantly came from undergraduate Caucasian students as well as Middle Eastern students. The institution used in the study has diverse demographics since it is located in a relatively urban area of a large city. Generalizing the adjustment to college based primarily on Caucasian and Middle Eastern students fails to consider students from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, as well as socioeconomic or academic differences. More Latino, African American, and Southeast Asian students, as well as more diverse international student populations may influence the way students transition from high school to college, although not fully captured in this study.

Finally, the survey administration at the end of the second semester in spring, as well as during the summer session to students may have influenced the way students responded to questions given the length of time attending school, and the point students were at during the academic year. The majority of students who participated were freshman. If the survey had been administered either earlier in the semester or during the

first (fall) semester, results may be varied. Martin (2013) suggested surveying students in the second semester of college since students would more likely adjust further to campus. The current study was administered during the second term after students have had opportunity to become aware of and use resources. Students identified turning points during the spring and summer sessions in this study. However, future research should consider surveying the same students in the fall and in the spring semesters to determine routine changes, turning points, acculturation stages, and resources used during each semester. Administrators, faculty, staff, resident assistants, and orientation leaders can use such results to suggest to new students what resources are more helpful during certain times of the year in order for students to overcome challenges experienced. When students are better prepared to face and move past challenges, there is a higher likelihood to continue in college, in turn creating higher retention and greater student satisfaction, including elevated graduation rates.

Future Research

The transition to college is inevitable for students seeking higher education degrees. Each student adapts to the new environment, whether face-to-face or online, in a different way. Institutions of higher education must continue to research the ongoing transition period to be able to offer the appropriate resources, programming, and tools for students to successfully navigate the journey to graduation. Future research should include more diverse sets of international students and domestic students to determine the similarities and differences between and within groups. Surveying students during the fall and spring semesters to determine consistencies and evolving themes of new incoming students gives advising staff a chance to develop programming to mitigate the challenges

faced at certain times of the year. Additionally, instead of separate orientations, integrating domestic and international students together at the start of the semester fosters friendship, social support, and camaraderie both groups need to survive and thrive throughout college. Students crave the feeling of belonging, and using the campus welcome activities to introduce students to one another and to campus is one way to assimilate from the beginning of the academic expedition. Administrators should consider respective campus cultures to provide innovative networking opportunities at the start of the academic year and follow up with survey instruments to determine what activities students enjoy most to continue to support the transition from the beginning of the academic year.

In addition, future research should look at the graduate student population. The transition to college for masters and doctoral students is a different landscape than undergraduate students. The results may starkly contrast those of undergraduate students since graduate students typically have different motivation for attending the university. With greater maturity, graduate students most likely have different reasons and timing for turning points. Studies that analyze types of turning points graduate students experience could provide valuable insight on what resources and support are needed to transition to advanced degrees, and why graduate students drop out.

Future research must also look at online students compared to students in the face-to-face classroom and how adjustment to college occurs. Online students may not have the ability to use on campus resources that are offered to face-to-face students. Future studies should compare online and domestic student transitions including resources needed and used, interactions with faculty, advisors and staff, as well as

forming relationships with college friends. Since online classrooms are a growing way to earn a higher education degree, it is important to analyze how online students adjust and transition to college so that campuses can serve the online population best.

Conclusion

Earning a degree at a university is part of many people's lives each year. The transition from previous academic, social, and personal experiences to a new venture on a college campus generates a challenge for some students, especially first-generation students (London, 1989; Terenzini, Springer, Yaeger, Pascarella, & Nora, 1996) and international students. Higher education administrators, staff, and faculty must be prepared to help with the adjustment process from orientation until graduation. First-year intervention programs, orientations, advisors, on-campus housing and programming must work together to assist students to assimilate to campus by increasing awareness and use of resources as necessary. Developing ways to socially integrate students to feel a part of the overall university community becomes pivotal in students' adjustment and ability to get past turning points experienced. Domestic and international students both experience collegiate culture shock, and need not only social support from friends and family, but campus allies and resources to keep moving ahead in school. College constitutes a place of transformation, and students should feel at home and empowered by what is provided in terms of resources in order to be successful in the journey to graduation.

Table 1

International Students' Countries of Origin

Country of Origin	No.	%
Bangladesh	2	2
Bolivia	1	1
Brazil	1	1
China	10	10
Colombia	1	1
Germany	1	1
Hong Kong	1	1
India	2	2
Indonesia	1	1
Iran	1	1
Italy	1	1
Japan	3	3
Jordan	2	2
Mexico	1	1
Nigeria	1	1
Philippines	1	1
Saudi Arabia	18	17
South Korea	5	5
Syria	1	1
Taiwan	1	1
Thailand	1	1
Vietnam	1	1
Not Identified	46	45
Total	103	100

Table 2

Turning Point Analysis

No Turning Point Statements:	Agree
I have not had any low points this semester, I am very happy at college.	120 (29%)
Already Experienced Turning Point Statements:	
I have overcome my anxiety about college, and I now feel positive about my life in college.	271 (65%)
I have had some low points this semester, but I am happy here at college.	254 (61%)
I think I passed the lowest point of college, and I'm now feeling positive about being in college.	246 (59%)
I was not happy at this college, but I have found strategies to cope, and resources to help me continue at this college.	113 (27%)
I passed the lowest point of college, I am not happy, and I plan to transfer to a new college.	29 (7%)
I passed the lowest point in college, I am not happy, and I want to drop out.	16 (4%)
Currently Experiencing Turning Point Statements:	
I now feel down and/or worried about my being at college.	71 (17%)
I think I am at my lowest point of college right now.	38 (9%)

Table 3

Comparison of Overall On-Campus Awareness of Resources vs. Resources Used by Students

	Aware of Resources	Used Resources
Academic Advising	284 (68%)	205 (49%)
Career Development Center	296 (71%)	72 (17%)
Computer Lab	268 (64%)	191 (46%)
Financial Aid	277 (67%)	171 (41%)
Graduate School	304 (73%)	40 (10%)
International Student & Scholar Services	254 (61%)	61 (15%)
Klotsche Center	254 (61%)	183 (44%)
LGBT Resource Center	282 (68%)	37 (9%)
Library	254 (61%)	231 (56%)
Neighborhood Housing Office	255 (61%)	66 (16%)
Norris Health Center	274 (66%)	120 (29%)
Panther Academic Support Services (Tutoring)	276 (66%)	96 (23%)
Resident Assistants in Housing	260 (63%)	71 (17%)
Student Organizations	277 (67%)	93 (22%)
Student Success Center	251 (60%)	57 (14%)
Study Abroad Office	269 (65%)	47 (11%)
Women's Resource Center	267 (64%)	39 (9%)

Table 4

Domestic vs. International Student Awareness and Use of Resources on Campus

	Domestic Student Awareness of Resources	International Student Awareness of Resources	d Awareness	Domestic Student Use of Resources	International Student Use of Resources	d Use
Academic Advising	234 (75%)	50 (49%)	.64*	179 (57%)	25 (24%)	.75*
Career Development Center	245 (78%)	51 (50%)	.73*	57 (18%)	14 (14%)	.16
Computer Lab	227 (73%)	41 (40%)	.70*	155 (50%)	35 (34%)	.36*
Financial Aid	228 (73%)	49 (48%)	.67*	156 (50%)	14 (14%)	.86*
Graduate School	263 (84%)	40 (39%)	.29*	16 (5%)	24 (23%)	-.91*
International Student & Scholar Services	215 (69%)	38 (37%)	.94*	28 (9%)	33 (32%)	-.81*
Workout Center (Gym)	216 (69%)	38 (37%)	.97*	152 (49%)	30 (29%)	.52
LGBT Resource Center	236 (75%)	45 (44%)	.83*	29 (9%)	8 (8%)	.03
Library	218 (70%)	35 (34%)	.94*	190 (61%)	41 (40%)	.53*
Neighborhood Housing Office	209 (67%)	45 (44%)	.61*	53 (17%)	13 (13%)	.13*
Health Center	232 (74%)	42 (41%)	.95*	100 (32%)	19 (18%)	.32*
(Mascot) Academic	232 (74%)	44 (43%)	.80*	78 (25%)	17 (17%)	.28*

Support Services (Tutoring)						
Resident Assistants in Housing	217 (69%)	43 (42%)	.81*	57 (18%)	13 (13%)	.24*
Student Organizations	235 (75%)	42 (41%)	.89*	74 (24%)	18 (17%)	.27*
Student Success Center	208 (66%)	43 (42%)	.61*	44 (14%)	12 (12%)	.06
Study Abroad Office	222 (71%)	47 (46%)	.66*	35 (11%)	11 (11%)	.00
Women's Resource Center	219 (70%)	48 (47%)	.60*	31 (10%)	7 (7%)	.09

An * indicates statistically significant.

Table 5

Standardized Coefficients and Correlations of Predictor Variables of Experiencing a Turning Point as a Discriminant Function

Predictors	Correlation coefficients with discriminant functions	Standardized coefficients for discriminant functions
	Function 1	Function 1
Social Adjustment General	-.40	-.60
Attachment General	.81	.94

Table 6

Variables Included in the Stepwise Discriminant Analysis

	Wilks' Lambda	F
Attachment general	.99	12.70*
Social general	.96	4.98*

An * indicates statistically significant.

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Appendix A:
Online Survey

University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee
Consent to Participate in Online Survey Research

Study Title: Transition to College – An Acculturation Comparison

Person Responsible for Research: Mike Allen and Kim Omachinski

Study Description: The purpose of this research study is to compare the acculturation process of domestic and international students in their transition to college. Approximately 500 subjects will participate in this study. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete an online survey that will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. The questions will ask questions about college social and academic situations, a comparison of life before college and during college, as well as if you have experienced a turning point in college to date.

Risks / Benefits: Risks to participants are considered minimal. Students will only lose a few minutes of time if they participate in the survey. Collection of data and survey responses using the internet involves the same risks that a person would encounter in everyday use of the internet, such as breach of confidentiality. While the researchers have taken every reasonable step to protect your confidentiality, there is always the possibility of interception or hacking of the data by third parties that is not under the control of the research team.

There will be no costs for participating. Benefits of participating include possible extra credit. At the end of the anonymous survey, participants can elect to receive extra credit by providing their name and course for which they will receive extra credit so their names will be provided to the appropriate instructors. Names will not be connected to the survey in any way. In addition, this research will help further research and possibly services on campus as well.

Limits to Confidentiality: Identifying information such as your name and email will be collected for research purposes for the distribution of extra credit. Data will be retained on the Qualtrics website server for two years and will be deleted after this time. However, data may exist on backups or server logs beyond the timeframe of this research project. Data transferred from the survey site will be saved in an encrypted format for five years. Only Mike Allen, Kim Omachinski, and Tae Seop Lim will have access to the data collected by this study. However, the Institutional Review Board at UW-Milwaukee or appropriate federal agencies like the Office for Human Research Protections may review this study's records. The research team will remove your identifying information before downloading the data and all study results will be reported without identifying information so that no one viewing the results will ever be able to match you with your responses.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose to not answer any of the questions or withdraw from this study at any time without

penalty. Your decision will not change any present or future relationship with the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee.

Who do I contact for questions about the study: For more information about the study or study procedures, contact Kim Omachinski.

Who do I contact for questions about my rights or complaints towards my treatment as a research subject? Contact the UWM IRB at 414-229-3173 or irbinfo@uwm.edu

Research Subject's Consent to Participate in Research:

By entering this survey, you are indicating that you have read the consent form, you are age 18 or older and that you voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

Thank you!

Are you a degree seeking international student? Yes/No

What is your home country? (type in)

How many years have you lived in the U.S.? (Please type only a number. For example, if you have been in the U.S. for 3 years and 6 months, write 3.5)

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS – Acculturation Survey:

This section is asking you to consider your lifestyle while in your home country compared to US college students the US. Are your experiences and behaviors similar to those of your co-nationals in your home country? Are they similar to other US college students? Use the following scale to indicate how similar your various experiences in daily life are compared to your home country (co-nationals) and US college.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
Not at all similar Very similar

Rate your experiences and behaviors to other co-national students and US college students using the 1-5 scale, where 1 is not at all similar and 5 is very similar.

- | | Home Country | US College |
|---|--------------|------------|
| 1. Clothing | | |
| 2. Amount of homework | | |
| 3. General knowledge | | |
| 4. Food | | |
| 5. Religious beliefs | | |
| 6. Material comfort / Standard of living | | |
| 7. Accommodation / Residence | | |
| 8. Recreational activities | | |
| 9. Self-identity | | |
| 10. Family life | | |
| 11. Values | | |
| 12. Friendships | | |
| 13. Communication styles | | |
| 14. Cultural activities | | |
| 15. Language | | |
| 16. Perceptions of other high school students | | |
| 17. Perceptions of other college students | | |
| 18. Political ideology | | |
| 19. World view | | |
| 20. Social customs | | |
| 21. Employment activities | | |

Are you originally from Wisconsin? Yes/No

Did you go to high school in the large public urban city in the Midwest or one of its suburbs? Yes/No

What state are you from? (type in)

What is your ethnic background?

- White
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- Asian / Pacific Islander
- Other

DOMESTIC STUDENTS – Acculturation Survey:

This section is asking you to consider your lifestyle while in high school compared to college. Are your experiences and behaviors similar to high school? Are they similar to other college students? Use the following scale to indicate how similar your various experiences in daily life are compared to high school and college.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 Not at all similar Very similar

Rate your experiences and behaviors to other high school students and college students using the 1-5 scale, where 1 is not at all similar and 5 is very similar.

- | | High School | College |
|---|-------------|---------|
| 1. Clothing | | |
| 2. Amount of homework | | |
| 3. General knowledge | | |
| 4. Food | | |
| 5. Religious beliefs | | |
| 6. Material comfort / Standard of living | | |
| 7. Accommodation / Residence | | |
| 8. Recreational activities | | |
| 9. Self-identity | | |
| 10. Family life | | |
| 11. Values | | |
| 12. Friendships | | |
| 13. Communication styles | | |
| 14. Cultural activities | | |
| 15. Language | | |
| 16. Perceptions of other high school students | | |
| 17. Perceptions of other college students | | |
| 18. Political ideology | | |

19. World view
20. Social customs
21. Employment activities

Please agree or disagree with the following statements about your personal experience in college: (2 categories: agree and disagree)

1. I have not had any low points this semester, I am very happy at college.
2. I have had some low points this semester, but I am happy here at college.
3. I now feel down and/or worried about my being at college.
4. I think I am at my lowest point of college right now.
5. I think I passed the lowest point of college, and I'm now feeling positive about being in college.
6. I have overcome my anxiety about college, and I now feel positive about my life in college.
7. I passed the lowest point of college, I am not happy, and I want to drop out.
8. I passed the lowest point of college, I am not happy, and I plan to transfer to a new college.
9. I was not happy at this college, but I have found strategies to cope, and resources to help me continue at this college.

Who helped you recover from your low point at college and turn around? (Please check all that apply)

- Instructor
- Advisor
- Counselor
- High School / Home Country Friend
- College / American Friend
- Family member(s)
- Classmate(s)
- Roommate(s)

What actions did you take to help move from feeling low to feeling better in college?

- I used online resources
- I learned more about the college itself
- I sought advice from individuals on campus
- I asked for help from available resources on campus
- I matured as a college student
- I did nothing

What else have you done to help you recover from the turning point (low point) at college? (open ended question)

Please respond whether you are aware of and / or used the following resources on campus. (2 categories: Resources Used, Resources Aware of)

Student Success Center
 Resident Assistant in Housing
 Student Organizations
 Health Center
 Women's Resource Center
 (Mascot) Academic Support Center (Tutoring)
 Study Abroad Office
 International Student and Scholar Services Office
 Career Development Center
 LGBT Resource Center
 Neighborhood Housing Office
 Financial Aid
 Graduate School
 Library
 Computer Lab
 Workout Center (Gym)
 Academic Advising Office

Please respond if you have joined and been involved in at least one organization in the following categories (3 categories listed: high school, first year of college, currently):

Service (volunteer activities, boys/girls club, YMCA, etc.)
 Sports (soccer, basketball, football, gymnastics, swimming, cheerleading, etc.)
 Religious (church youth group, church choir, etc.)
 Academic (student government, school newspaper, debate, etc.)
 Arts (dance, band, art, chorus, drama, etc.)

SACQ Survey Instrument (removed due to copyright purposes) 67 items used

What is your age? Please type number only. Example: If you are 20 years old, type 20

What is your gender?

Male
 Female
 Other

Are you currently married?

Yes
 No

Is this your first semester at college?

Yes
 No

How many semesters have you been at college? (type in response)

Have you previously been in active military service?

Yes

No

Are you a transfer student?

Yes

No

Are you a first generation college student?

Yes

No

What type of student are you?

Bachelors

Masters

Doctoral

Non-Degree

ESL only

How many miles away from home are you while studying at college?

Less than 20

20-100

101-500

500-1000

From outside the US

Do you live in on-campus housing at college?

Yes

No

Do you have at least one roommate?

Yes

No

How many hours do you work per week?

None

1-10

11-20

21-30

31-40+

Who do you spend the most time with while attending college?

- Roommates
- High school friends
- Co-nationals
- Classmates
- Club members
- Remain alone

Does your family help you pay for school?

- Yes
- No

What is the highest education level of each of your parents? (2 categories: Mother, Father):

- High school
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- PhD/MD/JD

*Note: Specific college and city names removed from survey and referred to as "college" or "large public urban city in the Midwest"

Appendix B:

Study Table – First Year Experience and Transition

Study Table – First Year Experience and Transition

Author(s)	Research Methodology	Implications for Research or Practice / Summary
Andrade (2008)	Qualitative	International students' perspectives about first-year seminars and the impact on student adjustment
Barefoot (2000)	Non-research	Summary of first-year experience issues, challenges and improvements
Campbell & Campbell (1997)	Quantitative	Mentor program positively correlated with GPA. Academic achievement and retention not related to the gender and/or ethnicity of the mentor or student.
Chaskes (1996)	N/A – Frame or Model	Comparison of first-year experience of students to immigrants.
Clark (2005)	Qualitative	Positive and negative challenges inside and outside the institution.
Cosgrove (1986)	Quantitative	Students in experimental group possessed increased confidence in abilities, setting goals, and making decisions. Mentoring program for freshman.
Inkelas & Weisman (2003)	Sample study	Living-learning students show higher levels of engagement in on campus activities with better academic outcomes.

Inkelas et al. (2007)	Quantitative survey	First-generation college students in living learning communities report more successful academic and social transition to college.
Peck (2011)	N/A	Description of peer involvement advising program and Involvement Center.
Purdie & Rosser (2011)	Quantitative	First-year students in living-learning communities and first-year experience programs. Retention improved when faculty link curricular and residential experience.
Schrader & Brown (2008)	Sample study	FYE programs were not valuable in terms of programmatic objectives, but showed greater gains in terms of resources.
Solomon (2007)	Qualitative	The feeling of “not belonging” in math is a theme of interviews. Institutional culture of beliefs about ability effect students’ experiences.
Terenzini et al. (1994)	Qualitative	Multiple schools in study used to determine how students become involved at college.
Trice (2001)	Case Studies	Faculty members at three Institutions were interviewed about what they view to be challenges of graduate international students (including cultural adjustment, English proficiency, academic and personal issues).

Turner (1992)	Quantitative and Qualitative	Survey and open-ended questionnaire about study skills and behaviors. Results demonstrate college academic support programs and high school focus on students developing study behaviors.
Van Schalkwyk et al. (2012)	Qualitative	Focus groups and thematic analysis regarding the early assessment program and how the results are perceived. A description on how early assessment affected students' approach to learning and success.
Wilcox, Winn, & Fyvie-Gauld (2005)	Qualitative	To successfully integrate to campus, students need social and academic support (which yields better retention).
Zhao & Kuh (2004)	Quantitative	Large sample at four colleges looks at how living communities help with engagement. Study uses first-year and senior students.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

EDUCATION:

PhD in Communication, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM), December 2014

Dissertation Title: The Transition to College – An Acculturation Comparison of Domestic and International Students

Advisor: Dr. Mike Allen

Committee Members: Simone Conceição, Tae Seop Lim, Rob Ricigliano, Kristin Ruggiero

MA in Communication, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM), May 2006

Thesis: An Evaluation of Cross-Cultural Training Methods Used in the Acculturation Process of ESL Students

Advisor: Dr. Nancy Burrell

BA, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire (UWEC), August 1995

Majors: Spanish and Latin American Studies

Minors: Business Administration and Mathematics

EDUCATION ABROAD:

Fulbright Award for International Education Administrators to Japan, June 2012

Nur University; Santa Cruz, Bolivia, Summer 2005 Alliance for Conflict Transformation Program in International Conflict Resolution

University of Ghana – Legon; Accra, Ghana, Winterim 2005

Universidad de Valladolid; Valladolid, Spain, Spring 1993

Cuauhnáhuac Spanish Language School; Cuernavaca, Mexico, Summer 1989 (High School Program)

Fluent in Spanish, proficient in French, and basic phrases in Mandarin Chinese and Japanese

HIGHER EDUCATION EXPERIENCE:

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM), Milwaukee, WI

Senior Immigration Coordinator

Jan. 2007 to present

Center for International Education – International Student & Scholar Services

Immigration and Admissions Office Assistant

May 2005 to Jan. 2007

Center for International Education – International Student & Scholar Services

Graduate Study Abroad Peer Advisor

April 2004 to May 2005

Center for International Education – Overseas Programs & Partnerships

INSTRUCTIONAL EXPERIENCE:**University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM), Milwaukee, WI***Instructor, Global Studies* **Sept. 2009 to present**
*Center for International Education**Graduate Teaching Assistant and Lecturer* **Aug. 2004 to July 2006**
*Department of Communication***Wuhan University, Wuhan, China***English as a Second Language Instructor and Speech Contest Lead Judge* **July to Aug. 2007****Kaplan Test Prep and Admissions, Milwaukee, WI***Instructor – GRE and TOEFL Exams* **Jan. to Aug. 2007****Futura Language Professionals, Pewaukee, WI****Nov. 2003 to Aug. 2006***Spanish Instructor***National American University, Bloomington, MN****March 2000 to Nov. 2001***Spanish Instructor***BUSINESS EXPERIENCE:****Deloitte & Touche, LLP, Milwaukee, WI****May 2002 to Oct. 2003***International Human Resources Associate (Experienced Expatriate Consultant)*

- Initial training period conducted through Anderson, LLP in Milwaukee, WI until company closed (Nov. 2001 to May 2002). Services to clients continued afterwards through Deloitte & Touche.

Department 56, Inc., Eden Prairie, MN**June 1999 to Nov. 2001***Consumer Services Specialist***Sedgwick of Minnesota, Inc. Minneapolis, MN****Nov. 1995 to June 1999***Claims Examiner (Bilingual)*

PUBLICATIONS:

- Omachinski, K.** (2013). Communication and cultural implications of short-term study abroad experiences on engineering students. *Connexions* 1(2), 43-77.
- Allen, M., Bourhis, J., Burrell, N., Cole, A.W., Cramer, E., Dilbeck, K., England, N., Hawkins, J.M., Maier, M., Mullane, R., **Omachinski, K.**, Omori, K., DeCloedt-Pincon, D., Victor, A., Willes, K.L., & Zmyslinski, A.N. (2013). Comparing communication doctoral programs, alumni, and faculty: The use of Google Scholar. *Journal of the Association for Communication Administration*, 32(2), 55-68.
- Kim, S., Allen, M., Gattoni, A., Grimes, D., Hermann, A., Huang, H., Kim, J., Lu, S., Maier, M., May, A., **Omachinski, K.**, Omori, K., Tenzek, K., Turkiewicz, K., & Zhang, Y. (2012). Testing an additive model for the effectiveness of evidence on persuasiveness of a message. *Social Influence*, 1-13. doi:10.1080/15534510.2012.658285
- Omachinski, K.** (2007). U.S. National parks. In A.M. Hancock-Hodges, C. Hancock, and M. Li (Eds.) *Learning English through United States culture* (pp. 34-38). Columbus, OH: Wuhan University.

GUEST LECTURER, PRESENTER, AND COLLOQUIA:

- Omachinski, K.**, Thomas, B., Zlatkova, T., & Grzeca, J. (2014, November). *Hiring international students*. Presentation for International Education Week at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Capati, C. A., Krough, A., Loomis, C., & **Omachinski, K.** (2014, November). *Global connection: Applying cultural and language dexterity in work and in life*. Presentation for International Education Week at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2014, October). *Intercultural communication in business writing*. Guest lecturer for the Business Writing Course, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.**, & Wolf, D. (2014, August). *Intercultural training for resident assistants at UWM*. Invited presenters to the Resident Assistant Training, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2014, February). *Crossing cultures: An intercultural simulation*. Guest lecturer for the Global Studies International Careers Course, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.**, & Gosz, S. (2013, March). *Fulbright program*. Colloquium presented to the Department of Communication, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.**, Singer, J., & Kaye, C. (2013, March). *From application to graduation: Issues for international students*. Invited Presenters for the Enhancing Advising Group, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.**, & Beisser, K. (2013, February). *Working with international students*. Invited Presenters for the Student Affairs Staff, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2013, February). *Intercultural communication in a global community*. Guest lecturer for the Global Studies International Careers Course, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.

- Omachinski, K.**, Corner, A.J., Wolf, D. (2012, August). *Intercultural training for resident assistants at UWM*. Invited presenters to the Resident Assistant Training, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2012, April). *Internationalizing your resume*. Guest lecturer for the Global Studies International Careers Course, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2012, February). *International education and intercultural communication*. Guest lecturer for the Global Studies Think Tank Course-International Careers, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Singer, J., & **Omachinski, K.** (2011, February). *From application to graduation*. Presentation for the Advisors and Counselors Network, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2011, February). *Intercultural communication in the workplace*. Guest lecturer for the Global Studies Think Tank Course-International Careers, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2010, October). *Cultural chaos*. Guest lecturer to conduct a cross-cultural simulation in the Global Studies Think Tank Course, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2010, February). *Intercultural communication and business*. Guest lecturer for the Global Studies Think Tank Course-International Careers, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2009, October). *Cultural chaos: An interactive game*. Guest lecturer to conduct a cross-cultural simulation in the Global Studies Study Abroad Think Tank Course, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2009, March). *International careers*. Guest lecturer for the Cultural Training and Adjustment Communication Course, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2009, February). *Intercultural communication and business*. Guest lecturer for the Global Studies Think Tank Course-International Careers, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2008, December). *Communication careers*. Invited member of alumni discussion panel for Proseminar Communication Course, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.**, & Tang, T. (2008, April). *One of three furnaces of China – Wuhan*. Presentation for the Chinese Round Table, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2008, April). *Pre-departure intercultural orientation for EMBA students in China*. Presentation for the Overseas Programs and Partnerships office and business students, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2007, December). *Communication careers*. Invited member of alumni discussion panel for Proseminar Communication Course, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2007, October). *Study abroad for graduate students*. Presentation for the Department of Communication Graduate Students, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2007, March). *Culture café Bolivia*. Presentation for the Center for International Education and Culture Café, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.

Omachinski, K. (2006, April). *Appropriate cross-cultural training methods used in the acculturation process of ESL international students*. Paper presented at Department of Communication Colloquium, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.

Omachinski, K. (2005, October). *Conflict resolution in Bolivia*. Presentation at Department of Communication Colloquium, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.

PRESENTATIONS:

Reynolds, M., Chanson Davenport, D., Frisby, B., Grewe, B., Lutgen-Sandvik, P., Medjowsky, C., **Omachinski, K.**, Polk, D., Wagner, P., Young, L. (2014, November). *Exploring three-year PhD programs: Financial and practical implications*. Presentation at the National Communication Association Conference, Chicago, IL.

Howard, T., Eng, J., Otis-DeGrau, A., & **Omachinski, K.** (2014, October). *So you want to get a job in international education, do you?* Presentation at the National Association for International Educators Region V Conference, Grand Rapids, MI.

Jones, P., **Omachinski, K.**, Simek, J., & Potempa, S. (2014, May). *When I first came to conferences I had a lot of questions, now I have many of the answers... Get the spark back through personal/professional development*. Presentation at the National Association for International Educators Annual Conference, San Diego, CA.

Brann, M., **Omachinski, K.**, Russell, L., Phalen, S., Johnson, M.A., Priddis, D., & Aust, C.F. (2014, April). *Elevating research into practice: Examples of interpersonal and small group health communication research*. Panel presented at the Central States Communication Association Conference, Minneapolis, MN.

Vorell, M.S., Priddis, D., **Omachinski, K.**, Gunn, A.M., Walters-Kramer, L., & Moore, M.A. (2014, April). *Toxic communication in organizations*. Panel presented at the Central States Communication Association Conference, Minneapolis, MN.

Omachinski, K. (2014, February). *Breaking down cultural barriers: Engaging international students on your college campus*. Presentation at the Student Personnel Young Professionals Learning Network Conference, Milwaukee, WI.

Omachinski, K. (2013, November). *Communication strategies to connect members working in virtual teams*. Great Ideas for Teaching Students presentation at the National Communication Association Conference, Washington, D.C.

Willes, K., & **Omachinski, K.** (2013, November). *Connecting colleagues through LGBT training in the workplace*. Training and Development Activity presentation at the National Communication Association Conference, Washington, D.C.

Foundos, A., **Omachinski, K.**, Schneider, T., Daniele, G., & Hope, J. (2013, November). *Why YOU should participate in NAFSA's Advocacy day!* Presentation at the National Association for International Educators Bi-Regional (V and VI) Conference, Indianapolis, IN.

Howard, T., Bradshaw, G., **Omachinski, K.**, Ryser Garcia, E., Schieman, H., & Diehl, K. (2013, November). *So you want to get a job (or move on) in International Education, do you?* Presentation at the National Association for International Educators Bi-Regional (V and VI) Conference, Indianapolis, IN.

- Omachinski, K., & Simek, J.** (2013, November). *Challenges and benefits of working with faith based organizations*. Presentation at the National Association for International Educators Bi-Regional (V and VI) Conference, Indianapolis, IN.
- Simek, J., **Omachinski, K.**, Potempa, S., & Jones, P. (2013, November). *When I first came to conferences I had a lot of the questions, now I have many of the answers... what is there for me?* Presentation at the National Association for International Educators Bi-Regional (V and VI) Conference, Indianapolis, IN.
- Omachinski, K.**, Kaempfer, S., Roosevelt, K., & Matera, H. (2013, September). *NOT lost in translation: International student collaboration across campus*. Presentation at the Wisconsin Academic Advising Association Conference, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.**, & Matera, H. (2013, September). *Culture chaos: An interactive game*. Presentation (Cross-Cultural Simulation) at the Wisconsin Academic Advising Association Conference, Milwaukee, WI.
- Cook, K., Lueders, A., Webb, N., Kunkel, A., Molen, S.T., Beck, S., Schreiber, L, **Omachinski, K.**, Smith, K., & Bolen, D. (2013, April). *From friendly climates to faux clients: New techniques for teaching small group communication*. Panel presentation at the Central States Communication Association Conference, Kansas City, MO. ***Interpersonal and Small Group Communication Top Reviewed Panel Submission***
- Omachinski, K.** (2013, April). *Cultural adjustment barriers: How social support can reduce stress for international students in the United States*. Paper presentation at the Central States Communication Association Conference, Kansas City, MO.
- Weismann, K., Herakova, L., **Omachinski, K.**, & Nesemeier, H. (2013, April). *Diverse (im)possibilities, teaching ideas, and activities for seemingly homogenous groups of students: Applying intercultural communication concepts in any classroom*. Panel presentation at the Central States Communication Association Conference, Kansas City, MO.
- Omachinski, K.** (2013, February). *Discovering your path to working in international education*. Presentation at the Student Personnel and Young Professionals Learning Network Conference, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2012, October). *Preparing resident assistants for intercultural encounters: A training program to foster intercultural competence in the residence halls*. Presentation at the Society for Intercultural Education, Training, and Research USA Conference, Minneapolis, MN.
- Omachinski, K.**, & Belmas, S. (2012, April). *F-1 case studies*. Presentation at the Wisconsin Association for International Educators, Appleton, WI.
- Omachinski, K.**, & Grenz, G. (2012, April). *Orientation burnout: Recharging your batteries for a new and improved international student orientation!* Presentation at the Wisconsin Association for International Educators, Appleton, WI.
- Omachinski, K.**, & Schmidt, T. (2012, April). *Immigration open dialogue*. Presentation at the Wisconsin Association for International Educators, Appleton, WI.
- Omachinski, K.**, & Simek, J. (2012, April). *Challenges and benefits of working with faith based organizations*. Presentation at the Wisconsin Association for International Educators, Appleton, WI.
- Omachinski, K.**, Simek, J., & Belmas, S. (2012, April). *F-1 basics workshop*. Presentation at the Wisconsin Association for International Educators, Appleton, WI.

- Wolf, D., **Omachinski, K.**, & Kaempfer, S. (2012, April). *Creating a living learning community that increases global engagement*. Presentation at the Wisconsin Association for International Educators, Appleton, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2012, March). *Intercultural challenges working overseas*. Great Ideas for Teaching Students (GIFTS) Submission. Presentation at the Central States Communication Association Conference, Cleveland, OH.
- Howard, T., Ryser Garcia, E., **Omachinski, K.**, Otis-DeGrau, A., & Bradshaw, G. (2011, November). *So you want to get a job in international education, do you?* Presentation at the National Association for International Educators Region V Conference, Champaign, IL.
- Omachinski, K.**, & Belmas, S. (2011, November). *How long until happy hour? Creative solutions when you're tired of responding to "quick" questions*. Presentation at the National Association for International Educators Region V Conference, Champaign, IL.
- Wolf, D., **Omachinski, K.**, & Aoki, K. (2011, November). *Co-curricular best practices: International education week*. Presentation at the National Association for International Educators Region V Conference, Champaign, IL.
- Omachinski, K.**, & Danner, T. (2011, November). *Working in international education*. Presentation for International Education Week at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Herrman, A., **Omachinski, K.**, Kartch, F., & Burrell, N. (2011, November). *The displacement of blame in conflict: The use of internal and external attributions in the Real Housewives of New York City*. Presentation at the National Communication Association Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- Omachinski, K.** (2011, November). *American values in the global workplace*. Great Ideas for Teaching Students (GIFTS) Submission. Presentation at the National Communication Association Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- Joseph, A., **Omachinski, K.**, & Wolf, D. (2011, April). *Co-curricular best practices: International education week*. Presentation at the Wisconsin Association for International Educators Conference (Won Best of State), Green Bay, WI. ***Won Best of State***
- Omachinski, K.**, & Belmas, S. (2011, April). *How long until happy hour? Creative solutions when you're tired of responding to "quick" questions*. Presentation at the Wisconsin Association for International Educators Conference, Green Bay, WI.
- Omachinski, K.**, & Foundos, A. (2011, April). *From application to graduation: Issues for international students*. Presentation at the Wisconsin Association for International Educators Conference, Green Bay, WI.
- Schmidt, T., **Omachinski, K.**, & Simek, J. (2011, April). *F-1 basics for beginners*. Workshop at the Wisconsin Association for International Educators Conference, Green Bay, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2010, November). *Cultural chaos: A cross-cultural simulation*. Presentation for International Education Week, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Pucci, S.L., **Omachinski, K.**, Gayhart, C., & Morris, K. (2010, November). *Careers across the map: Teaching English abroad*. Presentation for International Education Week at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.**, & Gattoni, A. (2010, November). *Online resources for SoTL researchers: Assessment of a SoTL website*. Paper presented at the National Communication Association Convention, San Francisco, CA.

- Allen, M., Kim, S., Antos, A., Gattoni, A., Grimes, D., Huang, H., Kim, J., Lu, S., Maier, M., May, A., **Omachinski, K.**, Tenzek, K., Turkiewicz, K.L., & Zhang, Y. (2010, November). *Testing an additive model for the effectiveness of evidence on the persuasiveness of a message*. Paper presented at the National Communication Association Convention, San Francisco. ***Top Paper Award***
- Wilgus, J., Pucci, S.L., **Omachinski, K.**, & Hetland, L. (2009, November). *Careers across the map: Teaching English abroad*. Presentation for International Education Week at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Gattoni, A., **Omachinski, K.**, Meyers, R.A., MacKenzie, J., McKerlie, R., & Morrow, L. (2009, October). *UK and US efforts to support engagement with SoTL online: Increased efficacy and collaboration*. Presentation at the International Society of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Bloomington, IN.
- Omachinski, K.** (2009, October). *Signs, roles and boundaries: Mental health issues with international and study abroad students*. Presentation at the National Association for International Educators Region V Conference, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2009, October). *Social Security numbers and DMV issues for international students*. Session chair at the National Association for International Educators Region V Conference, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.**, Matera, H.V., & McGraw, R. (2009, April). *Cultural chaos: An interactive game*. Presentation at the Wisconsin Association for International Educators Conference, Madison, WI.
- Matera, H.V., & **Omachinski, K.** (2009, April). *Know your rights: Basic safety and legal rights of international students and scholars*. Presentation at the Wisconsin Association for International Educators Conference, Madison, WI.
- Omachinski, K.**, Matera, H.V., & McGraw, R. (2008, November). *Cultural chaos: An interactive game*. Presentation for International Education Week, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.
- Omachinski, K.** (2007, November). *An evaluation of cross-cultural training methods used in the acculturation process of ESL international students*. Paper presented at the National Communication Association Conference, Chicago, IL.
- Omachinski, K.** (2006, November). *Paper or plastic? Utilizing appropriate cross-cultural training methods during international student orientation*. Paper presented at the National Association for International Educators Region V Conference, Madison, WI.
- Lochner, S., **Omachinski, K.**, Polnaszek, E., Wilcox, A., & Pugh, E. (2006, November). *Trusting your colleagues: Students & professional staff working together*. Presentation at the National Association for International Educators Region V Conference, Madison, WI.
- Lochner, S., Swan, M., Polnaszek, E., & **Omachinski, K.** (2006, April). *A return ticket: Mutual benefits of returned students working in a study abroad office*. Presentation at the Wisconsin and Illinois combined National Association for International Educators Conference, Lake Geneva, WI.

ACCEPTED CONFERENCE PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS:

- Omachinski, K.** (2015, April). *Breaking the stigma of mental health issues with international students*. Paper accepted to the Central States Communication Association Conference, Madison, WI.

Omachinski, K., Weismann, K., Myerchin, A., Priddis, D., & Nicolini, K. (2015, April). *Converging student groups: Integrating non-traditional students in the classroom and in the campus community*. Panel accepted to the Central States Communication Association Conference, Madison, WI.

Lie, S., Omori, K., Mutua, E., **Omachinski, K.**, Villamil, A., & Ahn, S. (2015, April). *Beyond foreignness: Converging foreign and local experiences to enrich intercultural communication/intercultural interactions on campus and surrounding community*. Panel accepted to the Central States Communication Association Conference, Madison, WI.

ONGOING RESEARCH PROJECTS:

Allen, M., Burrell, N., Cole, A., Cramer, E., Hawkins, J., Nicolini, K., **Omachinski, K.**, Pincon, D., Priddis, D., Victor, A., Zymslinski, A. (in progress). Aurora health project.

Omachinski, K., & Allen, M. (in progress). Factors attributed to international students' acculturation in the United States.

Omachinski, K. (in progress). Fostering intercultural competence in the residences halls through RA training.

Omachinski, K. (in progress). Acculturating to college: A comparison of domestic and international students' experience at a U.S. institution of higher education.

SERVICE:

University Service

Category A Sub-Committee (provides programming to UW Milwaukee staff members)

- Member 2007-2014
- Co-Chair 2009-2010
- Marketing Coordinator 2008-2009, 2011
- D2L Facilitator and Sub-Committee Member 2008

Awards Committee (selects award recipients at UW Milwaukee for service and performance)

- Co-Chair 2013-2014
- Secretary 2012-2013
- Member 2011-2014

Codification Committee (codifies bylaws for each committee at UW Milwaukee)

- Member 2009-2012

Orientation Committee (develops and delivers orientations to new and current staff at UW Milwaukee)

- Member 2014-2016
- Appointed Academic Staff Representative in 2011 for one year appointment

Victor Vega Scholarship Selection Committee

- Chair and Member 2008-2014

UWM Open House

- Trolley Tour Guide 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012
- CIE Booth Participant

Diversity Career Fair UWM

- Event Planning Team 2013, 2014
- Registration Volunteer 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013
- Just in Time Career Fair Volunteer 2012

Commencement Marshal and Name Reader

- May 2008-2014
- December 2008-2014

Center for International Education Service

- Center for International Education Open House – 2009, 2012
- Center for International Education Welcome Reception Planner 2010
- Center for International Education Event Planning Committee 2008, 2010, 2011, and 2014
- Member of the Center for International Education Social Committee
- Saudi Arabian Cultural Exhibit Participant 2010
- International Student Tax Workshop 2010, 2014
- Coordinator for H1B to Permanent Residency Workshops provided to UW Milwaukee and other international students in the Milwaukee area 2008-2014
- UW Milwaukee Executive MBA Summer Study Abroad Program Orientation (for students going to China) – Gave presentation on China to business students for the Overseas Programs and Partnerships office 2008
- Helped visiting students from the Middle East (MEPI) by receiving UW Milwaukee van training and being a tour guide of Milwaukee and chaperoning them to events in the Milwaukee area 2008

Additional UWM Service

- Member of the Academic Staff Holiday Party and Summer Picnic Planning Committees 2007-2011
- Greeting, Set up and Clean Up for the Employee Development Awards Celebration – 2008 and 2010
- Co-coordinated Center for International Education’s Advisors’ Retreat 2010
- Member of the UW Milwaukee Programming Committee 2008-present
- Floor Captain (Garland Hall) 2008-present
- Pantherfest –2008, 2009, and 2011
- Panther Prowl – 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014
- Graduate Student Welcome – 2007 and 2008
- Sophomore Honors Marshal (reader) – 2008
- Senior Honors Marshal (reader) –2008
- Chancellor’s Inauguration Usher – 2011
- University Band Usher 2010

- Wind Ensemble and Symphony Band Usher (multiple performances each year) 2008-2013
- Blood Drive Volunteer 2007-2013
- Wisconsin State Fair Booth 2008 and 2009
- UW Milwaukee Grand Viennese Ball 2008
- Hunger Clean Up Food Drive Bag Distribution 2008
- Oklahoma Usher 2008
- Nicaragua U-Visit with the Roberto Hernandez Center 2008

Communication Department

- Part-time and Non-Traditional Student Representative for the Department of Communication 2011-2012 and 2013-2014
- COMM PROM Committee 2010 and 2011

Community Service

Irishfest Milwaukee, WI

- 2005-2014 Main Gate Volunteer

Mexican Fiesta Milwaukee, WI

- 2009-2014 Food and Beverage Volunteer Ticket Vendor, 2012 Main Gate Ticket Sale Volunteer

Milwaukee International Film Festival

- 2012 Festival Volunteer – Ticket Collector

Core El Centro

- 2008 and 2009 Bilingual (Spanish/English) Volunteer at their 2nd and 3rd Annual Community Service Project for Latino Families

Milwaukee Debate League

- 2008 Trained as judge for local debates

Professional Service

Classification Society

- 2013 Conference Volunteer – registration, local arrangements, and opening reception

CSCA (Central States Communication Association)

- 2014 Paper Reviewer for the Intercultural Division
- 2014 and 2015 Paper and Panel Reviewer for the Instructional Resources Division
- 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015 Paper Reviewer for Undergraduate Research Division
- 2013, 2014, and 2015 Paper Reviewer for GIFTS (Great Ideas for Teaching Students) Division for Conference Submissions
- 2011 Conference Volunteer – Registration Desk

ICA (International Communication Association)

- 2010 Peer Conference Paper Reviewer

MCIE (Milwaukee Council for International Educators)

- 2004-2013 Assist when UWM hosts event each year, present on immigration topics, organize guest speakers at monthly meetings

NAFSA (National Association for International Educators)

- 2013 Inducted as NAFSA Trainer Corps Member for F-1 Basics
- 2013 Session Reviewer for NAFSA's annual conference for the Immigration Division
- 2010 Trained new Region V conference planner
- 2009 Region V Conference Planner – organized and planned entire conference with the highest attendance in the Region as of that year (over 400 attendees). Worked with local arrangements team to facilitate all sessions, operate registration, set up sessions, arrange for all visitors, and collaborate with Region V team.
- 2009 Region V Team Member

NCA (National Communication Association)

- 2009-2014 Paper Reviewer for GIFTS (Great Ideas for Teaching Students) Division for Conference Submissions
- 2010 and 2011 Conference Volunteer – Session Moderator

WAIE (Wisconsin Association for International Educators)

- 2011-2014 International Student and Scholar Services Programming Representative
- 2012 Session Reviewer for Immigration Submissions
- 2011 and 2012 F-1 Basics Trainer

SIETAR (Society for Intercultural Education, Training, and Research)

- 2012 Conference Session Manager Volunteer

HONORS AND AWARDS:

Fulbright Award - Recipient for International Educators to Japan, 2012
 Phi Kappa Phi Love of Learning Scholarship, 2013
 Phi Kappa Phi Inductee, 2010
 Phi Kappa Phi Scholarship, 2010
 John Paul Jones UWM Scholarship, 2009 and 2011
 Melvin H. Miller Award for Highest GPA (4.0) in Communication Department, 2006
 Outstanding Service Award in Communication Department, 2006
 Indefinite status as advisor at UWM (equivalent of faculty tenure), 2012
 Inducted as Trainer Corps member of NAFSA, 2013

Top Papers, Panels, and Presentations:

Cook, K., Lueders, A., Webb, N., Kunkel, A., Molen, S.T., Beck, S., Schreiber, L, **Omachinski, K.**, Smith, K., & Bolen, D. (2013, April). *From friendly climates to faux clients: New techniques for teaching small group communication*. Panel accepted to Central States Communication Association Conference, Kansas City, MO. ***Interpersonal and Small Group Communication Top Reviewed Panel Submission***

Joseph, A., **Omachinski, K.**, & Wolf, D. (2011, April). *Co-curricular best practices: International education week*. Presentation at the Wisconsin Association for International Educators Conference (Won Best of State), Green Bay, WI. ***Won Best of State***

Allen, M., Kim, S., Antos, A., Gattoni, A., Grimes, D., Huang, H., Kim, J., Lu, S., Maier, M., May, A., **Omachinski, K.**, Tenzek, K., Turkiewicz, K.L., & Zhang, Y. (2010, November). *Testing an additive model for the effectiveness of evidence on the persuasiveness of a message*. Paper presented at the National Communication Association Convention, San Francisco. ***Top Paper Award***

MEMBERSHIPS & PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS:

CSCA (Central States Communication Association) 2011-present
 ISSOTL (International Society of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning) 2009
 MCIE (Milwaukee Council for International Educators) 2004-present
 NAFSA (National Association for International Educators) 2003-present
 NCA (National Communication Association) 2005, 2007- present
 Phi Kappa Phi (Honor Society) 2010-present
 WACADA (Wisconsin Academic Advising Association) 2013-present
 WAIE (Wisconsin Association for International Educators) 2007-present