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Students' Stories About Internationalization Efforts in Technical Colleges: Transcending Learning Theories and Institutional Supports

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STUDENTS' STORIES ABOUT INTERNATIONALIZATION EFFORTS IN TECHNICAL
COLLEGES: TRANSCENDING LEARNING THEORIES AND INSTITUTIONAL
SUPPORTS

by

Rachel Dobrauc

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

Doctor of Philosophy
in Urban Education

at

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August 2019

ABSTRACT

STUDENTS' STORIES ABOUT INTERNATIONALIZATION EFFORTS IN TECHNICAL COLLEGES: TRANSCENDING LEARNING THEORIES AND INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORTS

by

Rachel Dobrauc

The University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, 2019
Under the Supervision of Professor Barbara Bales, Ph.D.

Much of the research regarding internationalization practices pertains directly to four-year institutions, but community colleges are also called to prepare students for participation in an increasing collaborate and interconnected global world (Dellow, 2007; Treat & Hagedorn, 2013). The unique mission of technical colleges, in particular, is positioned to provide opportunities for this type of learning. This global learning curriculum gap at the community college level has also not been widely examined from the student perspective.

This research addressed the gaps with regard to two-year technical colleges and student perspective and asks: How do students attending a technical college with an internationalized curriculum connect with the opportunity and assign relevance? Attendant questions included: 1) What aspects of an internationalized curriculum in their course of study draw student interest? 2) What types of learning opportunities in an internationalized curriculum do students suggest help them make connections to their personal lives, workplace or occupational interests? and 3) In what ways, if any, do students assign relevance to the learning experiences in an internationalized curriculum to their personal lives, workplace or occupational interests?

Andragogy, transformative learning, and the tenets of global learning were used as a conceptual framework to help understand how these particular students' lived experiences, roles,

and interests extend and enhance the expected outcomes of an internationalized curriculum present in two technical colleges. Each of the 18 students participated in one-one-one interviews. Many also offered an artifact of their learning with a written reflection. These tools granted access to understanding their experiences with internationalized course curriculum.

This study yielded three findings. First, students had meaningful connections with internationalized curriculum when they leveraged topics of personal, professional, or academic interest to them. Second, they drew from experiences both inside and outside of the classroom, which reinforced their learning. Third, despite students identifying the application of global learning in their occupations and workplace, they placed a stronger emphasis on working collaboratively with others. Additionally, three master themes of People, Place, and Occupation support the primary findings. Together, these findings and themes have implications for faculty, institutional leadership, and administration while pointing to future research in this area.

DEDICATION

To the students who participated in this study – talking with you was the most rewarding and exciting part of this whole dissertation journey. This would not exist without your willingness to share.

To my past, present, and future students – you are what make this calling of teaching immeasurably joyful.

To my parents – all I have accomplished is because of you.

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Dr. Barbara Bales, there is no one I would have rather walked with through this dissertation process other than you. It is easy to recall the day I was in your office where you offered to be my advisor, and I have since grown exponentially because of your guidance, insight, and feedback. Thank you for seeing in me what you term brilliance when it was hard to see for myself. As others have experienced and noted, you hold a high bar on your expectations, but you have also held my hand all the way through this process. I look forward to future visits in Madison.

Dr. Linda Gordy, you had a constant calming effect on me in these last few months. The many visits to your office served as constant reminders of what we can learn from each and how blessed I am to work with dedicated, humble people like yourself. I consider you a mentor, and thank you for treating me as a peer.

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For all of the individuals at both research sites, thank you for your willingness to dedicate time and effort to help me organize meeting times and locations and to access the most integral part of this research study: the student participants.

Et enfin, à ma chère Soeur Patrice Joyce: merci de m'avoir transmis l'amour de la langue et de la culture. J'ai souvent réfléchi à nos moments passés ensemble, tout au long de mon parcours dans l'éducation mais surtout dans ce processus de thèse. Je suis très reconnaissant de l'encouragement à "faire l'apprentissage de la mienne."

You have all been my personal Pavers, Shapers, and Weavers. I am forever grateful to each of you.

INTRODUCTION

Luis usually arrived early before class started. As a student in my developmental writing course at a technical college, he took an immediate interest in improving his writing from day one. Since the second week of the semester, he proved to be a consistent contributor to the class and eventually starting showing up 10 to 15 minutes before class began. Before he started coming in early, I knew little about him outside of his major except that he had a few grown children and that his apartment, unfortunately, smelled like cat urine. The day he arrived 20 minutes in advance became the day I associated with finally knowing his history. I was getting the computer and projector ready for class, and he came up to the front of the room to greet me.

“Hi Teach,” he said, his quiet yet routinely engaging salutation. “Here’s my homework from the weekend.”

Luis pressed down a stapled set of four pages, each page filled with neat handwriting on both sides. Laying together on the table, the pages curved in the middle, looking like a simple, graceful vessel that collected his thoughts. When I picked the papers up, I could tell he had pressed the ink through each page with verve and purpose.

“Thank you, Luis. It looks like you really got into the assignment.” I paged through what he handed me and was surprised, at initial glance, with the detail he had used.

“Thanks for this. I wrote you a note on the assignment. It really helped me with my landlord and some issues I was having with him.”

Never, in my (at the time) 10 years of teaching, had I been thanked for a homework assignment. He continued explaining why he had completed extra research for the assignment. The previous class period we had covered how reading and writing were two parts of a linked process, and we talked about how to more easily approach the academic writing students would

come across in their college courses. Their homework was a reading passage about arranged marriages in India. Students used context clues to identify vocabulary, and they responded with their thoughts about family members in their own lives. They wrote about their interest in the possibility of these family members picking out their future spouses.

When I skimmed through Luis' homework, the vocabulary word "caste" was his springboard into a world wide web of information regarding culture in India, status, and ritual. I turned over his paper and saw a colorful rendering of India's social hierarchy:

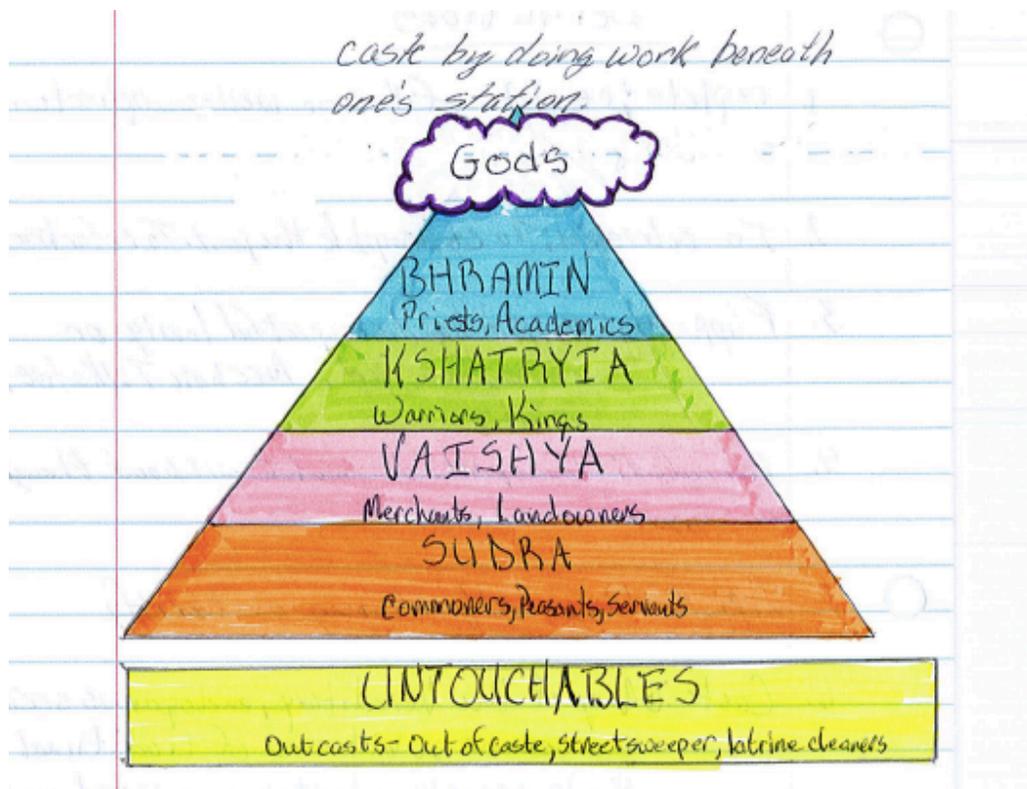


Figure 1: Student learning artifact. Luis illustrating that he could use writing to make connections with course content.

When speaking that morning, Luis shared that he was having difficulty with his landlord who had emigrated from India. "I didn't know I was offending him by calling him Al when his full name was Ali or that shaking his left-hand was disrespectful."

I was surprised by my own excitement about this wonderful meandering Luis had taken

from the assignment when he had become curious about the single word “caste.” His learning and application of new knowledge was reward enough, but his words confirmed the importance of global learning in my classroom. Later, I read this comment in his eight-page response to the 20-point assignment:

I don't know if it was the subtle similarities of my Hispanic background to the Indian culture background, but I related to this article immensely. Thus adding, I am so glad I read it . . . and also thank you for the reminder to read and take interest in what I read. Thanks again Teach, Rachel Dobrauc.

Students like Luis have repeatedly reaffirmed my incorporation of global learning into my teaching. His responses, as well as other students' feedback on the learning activities, have reflected their interests in global topics. This involvement has continually shone through in their engagement in the classroom and beyond by their inquisitiveness and their desire to know more. Luis was like most students attending a technical college by working full-time, having a family to support, and re-careering into a different field to find more opportunities for professional growth and employment. What still stands out to me, six years after this exchange, is how he related to the internationalized curriculum by including the experiences he brought to the course, the facets that interested him, and how his processing of the world around him changed.

Throughout my teaching career that spans middle school through the collegiate level, I have learned that sharing stories helped us understand the realities of the students we teach. Luis was just one student who taught me more about his own world through his validation that student voice is critical in deciding how we structure learning opportunities. Though not all students in college courses have such a positive response to internationalized curriculum, his story and others' highlight the opportunities that should exist in curricula that enhance student

learning. We teach students, not curriculum, so student voice offers insight for both the taught and learned curriculum (Cuban, 1993). Luis' story and the stories of this dissertation's participants are the foundational beams used to create a framework of understanding the lived experiences of students. These observations, both formal and informal, have cultivated a sense of allure in me as I entered into the doctoral program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with an interest in investigative inquiry to develop deeper understanding. van Manen (2007) describes phenomenology as "a project that is driven by fascination: being swept up in a spell of wonder, a fascination with meaning" (p. 12). Thus, this study uses student stories to create bridges future teachers can traverse between theory and praxis as technical colleges internationalize their curricula.

Problem Statement

The internationalization of curricula in higher education is intended to equip students to expand their global competence in the global marketplace as well as their cultural competence in an increasingly diverse world. This learning seeks to develop critical thinking and reflection, perspective sharing, and empathy (Clifford & Montgomery, 2017; Fezzey, Fujieda, Goerd, Kahler, & Nikoi, 2017). Others have found that preparing students' intercultural understanding and communication is "one of the strongest rationales for internationalizing the teaching/learning experience of students in undergraduate and graduate programs" (Knight, 2004, p. 11; as well as Kahn & Agnew, 2017).

While much of the research regarding internationalization practices pertains directly to four-year institutions, community colleges are also called to prepare students for participation in a world of invisible borders with regard to the global marketplace (Dellow, 2007; Treat & Hagedorn, 2013). Yet, the unique mission of technical colleges, in particular, is positioned to

provide both opportunities and challenges for this this type of learning. Though study abroad experiences continue to be seen as the primary or sole way for students to participate in other cultures, economies, and traditions, an internationalized course curriculum may be able to contribute to student development in similar ways (Opper, Teichler, & Carlson, 1990; Milstein, 2005; Zhang, 2011).

The majority of research pertaining to internationalization efforts examines institutional rationale along with a focus on faculty perspectives and preparedness in internationalizing curriculum, thus resulting in a limited focus from the student vantage point (Bond, Qian & Huang, 2003; Stohl, 2007; Clark, 2013; Fuller Klyberg, 2012; Nienhaus & Williams, 2016). Even though community colleges have an identified need for international education, students in two-year community and technical colleges are introduced to global learning to limited degrees as part of their educational experience (Raby & Valeau, 2007). Furthermore, this global learning curriculum gap at the community college level has not been widely examined from the student perspective. Since the learning framework of andragogy situates adult students at the center of any learning transaction, their experiences with an internationalized curriculum can be understood through the stories they share.

Research Question

This research shines a spotlight on these two gaps—with regard to two-year technical colleges and student perspective— and asks: How do students attending a technical college with an internationalized curriculum connect with the opportunity and assign relevance? Attendant questions to be addressed include:

- What aspects of an internationalized curriculum in their course of study draw student interest?

- What types of learning opportunities in an internationalized curriculum do students suggest help them make connections to their personal lives, workplace or occupational interests?
- In what ways, if any, do students assign relevance to the learning experiences in an internationalized curriculum to their personal lives, workplace or occupational interests?

Significance

With regard to comprehensive internationalization in higher education, Knight (1994) suggested, “curriculum is the backbone of the internationalization process” (p. 6). Thus, this study addresses the gaps regarding the internationalization of curriculum gap in technical colleges and adds to the limited research in understanding the implications of this curriculum effort from students’ perspective. In addition, a more in-depth look at students attending a technical college can help us understand how the adult learner constructs meaning from this type of learning, both as contributors to the workforce but also as contributing members of society. Understanding perspectives may also help address one of the difficulties in implementing a global learning focus: students find it boring or do not see it connecting to their own lives. Thus, the implications of this study inform researchers, policy makers, technical college administrators as well as academic personnel at various levels ranging from curriculum design to student support.

Key Terms and Definitions

The terms globalization and internationalization often accompany each other and are used interchangeably along with a cadre of additional terminology, which adds to the increased misuse of terms and confusion for readers (Kreber, 2009). It is important for those involved in the international dimension of higher education to have clear definitions to work from with

regard to both institutional and national levels (Knight, 2004).

- *International education*: Prior to the 1990s, the term used to identify the various opportunities available in education for developing perspectives and relationships among nations; these perspectives include economics, culture, and geography (Scanlon, 1960; Raby & Valeau, 2007).
- *Globalization*: The phenomenon and process of worldwide flow of ideas that exists and that we cannot control (Schuerman, 2014).
- *Internationalization*: The response in higher education to the world's rapidly changing social, economic, and political landscapes (Knight, 1994).
- *Internationalizing curriculum*: The process of higher education faculty integrating international and cross-cultural knowledge and perspectives into content, activities, assessments, and programs for students.
- *Global learning*: The integration of multiple perspectives and the impact of students gaining knowledge, skills, and attitudes through experiences of internationalized curriculum (Knight, 1994; Olson, Green & Hill, 2006; Raby & Valeau, 2007).
- *Global competence*: More broadly, this is the ability to “have an open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others [while] leveraging this gained knowledge to interact, communicate and work effectively outside one's environment” (Hunter, 2004, p. 277).
- *Andragogy*: The art and science of helping adults learn (Knowles, 1980).

Since there is no guarantee that students exposed to internationalized curriculum will transform into global learners, I used the terms internationalized curriculum to refer to curriculum designed with an international or global dimension. To narrow the focus of this dissertation study, I

investigated the impact of internationalized *course* curriculum and not education or study abroad curriculum. In addition, I used *global learning* as it relates to what students learn in terms of knowledge, attitudes, and abilities from engaging with an internationalized curriculum. Lastly, in the methodology section, I used *global learning* when I interviewed student participants because it was a more accessible term. A visual representation of how these terms are related is included in Figure 2.

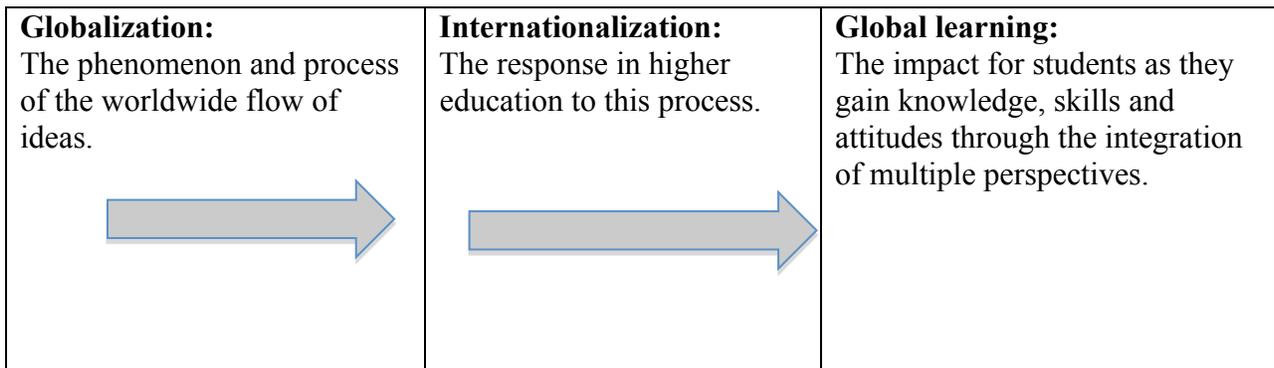


Figure 2: Relationship of terminology. This figure identifies key terms used in this literature review.

Context of the Study

This research study addressed the more discernible dearth of information regarding global learning opportunities within the curriculum at a more specialized type of two-year community colleges: the technical college. Throughout the study, references will be made to the Kanaska Technical College System (KTCS) along with select comparisons to the University of Kanaska System for additional context. Both are pseudonyms. My review of the literature highlights research that examines the broader context of international education including how two-year community colleges have started to address the need to graduate students who are globally competent.

CHAPTER I: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE—ESTABLISHING THE FOUNDATION

This chapter lays the foundational elements for the bridge between theory and practice by reviewing the literature and research of international education in two-year community colleges and the practices utilized to provide “at home” global learning opportunities for students. First, I extend key terms outlined in the introduction by setting forth definitions for both community and technical colleges. This review then builds on the historical context of international education specifically in community colleges and illuminates unique opportunities and challenges to internationalization efforts for students in career and technical education. Third, the discussion includes internationalization practices as they relate to institutions of higher education. Lastly, I introduce research focused on student experience and interest with global learning curricula.

This study answers the question: How do students attending a technical college with an internationalized curriculum connect with the opportunity and assign relevance? Though I centered this study specifically on students in technical colleges, much of the literature used pertains more broadly to two-year community colleges for two reasons. First, technical colleges are often categorized in this broader sense and second, there is scant literature in higher education as it pertains to internationalization efforts at technical colleges with their occupational focus. In addition, the substance of this research includes articles from higher education journals and periodicals, books, pertinent on-line resources, and internal documents from the Kanaska Technical College System (KTCS). Some of the academic, peer-reviewed journals utilized include: *New Directions in Community Colleges*, *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, *Journal of Studies in International Education*, *Community College Journal of Research and Practice* and others. The bodies of work were obtained through searches in Education

Research Complete and Education Research Information Center (ERIC).

A number of search terms were used since there are many interchangeable words used for this topic of interest. However, key search terms that guided this search include: global learning, internationalization, internationalization of curriculum (IoC), internationalization at home (IaH), international education, global education, global studies, global competence, cultural competence, community colleges, and career technical education. Given the scope of this project, articles regarding curricular design, institutional rationale, and faculty development were all included because they relate to my question by first addressing how internationalized learning opportunities are rationalized and then developed for students.

This study rests on the assumption that, while study abroad experiences continue to be seen as the primary way for students to participate in other cultures, economies, and traditions, an internationalized course curriculum may be able to contribute to student development in similar ways (Opper, Teichler, & Carlson, 1990; Milstein, 2005; Zhang, 2011). Too often, internationalization efforts are principally viewed as occurring outside of the classroom (Green, 2007). As Raby (2007) suggested, there must be a re-examination of both off *and* on campus strategies so that we can “move international education from the margins to the core-by offering a context for future college wide reforms” (p. 57). A curriculum based on the Internationalization at Home (IaH) concept applies to students in community and technical colleges since it brings together the local and the global.

Community Colleges / Career Technical Education (CTE)

Cohen and Brawer (2008) defined community colleges, broadly speaking, as “any institution regionally accredited to award the associate in arts or the associate in science as its highest degree” (p. 5). Two-year colleges are multipurpose institutions that directly serve a

variety of social, economic, and political needs; not surprisingly, their impact within communities and within higher education is both unique and important. Community colleges provide options for students who do not attend traditional universities or colleges for a variety of reasons (e.g., more flexible programming and delivery methods, lower cost, additional support services for veterans, access for underrepresented and first-generation college students, and open-access admission policies). This educational option comes with both opportunities and challenges. Many students are underprepared academically and need to take developmental courses before their program courses (Ma & Baum, 2016). Nonetheless, community colleges serve a commitment to life-long learning.

Unfortunately, some regard two-year colleges as “Grade 13” as a midpoint between high school and four-year universities (Goldrick-Rab, 2017) or for those considered unfit for university. In the United States, 46% of enrolled undergraduate students are enrolled in community colleges; of that 12.1 million, nearly 70% either full or part-time jobs in addition to their academic pursuits (Ma & Baum, 2016; American Association of Community Colleges, 2018). Regardless, these colleges with open admission (unselective and non-competitive) policies remain a vital pathway to post-secondary education and are not remiss in addressing global implications in higher education. Levin (2001) posited, nearly 15 years ago, that these community colleges face challenges in identity in terms of their ability to confront global changes.

More narrowly, career technical education (CTE) programs prepare students with technical knowledge and skills for specific occupations while helping meet workforce demands (Cohen and Brawer, 2008). Other descriptors have often accompanied or replaced CTE (e.g., occupational, vocational, semi-professional, and technical) with “occupational seem[ing] to

encompass the greatest number of programs used most often for all curricula leading to employment” (p. 248). Career-related programs at the two-year sub-baccalaureate level include healthcare, business, computer science, engineering, and applied trade and industry programs like welding or carpentry (Hirschy, Bremer & Castellano, 2011). While these degree programs can exist at community colleges, which also offer liberal arts associate’s degrees, technical colleges offer these programs along with apprenticeships as terminal degrees with their students often entering directly into the workforce (either before or after degree completion). A smaller percentage of students from CTE programs transfer to four-year institutions compared to those who transfer from liberal arts-focused community colleges. This Literature Review uses the terms CTE or occupational associate’s degrees and certificates, which include an integration of technical and academic training aimed at producing employees for specific careers (Laanan, Compton, & Friedel, 2006). In this remainder of this dissertation, I use the term technical colleges for simplification purposes.

A Brief History – Community Colleges / Career and Technical Education in Kanaska

H.E. Miles, President of the Kanaska State Board of Industrial Education, strongly criticized the state of public education in 1912, citing stark realities: fewer than half of students completed sixth grade and only one in 30 completed a high school degree. In addition to diminishing graduation rates, he criticized that “the public school curriculum with its traditional emphasis on academic subjects was meeting the needs of a small minority of youth” (Kliebard, 1999, p. 32). For these youth, the system did not include opportunity for concrete, hands-on learning, and professional educators were viewed as being overly focused on “impractical” ideals. Later that year, Kanaska became the first dual system in the nation to administer vocational and academic education. The original vocational systems were run by public school

systems or technical school districts organized in individual cities. In 1965, a state board and local vocational college districts shared oversight. In 1994, the name was changed to the Kanaska Technical College System (Kanaska Legislative Fiscal Bureau, 2015).

The mission of two-year community colleges resides chiefly to serve local and regional students for economic or social needs, and they have also “achieved a reputation for adaptability and responsiveness to the requirements of external stakeholders; these now include not only local community members but also business and industry and governments” (Levin, 2002, p. 121). In fact, this flexibility in curriculum and conferral of degrees is one of the key features of community colleges. They remain adaptable and responsive to community needs. For example, three technical colleges in the southeast Kanaska area are actively responding to the demands for employees to be able to work in “Industry 4.0” (also known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution). Advancing AI Kanaska (2018) describes this as a focus on robotization, ultimately enabling machines to perform tasks with increased complexity while adapting in a manner such that machines approach the flexibility of human labor.

The location of GlobalTech, the world’s largest technological producer, accelerated industry demands for employees in Stockton, Kanaska and vicinity with regard to robotics and informational technology fields. In turn, this fuels demand for supply chain management, housing, healthcare, hospitality, and mechatronics (the combination of technology and mechanical engineering) all of which technical colleges are continually being asked to address. This international company’s first United States production site locating to Kanaska also brings with it a demand for intercultural competence and a diversified global skillset for graduates who seek to fill the workforce demands (personal communication, June 16, 2018). Dellow (2007) asserted that, particularly in community and technical colleges where a great percentage of

students are attending less than full-time, the integration of the global experiences is of particular importance. This new expectation of responsive demand is in addition to the requests of current and past employers, which have been a priority since the KTCS began.

Along with community college's adaptability in providing curricula needed for emerging local demands, this college model can also be connected to an increase in social mobility. Research shows that "many community college models do serve the least affluent and least politically influential segments of the population" (Raby & Valeau, 2009, p. 31). They provide opportunity for the disenfranchised in pursuit of the American dream by appealing to a unique sector of "nontraditional" students (which can now be considered the "new traditional" student) while providing context for social mobility.

Community colleges are gaining popularity, due in part, to the lower cost and increased accessibility compared to universities. The American Association of Community Colleges (2018) reports that 36% of students attending two-year colleges are first generation college students, 17% are single parents, four percent are veterans, 12% are students with disabilities, and seven percent already have a bachelor's degree but are looking to re-career to a new field or to re-credential. The variety of reasons students enter community colleges is complemented by colleges' unique ability to react to both the community's needs and demands in addition to the needs and preparedness of the students they serve which have not been served by traditional higher education (Kleibard, 1999; Cohen & Brawer, 2008). There is a parallel evolution in how two-year colleges have responded globalization, and this evident in the key phases of internationalization practices amongst two-year community colleges.

History of International Education in Community Colleges

As aforementioned, international education was the umbrella term used for activities and

programming that transcend borders. International education has its origins in formal higher education. Post World War I, it was an imperative and optimistic goal of education to “develop a science of international relations” (Scanlon, 1960, p. 1) since this divided out across a number of fields including geography, history, diplomacy as well as others. The Institute of International Education (IIE), an independent, non-profit institution, was established in 1919 as a means to promote international understanding and to be a catalyst of change by connecting United States institutions of higher education with foreign nations who were interested in establishing educational ties with the U.S. The IIE has been integral in the development of international education with its focus on international fellowships and scholarships (such as the Fulbright Scholarship, initiated in 1946), leadership development, and student and faculty international mobility.

In 1957, the Soviet Union launched its first space rocket, Sputnik. The National Defense Education Act (NDEA), in response to the Soviet's success, was enacted by the United States Congress in 1958 in an effort to increase support for the sciences in schools. Though defeated many times in the past, the federal aid lobby latched onto national security as a means to establish the necessary role of federal involvement in supporting science education (Ravitch, 1983). Additionally, in the 1960s, enrollments had ballooned in higher education. This was followed by increased expansion of curricular institutions while research institutions were seeking international notoriety and respect for their academic programs (Thelin, 2011).

From an operational and programmatic perspective for community colleges in particular, there are key phases throughout the history of international education's role in two-year colleges. Raby and Valeau (2007) identify four stages: Recognition Phase; Expansion and Publication Phase; Augmentation Phase; and Institutionalization Phase. These historical foundations include

both opportunities and challenges.

Recognition Phase (1967-1984). Policy makers and leaders in community colleges saw their institutions as having a role in international education. Rockland Community College established the first study abroad program in 1969, and faculty-led study abroad programs were started by California community colleges in 1974. In that same year, community colleges adopted the first internationalized curriculum and student support services were added for international students.

In 1976, the Community Colleges for International Development (CCID) consortium was established. This organization has been instrumental in helping community colleges by offering a network of support in developing international education. The Framework for Comprehensive Internationalization is an in-depth tool by which community colleges can self-assess where they are as an institution in comprehensive internationalization¹. This detailed framework includes ten key areas with multiple sub-categories for assessment. The key aspects of internationalization include: leadership and policy, organization structure, organization personnel, teaching and learning, co-curricular, international student support, study abroad, professional development, partnerships, and international development projects. The scale of self-assessment within these categories starts with Seeking, Building, Reaching, and culminates with the Innovating level of performance (Community Colleges for International Development, 2012). Community colleges utilize the Framework for Comprehensive Internationalization solely in a self-assessment role. To date, there is no external, accrediting body to audit this self-assessment or to ensure it accurately reflects where a college is on the continuum of comprehensive internationalization.

Expansion and Publication Phase (1980-1990). In this stage, documentation of

¹ Comprehensive internationalization is “a commitment, confirmed through action, to infuse international and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research, and service missions of higher education... It is essential that it be embraced by institutional leadership, governance, faculty, students, and all academic service and support units” (Hudzik, 2011, p. 6).

international education began to grow. In response to a proliferation of published reports arguing that too many students were internationally illiterate, community colleges began receiving national grants to help internationalize the curriculum and prepare students for life in a globalized world (Raby & Valeau, 2007). In addition to these reports, which helped identify and describe the benefits of international education, regional and state consortia were being developed to provide more guidance on how to implement international educational programs.

Augmentation Phase (1990-2000). Next, there was a concentration on growing study abroad opportunities for students as well as an intentional focus on international student recruitment. In 1992, a survey conducted by the American Council on Education (ACE) identified that 50% of 60 randomly surveyed community colleges conducted international business, were internationalizing curriculum, or had study abroad programs (2017, p. 7). In 2000, there was a 30% increase of international students studying in the United States. Business related programs saw the most robust and sustained growth at this point in time. As the country's fifth largest export, international education was contributing \$13 billion per year to the U.S. economy. "These statistics made it impossible for community colleges to ignore the importance of promoting global awareness at their institutions" (Blair, Phinney & Phillippe, 2001, p. 2). In retrospect of reviewing this history, there was a missed opportunity during this phase to capitalize on internationalization of curriculum benefit to both domestic and international students. Since developing intercultural competencies is an outcome of internationalized curriculum, additional consideration should be given to simply bringing international and home students together. Leask (2013) argued that meaningful strategies which include reflection on how new cultural perspectives are applied after cross-cultural interaction among students can increase institutional culture in a dynamic way.

Institutionalization Phase (2000-2007). Prior to the 2008 economic crisis, increased policies, procedures, and planning helped institutionalize education in community colleges. The events of September 11, 2001 further cultivated a need for students' exposure to opportunities that deepen their understanding of other countries, cultures, and social values while increasing understanding of the lived experiences of all (Bikson & Treverton, 2003). This humanistic rationale to international education can result in increased tolerance and acceptance of one another. In addition, this phase recognized senior leadership of community colleges as a critical component to comprehensive internationalization (The Stanley Foundation, 1996). Economics also shaped international education during this time. International students represented the nation's fourth-largest service sector with a growth of 126% in community colleges; this was the largest growth amongst all post-secondary institutions (Raby & Valeau, 2007). The creation of both direct and indirect jobs also increases as expenditures grow across employment industry sectors (e.g., dining, transportation, and retail) (NAFSA, 2018). Over time, colleges can experience declining student enrollment or decreased revenue generation; this economic impact for higher education and the United States is present even today. Overall, this broad understanding of historical shifts in international education provides context for policy development and initiatives in career and technical education as well.

History of International Education in Career and Technical Education

As mentioned, since there is limited literature pertaining to technical colleges and their response to international education initiatives, I developed a timeline of key steps in the Kanaska Technical College System (KTCS) history of internationalization practices. Developing and sharing Global Education opportunities has been part of KTCS since 1994 with goals to facilitate internationalization within the system through Curriculum Development, Staff Development,

Student Development and Business and Industry Partnerships (KTCS, 2014). Since its inception, the KTCS State Standing Committee on International Education has been involved in undertaking different initiatives to facilitate internationalization practices as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1

Timeline of Global Initiatives in the KTCS

Date	Initiative
1995	Conducted a survey identifying international experience and interest throughout the KTCS system
1997	In partnership with the Stanley Foundation, system hosted a statewide global education conference.
1995-1998	KTCS received federal funding via Title VI grants to support 46 international curriculum projects.
1996-1998	KTCS funding supported 30 additional international curriculum development projects disseminated across all 16 districts.
1998	10-day Spanish language study abroad program (coordinated by Techtee Technical College)
1998 	State of Kanaska signed an agreement reaffirming the sister state relationship between Kanaska and Hessen, Germany (originally established 1976).
1999 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌘ 7-day China program (coordinated by Salem Technical College) ⌘ 14-day Spanish Language and Peruvian Culture Program (coordinated by Centerville Area Technical College)
2001-2008	<p>More than 10 reciprocal delegations met between Kanaska and Berlin including over 200 faculty, administrators, legislators, and business leaders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌘ All 16 KTCS districts participated ⌘ Many KTCS districts established lasting sister college, sister city, and/or sister county partnerships that continue today
2007-2010 	Global Education Institute to China opens to KTCS faculty, staff, and administration.
2006	Committee conducted a review and revision of the original 1998 World of International/Multicultural Work Skills Forum.
2011	Techtee College hosted a statewide summer institute on Internationalizing the Undergraduate Business Curriculum.
2011 +	Rigorously promoted study abroad through international professional exchange affiliation (both student and faculty), scholarships, and workshops
2012 	<p>Supported international students through state-wide F-1 visa workshops, participation in CCI program</p> <p>KTCS signs a 5-year agreement with the Ireland Institutes of Technology Ireland (IIT).</p>

2013

Delegation of 5 KTCS administrators visited IIT and discussed implementation

Note: Information for the table was retrieved from the KTCS State Standing Committee on International Education (2013).

Challenges in Internationalization of Community and Technical Colleges

Raby and Valeau did not include a phase beyond 2007, but literature suggests that international education has experienced three significant challenges. Each also presents opportunity for community and technical colleges to strengthen internationalization practices.

First, current research indicates that the top two areas of concern for campus internationalization are study abroad and international student recruitment; both require students to be internationally mobile (American Council on Education, 2017). Across institutional types, study abroad is the most recognized and easily quantifiable global learning activity (Whitehead, 2015), but when education abroad or work abroad remains the primary pathway to increase student knowledge of and engagement with the world, this excludes a large portion of the students in community colleges since it is unlikely they will travel internationally. Green (2006) suggested that “study abroad is often poorly integrated into the curriculum so that students and faculty see it as an academic ‘extra’ that is peripheral to the important learning of the major” (p. 3). Faculty, despite finding strong support for the need for and interest in broadening students’ perspectives about the world, also feel that they or their colleges are ill prepared for completing this work effectively (Bond, Qian & Huang, 2003). In addition, first-generation college students or those from low-income families often work full-time and embrace parental roles or the role of caregivers for family members. Thus, typically they are unable to capitalize on this opportunity. According to NAFSA (n.d.), globally, fewer than three percent of the total world student population in higher education is internationally mobile. Unfortunately, the national average for U.S. students studying abroad is fewer than 1.5 percent. The two-year college numbers are even

lower.

Students have a better understanding of multiculturalism when they are able to see and experience it firsthand. Richardson (2012) illustrated how study abroad can serve to reinforce “the concept of global citizenship, cultural tolerance, and humanitarian responsibility” (p. 47). This ability to experience another culture firsthand through immersion, homestays, business visits and cultural integration should not be underappreciated, but it is not the only way to develop a student’s global citizenship. In fact, study abroad has traditionally been part of university liberal arts programs, which can be viewed as more exclusive than inclusive. Campus internationalization opportunities can include both formal and informal learning activities, but Beelan and Jones (2015) suggest the focus is often on the latter, which includes international mobility.

Second, institutional support at community colleges ranges drastically based on capacity (e.g., financial allocation, international student support, and curriculum inclusion), articulated commitment, and leadership buy-in (Green, 2012). The KTCS is not exempt from some of the challenges that are at other colleges. The 16 colleges across the system address global education to varying degrees based on respective investment from executive leadership, governing board support, commitment of resources, and breadth of institutional expertise related to interest and experience with international education. For example, there are currently five global education/international education offices across the system of 16. As enrollments have declined across the KTCS since 2009, so too have operational budgets. At two of the technical colleges, the international offices were completely closed down.

College presidents are the primary catalysts for internationalization efforts (American Council on Education, 2017; Michigan State University; n.d.). In 2016, activities and programing

were led from a single office at a 58% of all two-year institutions (American Council on Education, 2017). This was an increase of 22% from five years prior, and while centralization is necessary, dissemination of initiatives and momentum college-wide can be a challenge (American Council on Education, 2017). Executive officers and leadership are often the first to approach internationalization in terms of advocacy, but these personal values are not always enough to enact transformative change (Raby & Valeau, 2016). This can lead to global learning outcomes being unclearly defined and a global agenda that loses momentum when local concerns call for more immediate attention from institutional leadership. An opportunity exists, however, for community colleges to leverage community partnerships and workforce development, which are not as commonplace at four-year institutions (Bissonette & Woodlin, 2013). Piazza (2015), after reviewing how technical college leaders facilitate change in comprehensive internationalization efforts, concluded that, “For those responsible in creating public policy, it is time to create a message that global competence is of paramount importance in our technical colleges and not a mere add-on for colleges who care to address the issue” (p. 189). For two-year colleges, a policy for international education and global learning in curriculum could lead to more opportunities for students to develop global competence through program and course curriculum.

In fact, policies that support international education at two-year colleges do exist, though many are more closely aligned with the mission and goal of comprehensive four-year universities and liberal arts colleges. For example, the American Council of on Education’s guide for internationalizing U.S. higher education indicates four broad categories that comprise the U.S. internationalization-related policies and programs (Helms, 2015). The first type is *student mobility*, which includes the previously mentioned inbound mobility of international

student recruitment and outbound mobility of study abroad opportunities. *Scholar mobility and research collaboration* is a second type, which is supported by a number of federal agencies to help the United States remain both internationally competitive and collaborative (e.g., Fulbright programs, National Science Foundation [NSF], and Department of Education grants). The third category is *cross-border education*. While not a strong focus in U.S. federal policy, this includes the movement of programming across borders to include partnerships between organizations (e.g., consortia agreements like articulation agreements between sister colleges in the KTCS) and branch campuses in another country. Fourth is *Internationalization at Home (IaH)*, and while there are various interpretations regarding activities included in IaH practices, this category addresses international and intercultural “on-campus student learning for non-mobile students” (p. 25). The initial three categories are not at the forefront of the mission and philosophy of community colleges. And while the U.S. federal government policies and programs in higher education typically include grants to develop area specific (e.g., East Asian, Caribbean, and Middle East) and language study, which community colleges do not typically include, the IaH approach has increased opportunity for creating student-learning opportunities across the curriculum. Hanson (2007) also suggests that an international approach is contradictory to the needs of community colleges, asserting that the public’s interests are chiefly served when curricula problem-solving unique to the communities the colleges serve. He cites, “For both social and educational purposes, our in-class activities must be drawn from our vicinities” (p. 1005). However, this is a similar approach as set forth by the Internationalization at Home framework discussed, which is suited for all students.

A third salient challenge to two-year institutions is the local or regional focus of community colleges some view contradictory to pursue global engagement. Community colleges

largely serve a local student base and possess locally funded operations to supply the demands of a local workforce with increased need to remain locally focused (Treat & Hagerdorn, 2013). Yet these institutions are quite responsive to changing needs given their flexibility in preparing students for a workforce and society, both of which rapidly change due to globalization. As Schuerman (2014) points out, deterritorialization, social interconnectedness and acceleration are shaping our society, so technical colleges' ability to leverage distance with technology can also be utilized.

Technology use as a means for enhancing global learning and intercultural opportunities in courses has increased by almost a third of reporting institutions (American Council on Education, 2017). In 2006, the State University of New York (SUNY) developed the Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) method, a pedagogical approach to connecting students and faculty in two or more countries to complete assignments in collaboration with one another (Ward, 2015). Community colleges can partake in SUNY's network of opportunities, and this approach enables any two-year colleges to optimize technology to improve collaboration across cultures and investment of multiple stakeholders across institutions (e.g., faculty, department chairs, deans, centers for teaching innovation, and international program offices). This is just one aspect of an IaH approach that can further enhance opportunities for community colleges seeking to include global learning opportunities for the local students they serve. In sum, exposure to an internationalized curriculum may be the only opportunity that some students have to develop global competence (Green, 2007).

Opportunities within an Internationalization at Home Framework for Two-Year Colleges

Broadly speaking, experiential learning occurs when experiences play a role learning

through experiences or through the process of doing. For adult learners, experiential education takes students into the community and takes place outside of the classroom more formally through internships and community-based activities; however, it can also happen informally through hobbies and even travel (Collins & O'Brien, 2003). While this literature review draws on the historical references of Internationalization at Home through Experiential Learning (IaH-E), such as abroad experiences, international exchanges, and service learning, the focus of this dissertation study examines Internationalization at Home in the Classroom (IaH-C) through classroom activities, reading, and lectures. The relationship amongst these types of learning is illustrated in Figure 1.2.

<p>Experiential Learning: Students learning through experiences</p>	<p>Internationalization at Home – Experiential Learning (IaH-E): Study abroad, internships, service learning</p>	<p>Internationalization at Home-Classroom (IaH-C): Classroom activities, readings, lectures</p>
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Figure 1.2. Relationship of experiential learning and Internationalization at Home. This figure identifies how experiential learning –both formally and informally—are present in Internationalization at Home practices.

Internationalization at Home (IaH) strategies utilize intentional global learning experiences that occur within curricula and co-curricula, primarily by capitalizing on classroom, campus and community relationships. Agnew and Khan (2015) suggest that the most successful IaH programs “break down the historical distance between formal and informal learning [by] seamlessly redefining classrooms and campus as environments and experiences that are intentionally designed to promote intercultural, international, and global learning” (p. 32).

IaH practices may look different across contexts, and while practices do not necessarily need the presence of international students, they can be a benefit (Leask, 2013; Beelan & Jones, 2015). Utilizing technology to provide online collaborative experiences also allows students to interact with cultures outside their own when campus diversity is minimal. Custer and Tuominen

(2017) conducted a study that followed students' development in a Japanese/U.S. virtual exchange. Using Larry Brasskamp's Global Perspectives Inventory (GPI), a survey tool commonly used to measure cognitive and interpersonal development in study abroad experiences, the authors discovered that this online IaH practice did provide both U.S. and Japanese students' opportunity to improve their intercultural competency skills. Though it offered less opportunity than a traditional study abroad experience, the authors suggest "one can imagine how carrying out multiple exchanges with the same group of students over time or how bringing in new groups to join earlier ones might further deepen student experiences and potentially expand intercultural competency skills" (p. 356).

Much of the research that exists pertains largely to the institutional role of internationalization, faculty perceptions, and what students should learn (Fuller Klyberg, 2012; Clark, 2013; Nienhaus & Williams, 2016). In addition, global learning is viewed most frequently as a foundation more so in liberal education based on institutional mission and learning goals (Coker, Hakell & Nelson, 2014). As mentioned, IaH emphasizes intentional learning as part of a comprehensive curriculum:

Through formal and informal experiences that occur within and beyond courses or programs and that align student-learning outcomes to broader campus strategic goals and mission. By focusing on curricula – experiences situated within *formal* course or program structures – and co-curricula – *informal* experiences that occur beyond the course or program but within the broader campus community – the IaH strategy encompasses all aspects of the lived experience of the student whether in or out of class and whether an international or home student. (Agnew & Kahn, 2015, p. 31)

Thus, IaH is unique with its explicit and intentional focus on all students in the core curriculum (Beelan & Jones, 2015). For this reason, general education courses are oftentimes the only place where students in community colleges can gain the core knowledge they need related to civic issues (Zeszotarski, 1999). The American Council on Education (2017) found that in 2016, nearly half of institutions reported that their general education requirements included an international or global component. Students fulfilled these requirements “with either courses that focus on global trends/issues (e.g., health, environment, or peace studies), or those that feature perspectives issues, or events from specific countries or areas outside the U.S.” (p. 15).

Community colleges capture a diverse group of students with an array of desired endpoints in terms of their programs, career goals, and potential goals of transfer for baccalaureate degrees. Clarke (2014) found the frequency of which faculty included global concepts in their courses was strongest among humanities, social/behavioral sciences, and English courses compared to science and mathematics. Inclusion was also based on faculty perception of importance as well as comfort level with introducing these topics to students

O’Connor, Farnsworth and Utley (2013), using human capital theory, examined the factors that might contribute to or hinder the development of internationalized general education curricula in Missouri community colleges. While only 18 campuses were surveyed with 243 faculty participating, the study did support other literature that suggests faculty perspective and engagement is a primary driver in internationalization efforts. In addition, as “economic theory demonstrates, as the engine that generates a large percentage of the skilled American workforce, community colleges should be as involved as any sector of higher education in international awareness and skill building” (p. 968). They affirmed the unique role of community colleges to be able to respond to community needs and included faculty perception of problem-solving,

critical thinking, and analytical skills as high/very high priorities in learning outcomes. They conclude that students must be exposed to internationalized curriculum in their college careers but fail to address how general education courses solve for this.

Milliron (2007) proposed the skills students need in this “flattening,” increasingly interconnected world include critical thinking, creativity, and courage. Critical thinking skills are important because of the impelling trend toward data-driven decisions. “If our students do not understand what the information means, which questions they are trying to answer, how to structure explorations or research, or how to apply the results, all of this raw material is meaningless” (p. 34). In addition, the outcomes of the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Global Learning Value Rubric align with these skills that faculty validated as essential for students.

The AAC&U, established in 1915, is one of the leading national organizations promoting a liberal arts education that is integrative in nature and includes all students regardless of their majors or degree programs. It is also comprised of more than 1400 member institutions, including both two and four-year intuitions along with public and private post-secondary schools of all types and sizes (AAC&U, 2014). Additionally, AAC&U’s Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) initiative promotes a value on general education and the need for students to “acquire the broad knowledge, higher order capacities, and real-world experience they need to thrive both in the economy and in a globally engaged democracy” (AAC&U, 2018, para. 3). The AAC&U validated the need for these skills that traverse all disciplines and fields through an online survey conducted by Hart Research Associates. Civic engagement, problem-solving skills, and increased global knowledge and experience are expected from employers when hiring candidates from both two and four-year institutions (Hart Research Associates,

2015).

Research Addressing Student Experience and Interest in Internationalization

Workforce demands support the need for 21st century skills, and community college colleges are in a unique position to meet the global workforce demands (Dellow, 2007; Treat & Hagedorn, 2013). While the gap exists regarding internationalization efforts in two-year technical colleges, evidence is also limited and primarily quantitative in nature with regard to student engagement and effects of on internationalized curriculum and student interest.

Nonetheless, how and when students engage during post-secondary education impacts both their learning and developmental outcomes in and out of the classroom (Roberts & Komives, 2016).

From the perspective of four-year university students, Zimitat (2008) found that less than half of students felt their institutions were preparing them for effectively working overseas; they believe there were insufficient examples used from other countries and cultures in their coursework. An additional finding was that first-year students viewed internationalization more positively than second and third year students. Supplementary insight for understanding these perceptions could be enhanced with in-depth qualitative research.

With a small sample size of 68 participants, Robertson (2015) found that the majority of students in one community college identified little interest in global topics or perceived the topics as boring, and students were unable to see the connection of a global perspective to their own lives. However, the global topics presented to students were limited in nature to items such as world history, and world art with general regions represented on the list such as the Middle East, United States, Asia, and Africa. Broadening this list by having students self-identify topics of interest may have bolstered the ability for students to connect in more meaningful and significant ways with an internationalized curriculum. This finding necessitates the need for

faculty to help students understand how their lives are connected with the world outside of themselves. However, an additional finding did suggest a strong positive correlation between both family and peer interactions with a heightened interest for international education (Robertson, 2015).

Davis, Snyder, and Widmar (2014) deepen an understanding of student experience by using case studies to examine students' use of social media in a course project. When Facebook was used as a tool to help understand agriculture production from an international perspective, participants' knowledge increased in four of the five content areas (environment, socioeconomic, geography, and global). Participants reported that this was a convenient way to connect with fellow students and familiarize themselves with a different culture. These findings heightened the fact that "as students learn to recognize the global in the local, the global education agenda will allow students to understand how their own behavior affects and is affected by larger world patterns" (p. 10).

Cooper and Niu (2010) used a mixed-methods longitudinal study, which included the BEVI scale to help determine students' openness to various transformational experiences regarding international learning. The researchers also analyzed E-portfolios of student learning artifacts submitted by students after completing internationally focused class projects. With the sample size too small to make any definitive conclusions, the authors reinforced the need to establish clear international learning outcomes and assessments. In addition, they expressed the need for further investigation of Lev Vygotsky's "Space Theory" to understand how students "moved from his or her private (or individual) space to a public (or collective) space" in terms of knowledge, skills, and abilities (p. 169). While the works of Cooper and Niu (2010) and Davis, Snyder, and Widmar (2014) are both situated around students attending four-year institutions,

each study allows for the opportunity to extend upon global learning curricular outcomes for adult learners. The theoretical underpinnings between an internationalized curriculum as identified in the AAC&U Global Learning Value Rubric and student outcomes are noted in Chapter 2.

Synthesis

This review of the literature illustrates a tension between internationalization practices of four-year institutions (i.e., study abroad) and the mission of two-year colleges (preparing a local workforce). An Internationalization at Home approach provides a salient framework for creating global learning curriculum and activities in two-year community and technical colleges – a framework that offers opportunities for students to gain international and intercultural content exposure in their compulsory course (i.e., general education courses). The IaH concept also adds value by providing global learning outcomes for all students regardless of their international mobility. Thus, this framework provides a lens for understanding how students in a two-year technical college can benefit from an internationalized curriculum.

CHAPTER II: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter shares the theories used to examine the question: How do students attending a technical college with an internationalized curriculum connect with the opportunity and assign relevance? Attendant questions include:

- A. What aspects of an internationalized curriculum in their course of study draw student interest?
- B. What types of learning opportunities in an internationalized curriculum do students suggest help them make connections to their personal lives, workplace or occupational interests?
- C. In what ways, if any, do students assign relevance to the learning experiences in an internationalized curriculum to their personal lives, workplace or occupational interests?

In the previous chapter, I shared the context for community colleges and their role in international education and how this molds the research design. In this chapter, I first extend on the American Association for Colleges and Universities (AAC&U's) work through its creation of outcomes to guide global learning curricula. Given that the context of this research study is informed by the largely adult population of two-year community colleges, andragogy and transformative learning theories are introduced as theoretical constructs to better understand how students can impact curriculum design as well as how curriculum can enlighten student perspectives. These theories guided the research design, which examined the connections students may make between internationalized course content and their personal and/or occupational or workplace experiences.

Understanding Students' Connections between Internationalized Curriculum and Personal Experiences: A Conceptual Framework

Just as andragogy acknowledges and incorporates the learning experiences that adults have acquired over their lifespans, transformative learning further develops an understanding of how a learner makes meaning of one's life experiences beyond just knowledge and skills. The term *learning* is broadly used across contexts, and for this study, learning will be defined as the interactive process that leads to transformation and change, and special consideration will be given to the social and societal context in which learning happens (Illeris, 2017). Figure 2.1 illustrates how learning and these theories and a global learning curriculum will be used to undergird the research design. This study examined what students learn in an internationalized curriculum as an amalgam of global learning, andragogy, and transformative learning.

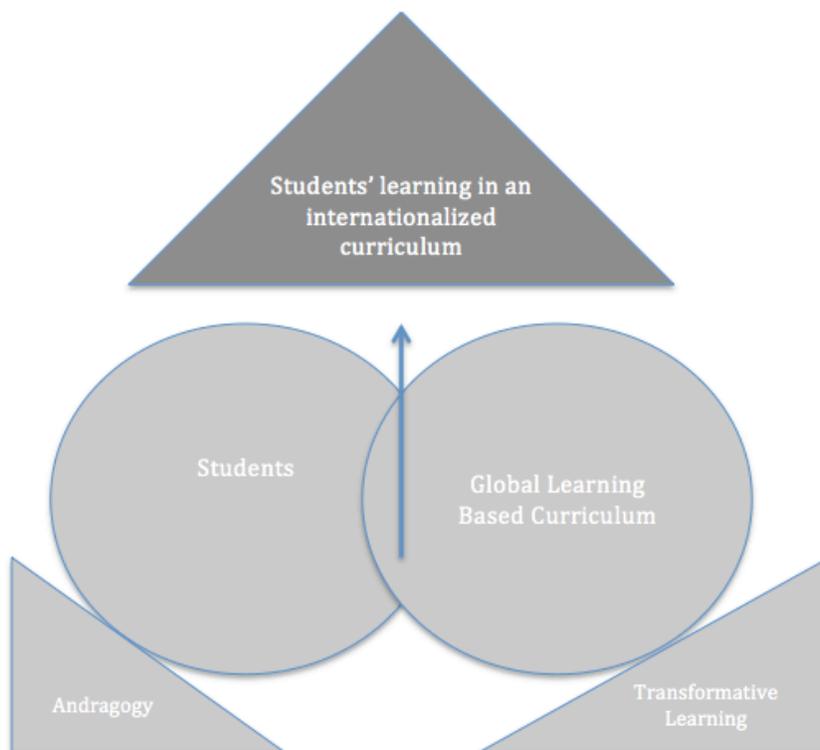


Figure 2.1. Conceptual framework. This figure identifies the key elements and theories used in this study.

A Global Learning-Based Curriculum

Chapter One included a brief background on the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and its approach to integrated, interdisciplinary learning outcomes for all students in undergraduate education, regardless of institutional type or size. In addition, the AAC&U created a Global Learning Value Rubric organized by key criteria, which are the core expectations of their global learning outcomes. The outcomes can and have been used at many types of institutions (e.g., research universities, liberal arts colleges, two and four-year colleges, public, private), and these outcomes can be attained through a range of activities including formal curriculum, engagement with international students, global capstone experiences, and service learning (Whitehead, 2015). AAC&U's overarching definition of global learning is as follows:

Global learning is critical analysis of and an engagement with complex, interdependent global systems and legacies (such as natural, physical, social, cultural, economic, and political) and their implications for people's lives and the earth's sustainability. (Association of American Colleges and Universities: Global Learning value rubric, 2014)

As with the other 15 VALUE rubrics created by AAC&U, the global learning rubric can be used by faculty and administrators to design course, program, and even institutional outcomes. These outcomes are intended to guide discussions on evaluating student learning. The outcomes advocate that students demonstrate achievement in six different dimensions: self-awareness, perspective-taking, understanding cultural diversity, personal and social responsibility, global systems, and knowledge application (Whitehead, 2015). The full rubric is included in Appendix A.

These six dimensions were used for evaluating general education course descriptions of the two institutions in this study. There is a statewide curriculum for the general education courses in the Kanaska Technical College System and a shared document that delineates the role of the general education courses in the Applied Associate in Arts & Sciences (AAA/AAS) degree programs (see Appendix B). When juxtaposing the global learning dimensions with the skills, concepts, and attitudes of the general education courses, there is a natural link between the interdisciplinary nature of both sets of criteria. Table 2 shows their alignment in a crosswalk matrix while highlighting key similarities.

Table 2

Overlap of Global Learning Criteria and General Education Criteria in the KTCS

Global Learning Criteria	General Education Skills, Concepts, and Attitudes
Global Social Awareness	Global Awareness; Inclusive Social Interaction; Self-Determination
Perspective Taking	Critical Thinking/Problem Solving; Ethics; Global Awareness; Inclusive Social Interaction; Self-Determination
Cultural Diversity	Communication; Critical Thinking/Problem Solving; Ethics; Self-Determination
Personal and Social Responsibility	Ethics; Global Awareness; Inclusive Social Interaction; Science and Technology; Self-Determination
Global Systems	Critical Thinking/Problem Solving; Global Awareness
Knowledge Application	Communication; Critical Thinking/Problem Solving; Mathematical Principles; Science and Technology

Given the overlap of these dimensions, students enrolled in general education courses are more likely to have been exposed to internationalized curriculum. These tenets of global learning are linked to courses from which the sample population was drawn; this is discussed in Chapter Three. They were also used during the coding and analysis of generated data in this study.

Andragogy

Previous experiences of adult learners, their need for applied learning, and internal motivation are at the heart of andragogy. This research study draws on the primary interest of understanding the student learner experience with internationalized curriculum, so the basic tenets of andragogy will be discussed with contextualized examples to help develop a more thorough picture of student learners who attend community and technical colleges. The average age of adult students attending two-year community and technical colleges is 28, placing additional relevance of this learning theory in this research study (American Association of Community Colleges, 2018).

Interchangeably referred to as a theory, framework, or technique for understanding adults, andragogy originated with Malcolm Knowles' view of the learning process as inclusive of the whole person: emotionally, psychologically and intellectually. Five key assumptions of andragogy exist that apply to students in a community college, especially those in career and technical education given andragogy's attention to applied learning and direct application of skills.

First, as a person matures, his or her self-concept moves from that of a dependent personality toward one of a self-directing human being; this is as opposed to children who rely on the teacher to determine what is taught and the manner in which course content is delivered and learned (Knowles, 1980). Adults also actively seek to take responsibility over themselves without others making decisions for them in terms of learning, family, and community life (Merriam & Bierema, 2014). Adults enter new academic pursuits, either as first-time or returning students, with either positive or negative past experiences, but flexibility in course offerings, delivery modes, and creation of an environment where student input is valued and respected can

be help contribute to positive learning experiences for adults (Cohen & Brawer, 2008).

In addition to this independent self-concept, an adult accumulates a growing wealth of personal experience and knowledge –both serving as rich resources for learning. “To children, experience is something that happens to them; to adults, their experience is who they are” (Merriam & Bierema, 2014, p. 51). Adults define themselves by their life experiences. When students enter community or technical colleges, they may do so to re-career, re-certify, or continue building on prior knowledge in their respective fields. This interest in advancing education stems from the belief that they will derive benefits from the investment of time, money, and effort with the opportunity to integrate formal academic experiences within work experiences (Tharp, 1988; Benshoff and Lewis, 1992). In addition, compared to children, adults have more to contribute to learning, have more experiences on which to place new learning, and have also developed habits and patterns of thought which may lead to less open-mindedness (Knowles, 2008).

However, adults can, at times, be the best resources for each other, and allowing for socialization and discussion, cooperative learning opportunities, and experiential or participatory learning is essential (Elias & Merriam, 2005). This becomes a rich opportunity for instructors as they can tap into life experiences that make each student unique. A community college’s close ties with the local community provide unique learning opportunities as well. High-impact practices (HIPs) (e.g., first-year seminar and experiences, e-portfolios, and learning communities) have been shown to benefit engagement and retention efforts for college students including those from historically disadvantaged backgrounds (Kuh, 2008). Relevant to this proposed study, depending on institutional mission, students have access to different HIPs, which are likely to include experiential learning opportunities (e.g., service learning, community-

based learning, internships, and capstone courses and projects) (AAC&U, n.d., “High-impact”). Global learning is also considered a HIP, “and as higher education becomes more equitable, inclusive, and reflective of the American population, it is essential that all students have access to the most powerful forms of learning” (Whitehead, 2015, p. 6). For community colleges, this also presents a critical opportunity to draw from their local placement for this type of learning; graduates will be working and providing service to these local communities.

Thirdly, the readiness of an adult to learn is closely related to the developmental tasks of his or her social role. Students enter community colleges with a variety of roles they have embraced for many years, and many come for career-related or job-related reasons for participation (Knowles, 1980). Diversity of students, whether age, race, role as care-giver, or occupational goals can be one of community college’s strongest assets despite challenges that exist in the provision of relevant and rich learning experiences. Grubb (1999) observed that a common approach on the path to supporting students’ persistence is adopting shared empathy for students and an “unwillingness to label them as ‘deficient’ or ‘not college material’” (p. 37). Fairchild (2003) addressed common hindrances to adult learners, which included financial difficulty, guilt over taking time away from children, job demands, and even institutional challenges that a college presents. One of Graham and Donaldson’s (1999) four identified ways students persist despite these multiple roles is through their involvement with family, community, and career. Increased inclusion of curricular design that draws on these meaningful responsibilities can benefit student successes even when campus involvement is limited. Again, service-learning opportunities offer significant engagement with communities along with being able to critically reflect on their application of classroom knowledge in practical settings.

Fourth, there is a change in time perspective as people mature, from future application of

knowledge to immediacy of application. Thus, in the process of learning, an adult is more problem-centered than subject-centered (Knowles, 1980). This motivation to learn is oftentimes to deal with an immediate concern or need where students “must be active doers and constructors of their own knowledge” (Barr & Tag, 1995, p. 21). Since faculty perceive problem-solving, critical thinking, and analytical skills as high/very high priority in terms of skills needed to internationalized course curriculum (O’Connor, Farnsworth & Utley, 2013), additional global learning opportunities can be encouraged across the curriculum. High impact practices like service-learning are problem-oriented in their very nature and are often opportunities for students in two-year colleges to remain involved with the communities in which they are already participants. In fact, the KTCS graduate follow-up survey shows that in 2015-16, over 93% of graduates who responded were employed within the state of Kanaska (KTCS Factbook, 2018). This is a 10% increase over the 2006-07 school rates, showing students’ commitment to work and support in their communities.

The last assumption is that for adults who need to know why they need to learn something, the most potent motivations are internal rather than external (Knowles, 1980). Given its humanistic roots, andragogy situates students at the center of the learning transaction. Students in a technical college are often there to get credentialed so as to gain initial employment, re-career, sharpen their work skills, and achieve a job promotion or additional learning for personal development and enrichment. Collectively, these postulations about adult learners carry both opportunities and criticisms regarding this theory and applications.

Opportunities and limitations. Since the Humanistic adult educator is concerned with the full development of a student, one of the strengths of andragogy is its focus on the individual and his or her ability to advance towards self-actualization. In addition, this framework is not limited

to only formal educational opportunities, but it is also applicable to informal learning experiences as well. Workplace professional development, personal enrichment, and recreational self-development all have the ability to incorporate tenets of andragogy.

Moreover, though at times it can also be a criticism, andragogy is a “model of assumptions about learning or a conceptual framework that serves as a basis for emergent theory” (Knowles, as cited in Merriam & Bierema, 2014, p. 57). This framework can guide practice but offers little in terms of specific processes to follow in order to successfully guide adults through individualized or collective learning. When learning is self-directed, adult students can play a crucial role in participating in their own learning needs as well as planning for and assessment of their learning experiences (Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007).

Theories are not without limitations, and controversy has ensued as it pertains to andragogy. Elias and Merriam (2005) identified the debate regarding whether or not andragogy was in fact a theory (due to little empirical evidence to support it as such) and whether or not its assumptions should be limited only to adults. While Knowles did become more encompassing and understanding of the continuum between pedagogy (“leading children”) and andragogy, at times learning is situation-specific and cannot merely be guided by an adult’s experiences. “Sometimes adults know so little about the subject that the teacher by necessity take the lead; conversely, some young people are capable of being self-directed depending on their experience with and knowledge of the content area” (Merriam & Bierema, 2014, p. 57). Understandably, adult students can be missing one or many of these assumed traits when they enter (or re-enter) a formal educational setting. However, it seems that Knowles intended this framework more to guide teachers in understanding how adults go through the learning process as opposed to offering a theory of teaching that delineates specific principles of instructional practice. Given

the debate in institutions of higher education regarding the need to shift from a system of delivery instruction of packaged lectures and formulaic assessments, and the need to shift to a learning paradigm (Barr & Tagg, 1995), andragogy offers prospects for addressing students' needs.

Implications for this study. Based on andragogy's implications for practice, much of the guidance Knowles gives is derived from the contrasts of adults and children. For example, as children, their self-concepts are shaped by the adult world around them and the adult roles within them. Typically, teachers have a pre-determined set of curricula and intended set of knowledge that is deemed worthy for a child to consume. However, as they grow and develop, learners start to make more self-directed decisions. As children age and grow into adults, Knowles posited, "they begin to see their life no longer as being full-time learners. They see themselves increasingly as producers or doers" (1980, p. 46). Thus, trying to understand what students anticipate doing with their learning from an internationalized curriculum is one of the key considerations of this research study.

Adult students are not to be viewed simply as empty canisters waiting to be filled, as Freire's description of the banking theory suggests (Freire, 1970). Instead, adult learners should see themselves as part of the learning process, as problem-solvers, as critical thinkers, and as users of knowledge to transform their lives. This is relevant to this dissertation study since students attending technical colleges are coming to their programs of study with the desire of directly applying what they are learning to reach their career goals. As with Luis' story in the introduction of this dissertation, he sought to not only apply knowledge from the classroom to his professional life but to his personal life as well.

In addition to the implication of adult learners' desire to be "doers" instead of mere

consumers, the learning climate should complement this action of learning. Knowles (1980) determined that the climate should make students feel comfortable and at ease and not childlike nor entrenched in an overly formal environment. Rigid rows of desks with the teacher centered at the front, while common in many classrooms, cannot only conjure associations of past negative educational experiences, but it can also symbolize a teacher-centered environment. Students in applied technology programs are often learning by application in a robotics lab or automotive shop as students in health and human service programs learning in hospital placements, dental clinics, and fire apparatus bays. In all of these occupational degree programs, they work alongside faculty. Learning for adults extends beyond mere acquisition of knowledge that can ultimately shape students' mindsets and action, so the addition of transformative learning theory will be completed by the third part of this study's theoretical framework. Seeking to understand which learning opportunities in an internationalized curriculum resonate with students is the second main consideration of this research study in addition to the critical elements students find of interest.

In terms of addressing global learning outcomes through internationalization practices in curriculum design, a challenge is that students can see global learning as boring, which can contribute to their disinterest; students can also fail to see connection of what goes on in the world and its relevance to their own lives (Robertson, 2015). Application of the andragogy as a framework may help bridge this gap. When faculty or designers of internationalized curriculum can diagnose learners' interests in tandem with learners' needs, a greater opportunity exists for students to make more relevant connections between curriculum and their occupational or personal lives.

These guiding principles also reinforced the design of the interview protocol since

questions focused on student experience, motivation, and application of new knowledge. The interview protocol in Chapter Three reflects the intentionality of constructing a fully developed picture of the student experience. To this end, utilizing these characteristics of andragogy reinforces how participants are in fact “co-researchers” in the research process (Moustakas, 1994).

Transformative Learning

The model of andragogy as an approach to understanding adult learners in community colleges addresses student characteristics to consider in all types of instructional settings. Given that a global learning-based curriculum is designed to “enhance students’ sense of identity, community, ethics and perspective-taking” (AAC&U Value Rubric), transformative learning theory will be used to help understand how the adult learners in this study make meaning of their new understandings from an internationalized curriculum.

Just as andragogy acknowledges and incorporates the learning experiences that adults have acquired over their life spans, transformative learning (TL) also acknowledges while further describing how a learner makes meaning of one’s life experiences. Jack Mezirow described this cognitive, rational process “by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference (meaning schemes, habits of mind, mindsets) to make them more inclusive, discriminate, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective” (Merriam & Bierema, 2014, p. 84). While andragogy is able to recognize the attributes adults bring to the formal or informal learning experiences, transformative learning extends this beyond who the adult learner *is* and includes their thinking, processing, critical reflection and ability to examine held beliefs, all which ultimately results in the learners’ changing. This opposes learning in childhood, which is primarily driven by outside authorities (e.g., parents or teachers).

Per TL, a disorienting dilemma, either personal or professional in nature, triggers a transformation that puts the process in motion. From the pilot study, which is referenced in Chapter Three and included in an appendix, students' reflections on previous life experiences (outside of the actual internationalized courses) could be determined as a catalyst of sorts for their interest in global learning along with a shift of how they viewed their role in society.

Merriam and Bierema (2014) summarize the 10 ten steps in Mezirow's theory:

1. Experience of a disorienting dilemma
2. Questioning and self-examination
3. Critical assessment of prior held assumptions
4. Recognition of discontent
5. Exploration of new roles, relationships, and actions
6. Planning a new or revised course of action
7. Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans
8. Trying out new roles
9. Building competence and self-confidence in the new roles
10. Reintegration of new perspective into one's life

Though 10 stages exist, there are four main criteria to the transformative learning process: experience, critical reflection, reflective discourse and, finally, action (Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007). Transformation occurs when there is a shift in the beliefs or attitudes that shape a person; thus, this transformation is, in fact, a second shaping of oneself. These transformative experiences can take place in one's personal life or professional life, though Mezirow (1998) asserted that not all learning is transformational.

Four different lines of thought exist for transformative learning and theoretical

application. In addition to Jack Mezirow, other influential adult educators include Paulo Freire, Larry Dalo, and Robert Boyd (Dirkx, 1998). Despite these four different views about learning, they are all built from the core concepts of experience, critical reflection, and development. Freire identifies transformation as a means to enhance consciousness and development of the critical perspective; Mezirow's view is inclusive of critical reflection, grounded in an understanding of cognitive and developmental psychology; Dalo was influenced by the socio-cultural context of educational experiences, which impacts how adults construct meaning; and Boyd, was also influenced by the consciousness-raising aspect of learning, which shapes a learner's sense of self and interpretations of the world around them (Dirkx, 1998). There are additional implications of this theory with regard to international education.

Transformative learning in international education. To further contextualize how transformative learning theory fits into the theoretical framework for this proposed study, examples of its application to the broader field of international education will be shared.

Among college students, those who have traveled abroad have a distinct advantage over students who have not had this experience. Students have a better understanding of multiculturalism when they are able to see and experience it firsthand. Richardson (2012), Professor of Business and International Education Coordinator, showed how study abroad can serve to reinforce “the concept of global citizenship, cultural tolerance, and humanitarian responsibility” (p. 47). This ability to experience another culture firsthand through immersion, homestays, business visits and cultural integration should not be underappreciated, but it is not the only contributing factor in developing a student global citizenship. Bradshaw (2013), states, “Community college graduates are now expected to be prepared to communicate with people from all over the world, understand complex global economic changes, and are told to expect

even greater global integration throughout the course of their lifetimes” (p. 40). The benefit of applying multicultural knowledge both in and out of the classroom is immense since employees are seeking to find globally competent students to fill their employment needs (Daniel, Xie & Kedia, 2014; Milliron, 2007).

Study abroad experiences can trigger a disorienting experience for students as they enter a new environment, a new culture, and a radically different context to what they are accustomed to as college students or adult learners. Learning facilitators for these experiences also guide students through critical reflection, both pre-entry in country and after re-entry into their home cultures. These experiences encourage transformational learning experiences, both in terms of personal and professional growth (Miller & Gonzalez, 2009).

Chang, Chen, Huang, and Yuan (2012) identified key triggers (e.g., living conditions, a new culture’s use of time, situations contrasting previous experiences, and so on), which contributed to 10 international service-learning students’ development. “When international volunteers were faced with something beyond their existing mental framework, they were often stunned and needed some time to make sense of the situation” (p. 240). Students not only learned more about their new environments but also about themselves, which was revealed through their personal introspection and critical reflection. While education abroad experiences often result in transformative learning situations, the authors of this study conclude that development resulted in a dramatic contrast between the participants' new and past experiences and incidents that went beyond their existing cognitive frameworks” (p. 247).

Research also shows that students are not the only ones to undergo cognitive, emotional, and social change. Faculty engage in developing internationalized curriculum or in understanding how their own worldviews shape their attitudes, beliefs, and dispositions as

educators, resulting in true, authentic learning (Halupa, 2015). Nienhaus and Williams (2016) used transformative learning theory to understand how faculty members developed as learners through professional development of their own global awareness and competence while they developed internationalized curriculum. Participants in a Global Faculty Development Program (GFDP)—a four –year professional development program as part of a comprehensive internationalization plan for the university—described the various ways instrumental outcomes and transformative outcomes were obtained by their involvement. Not only did all the involved faculty share of their personal growth and broadened perspectives of culture, the process of internationalization and their role in internationalization influenced the participants. “The process of transforming curriculum during the GFDP also reframed the thinking of some participants about the power they have in shaping the story told in the curriculum” (p. 69). Optimally, internationalized curriculum can provide transformative learning experiences to students that make them aware of not only international content but of economic, historic, and political interconnections. In short, transformative learning experiences require creative and enthusiastic teachers (Clifford & Montgomery, 2017). Bond, Qian and Huang (2003) suggested that for curriculum to be internationalized, there must first be internationalized faculty. Despite not all faculty being confident of their own abilities to create sound curriculum, they must be willing and have a desire to change.

"Disagreement and discomfort are clearly part of global learning, and educators may design learning activities that pull students out of their academic and cultural comfort zones" (p. 59). This discomfort is relevant to both student and faculty. Faculty plays a critical role in developing curriculum, and their own growth provides additional ways to develop goals of a global learning based curriculum. To make sense of the world, students need to see multiple

perspectives and to bridge the general and particular (the local/global connection) especially a learning centered paradigm rests on the assumptions that a college's purpose is not to transfer knowledge but to create experiences and environments that allow for student discoveries and problem-solving (Bar & Tagg, 1995).

With a more narrow focus on classroom curriculum, Robertson (2015) examined student interest in internationalized curriculum in addition to students' perceptions of his or her ability to embrace an international perspective. Results suggested a strong, positive correlation between a higher global perspective and the support of family, peer, and faculty encouragement. This also resulted in the reported increased likelihood that students' would also participate in other internationalized activities, including but also in addition to participation in study abroad. Given TL's focus on the shift in perspectives and worldviews, this is relevant to classroom curriculum. It is also relevant with global learning outcomes in curriculum regarding students experiences' with these curricular expectations while considering what piques curiosity in students, what surprises them, and how their views might shift over time. Davis, Snyder, and Widmar's (2014) used frequency tests to calculate whether or not attitudes of students in three agricultural classes changed regarding international content changed. In seven of eight categories, students showed an increase in feelings curricular exposure, including increased interest in finding internationally focused employment in natural resources or the environment and understanding international cultures.

Zimitat (2008) found with more than half of participants in college classroom settings that group work with a culturally diverse group of students allowed for scaffolding opportunities regarding intercultural awareness. However, one quarter of the students felt it was ineffective in developing these critical understandings, which could be transformed perceptions about others to

enable seeing and acting differently in their classrooms, with their peers, and ultimately, in the world. As aforementioned, Custer and Touminen (2017) offered context of students in a sociology course and their intercultural development using a classroom based virtual exchange with Japanese students. With an interest in understanding the transformational opportunities that existed in these exchanges, they used the topic of society's promotion of particular gender roles for students in both countries to discuss and share experiences. A lively exchange followed with the virtual exchange having "the capacity to shift students' perceptions about other cultures (p. 351). This opportunity for rich authentic exchange, in the context of a classroom based sociology class, offers transformational learning opportunities for place-bound students and may even inspire participation in other educational opportunities abroad.

Opportunities and limitations. Transformative learning takes into account a learner's emotions, which are linked to critical reflection and they provide a pathway to action. This theory "emphasizes the importance of inner meaning and mental constructs for learning in adult life" (Hoggan, Simpson & Stuckey, 2009, p. 17) while incorporating multiple ways of knowing and expressing oneself creatively. Instead of one manifestation of knowledge, this theory acknowledges the affective (emotional), somatic (sensory perception), spiritual (non-rational), and artistic forms of expression.

There is also a clear connection of critical self-reflection to the learning process as well as to the decision-making process. Mezirow (1998), in revisions of this theory, clarified the purpose and process of critical reflection. Drawing from King and Kitchner's (1994) model of reflective judgment, Mezirow determined the importance of *active construction* of knowledge in the later stages of reflection. Not only can this act change one's self-concept and worldviews, it has the ability to impart change into the world.

A limitation of Mezirow's theory is its failure to integrate how context affects and influences the learning process for adults (Illeris, 2017). It is also cited the original iteration of this theory failed to incorporate social change despite the need for one to *first* cognitively understand how power and oppression exists in one's life *before* being able to impart change. "[Mezirow's] response was to say that individual transformation was [the] focus and a necessary precursor to aligning with other like-minded people to affect social change" (Merriam & Bierema, 2014, p. 89). Much like the outcomes of critical theory, transformative theory does shape people to be different while involving the awareness of a person's own belief system. Baumgartner (2012) illustrates that perspective-sharing and a more integrated view of the world and one's place in it is a result of this personal, individualized self-transformation.

An additional limitation is related to experience as part of transformation. Given that critical reflection on a prior interpretation is needed in order to interpret the meaning of one's action, the concept of experiences is rarely articulated. Taylor and Cranton (2013) dig into the concepts of experience, empathy, desire to change, and the largely positive orientation that the theory suggests. The authors cite the lack of parameters for the transformative experience that contrasts other types of experiences; they ultimately deduce that the experience resides in the individual (similar to Dewey's belief), which is mediated by personal context and history. Context is seemingly void in transformational theory as well, and it is debatable whether or not one can revert to the "old self" and perspective after a transformation has occurred (Merriam & Bierema, 2014). Illeris and Laros (2017) assert there is no comprehensive or new definition for TL despite the addition criticism that Mezirow strictly limited learning to adulthood while excluding childhood; he questions the age at which adulthood can be determined and draws on Erickson's understanding of identity being heavily informed by youth experiences. The revised

definition is that “the concept of transformative learning comprises all learning which implies changes in the identity of the learner” (p. 181). For this study, this more inclusive definition will help frame the understanding of students’ learning from an internationalized curriculum.

Implications for this Study

Figure 2.1 identified the key elements and theories used in this study to help understand students’ connection with an internationalized curriculum based on their personal experiences. When viewing the core dimensions of a global learning-based curriculum and the overarching goals of general education courses in the Kanaska Technical College System, there is a demonstrated link between what students are expected to learn and why as illustrated in Table 2. This chapter also addressed the AAC&U Global Learning VALUE Rubric and how the two person-centered learning theories of andragogy and transformative learning can help better understand how adult students learn from internationalized courses based on experiences and their individual development. This conceptual framework frames the research design for this study, which is detailed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

This study seeks responses to the question: How do students attending a technical college with an internationalized curriculum connect with the opportunity and assign relevance.

Attendant research questions included: 1) What aspects of an internationalized curriculum in their course of study draw student interest? 2) What types of learning opportunities in an internationalized curriculum do students suggest help them make connections to their personal lives, workplace or occupational interests? and 3) In what ways, if any, do students assign relevance to the learning experiences in an internationalized curriculum to their personal lives, workplace or occupational interests? Answering these questions will help determine what aspects of this curriculum cultivate student interest and what learning opportunities exist in the curriculum that help them connect learning with their personal and workplace/occupational lives.

This chapter shares the qualitative, phenomenological research design used to study the research question. A pilot study was conducted and garnered the research design for this dissertation investigation. Appendix F shows the pilot study's contribution to this dissertation. Supported by that design, I begin by explaining my selection of a qualitative approach for this study. Next the study's context, sample, and data collection methods are shared followed by a description of the selected methodological tools and the research schedule. A description of how the generated data was analyzed, interpreted, and reported follows. Next, I discuss my reflexivity in the research process. The chapter ends with the limitations of the study.

Interpretive Qualitative Research

This research focused on “how” students connect their experiences in an internationalized curriculum and assign relevance. As such, the study called for interpretive, qualitative research. This is because interpretive research probes perspectives and does not look for one truth. As

Creswell (1998) noted, philosophical assumptions as well as types of questions (for example, *how* or *why*) that allow researchers to explore topics affect a researcher's choice of framework. In addition, all aspects of a research study are affected by the chosen research approach as it shapes the research questions, the data analysis techniques, and our observations as researchers (Merriam, 2009).

Interpretive, qualitative research assumes that reality is socially constructed with multiple interpretations (Merriam, 2009). In line with my research focus on student connections with curriculum, qualitative research is an appropriate way to understand how students' realities are constructed in their worlds (Maxwell, 2013). As with any curriculum, a full picture of its outcome goes beyond numerical data. In 2013, prior to enrolling into doctoral coursework, I conducted action-research in my own writing courses by examining students' response to a global theme-based curriculum and how it both shaped their interest in writing and impacted their global awareness. Luis, mentioned in the onset of this dissertation, was part of that first cohort of "global learners." In a rather rudimentary form, I used quantitative data to measure their growth over the course of a semester. However, it was the multitude of those "in between" conversations, their exchange of notes and ideas, the questions they asked, and their non-verbal communication that told the story of how they made meaning of their own experiences with this new learning. When students' responses were reduced down to numbers, I found myself wishing I had encapsulated their transformation throughout the semester primarily in a qualitative manner compared to the pre and post surveys that were used. In other words, qualitative research, underscores the "researcher's role as an active learner who can tell the story from the participants' view rather than as an 'expert' who passes judgment on participants" (Creswell, 1998, p. 18). In this study, the stories, taken together offer a "complex holistic picture" (p. 15) of

students' experiences with an internationalized curriculum.

Using a Phenomenological Qualitative Approach

My use of phenomenology was appropriate for this research sought to understand students' experiences as they develop as global learners. Patton (2015) addressed qualitative paradigms of inquiry by their core questions with phenomenology seeking to understand the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experience. This study's framework encapsulated what students thought, felt, remembered, and how they made sense of global competencies embedded in their courses. Such work goes beyond sensory description to include the nature or essence of the experience as opposed to the whether or not something happened or how it happened (van Manen, 1990). Moustaks (1994) proposed that a phenomenological study like this would seek answers to structural meaning of the lived experiences and identification of underlying themes and various contexts, which account for the themes that emerge.

Kinloch and San Pedro (2014) remind us about "the utility of language [in providing] opportunities for the emergence of multiple, related, and conflicting experiences through the use of various channels and spaces of communication" (p. 21). Interviews, observations from participant interviews, and data were examined through a phenomenological lens, thus highlighting the experiences, or lack thereof. Given that the research question sought to understand which connections were present and how relevance from learning outcomes is determined, I was also aware these connections from students were at times absent or hard for participants to identify.

The Study's Research Context

This study took place with students who were participating or who had participated in the Kanaska Technical College System (KTCS) located in the Midwest. The unique mission of

technical colleges provided both opportunities and challenges for this this type of learning.

Though study abroad experiences continue to be seen as the primary or sole way for students to participate in other cultures, economies, and traditions, an internationalized course curriculum may be able to contribute to student development in similar ways (Milstein, 2005; Zhang, 2011).

The study's context was informed by the student demographics in two-year colleges since these institutions largely serve an adult population while students' personal and professional goals can often differ from their four-year counterparts. For brief context, the University of Kanaska System served more than 175,000 students in the 2016-17 school year, 21% of which were over 25 years of age (UK Factbook, 2018). Though the programs and degree options are different in the Kanaska Technical College System (KTCS) (e.g., bachelor's, master's, and doctorate versus liberal arts transfer, applied associate, technical diploma, and apprenticeships), it is important to note that the KTCS, which served more than 307,000 students in the same school year, awarded 47% of its degrees to students 25 years of age or older (KTCS Factbook, 2018).

Selection of Sites for this Study

All data for this study was collected from two separate colleges in the Kanaska Technical College System. Comprised of 16 different institutions that collectively span 54 campuses, the KTCS is a touch-point each year for over 300,000 students with program offerings ranging from mechanical engineering to criminal justice and agribusiness. Programs across the KTCS confer apprenticeships, diplomas, certificates, and associate degrees to their students. Over 30% are race or ethnic minority students and 30% are Pell Grant eligible (KTCS Factbook, 2018). The system also serves thousands of students in English Language Learning (ELL), Adult Basic Education (ABE), career exploration or personal enrichment courses, and dual enrollment (i.e.,

high school students also enrolled in courses for college credit).

In the KTCS, six of these colleges are “hybrid” institutions, which also offer two-year liberal arts transfer degrees in addition to associates of applied science degrees. This study focused on “pure” technical colleges that offered associates of applied science degrees, also known as AAS occupational degrees. All 18 participants in the study were enrolled in or had completed associates or diploma programs.

All 16 colleges in the system fall under the same umbrella of governance for program development and facility expansion, but each college has its own local governing board and president. Additionally, each determines its own mission, vision, and strategic directives based on the needs of the community or communities where the college resides. In addition, there is no prescribed approach for colleges to achieve global integration across the system, nor is it a requisite to address this need at all. As discussed in Chapter One, colleges across the system have varying levels of commitment to global education based on leadership and resource allocation. Within this context, I selected two different colleges—Alpha Technical College and Beta Technical College.

Alpha Technical College. The first school, Alpha Technical College (ATC), is a suburban school that also supports the nearby urban city of Centerville. The enrollment size of ATC is average compared to other schools across the system, serving just under 10,000 degree-seeking students on two separate campuses (KTCS Factbook, 2018). For the last strategic goal cycle which ended with the 2017-18 school year, a global focus was included in the school’s mission: “ATC is the leader in workforce development, preparing learners for success within the regional and global economy” (school website, 2018). In addition, one of the school’s four strategic initiatives centered on global integration as it pertained to a global mindset across the

college, global competency development for students, and development of international partnerships. However, both of these affirmations of a global focus were eliminated from the current strategic plan.

Despite the transition away from explicating including global in the strategic directives, ATC does incorporate six core ability skills (CAS) into students' curricular and co-curricular experience. Commonly referred to at other colleges across the system as soft skills or employability skills, these are critical abilities, skills, and behaviors that employers expect to see demonstrated in the workplace. One of the six CAS is Citizenship, which is defined with four sub-criteria: Demonstrate local engagement, global awareness, social responsibility, and effective engagement with diverse populations. This CAS has helped establish the need and expectation for academic curriculum and co-curricular programming to incorporate local engagement and global awareness focus throughout curriculum. As of the completion of this dissertation, the four Citizenship criteria were being redistributed to be included in four of the remaining core ability skills, yet there are no standard requirements for where and when they are assessed in the remaining four CAS.

International student recruitment has not been a focus of support at the college, and the 2017-18 school year had only eight international students enrolled in programs. Nonetheless, a global education office of one staff does exist, and it reports directly to the Dean of Student Support, which is part of Student Services. In addition, there is an English as a Second Language (ESL) program, a Global Business program, and Global Learning Curriculum Team (GLCT). As of spring 2019, the ESL program relocated to the main campus of ATC, and students from over 50 countries were also part of the ATC campus community; these students included transnational and domestic students. The Global Learning Curriculum Team, under executive leadership

support in its sponsorship by the Vice President of Learning, is comprised primarily of faculty along with the curriculum coordinator, international education coordinator, and other staff. The team exists to “standardize education abroad course competencies, communicate about the process and training for internationalizing curriculum, and provide recommendations for moving the college forward with global integration” (Team Charter, internal document).

Beginning in the 2013-14 school year, the Division of Professional and Academic Excellence started an annual call for Global Mini Grant proposals for faculty to internationalize an element or unit in pre-existing courses. Since its inception, near 40 grants have been awarded, and internationalized units or activities were developed in various communication skills and social sciences along with early childhood education, health, and business courses. Additionally, for the past 10 years, the past and current associate deans for the Communication Skills and Social Sciences (CS/SS) Department have committed time and resources for faculty to internationalize courses.

In 2014, a competency of “Apply a global mindset” was added to many of the CS/SS courses. The associate dean had also worked with the GLCT to create a needs assessment around internationalizing curriculum, professional development opportunities for both full and part-time faculty, and the development of global learning implementation plans by all adjunct faculty. There was intentionality around curriculum design for integrating global learning content and assessments, and this was the norm for the department given its strong faculty representation on the GLCT. It is important to note the Communication Skills and Social Sciences Department is just one of the four departments in the Academic Foundations/General Studies department which also includes the Math and Natural Science department, Adult Basic Education (ABE), and Academic Support. This delineation is relevant since the sample population for this study will be

identified through the Communication Skills and Social Sciences Department given its inclusion of the global mindset competency. However, since these implementation plans were faculty-specific in their creation, those global learning activities may go or unincorporated if a faculty member leaves.

Beta Technical College. The second school, Beta Technical College (BTC), is an institution with several campuses that serve five counties in central Kansas, and the college had one of the highest enrollments in the KTCS. Supporting the city of Owasso, BTC has a strong global presence at the college, largely since the college president has a global perspective for many initiatives at the college. BTC has a close relationship with the colleges in Mexico as a large number of students came to BTC to learn agriculture practices. At one point, the college had the highest number of international students in all of the system with over 250 enrolled in programs. To support this intentionality, the global education office (which reports directly to the Vice President of Instructional Services) is multi-faceted in its support of international students, corporate training and study abroad, English Language programs along with translation and interpretation services (school website, 2018). In addition to a global education office, which has seven staff members, there is a Global Studies Program, a Business Management program with a Global emphasis option, additional language and global certificate offerings, and a Global Education Committee comprised of faculty and other staff members across the college.

Lastly, the global focus is strong due to a substantial amount of committed resources to global practices; global “is the norm” (personal communication, April 20, 2018). In the 2014-15 school year, a dozen mini grants were awarded to faculty to encourage incorporation of global elements in their course curricula. Faculty receiving these grants internationalized courses ranging from Business Technology, Human Resource Management, and Banking to Mechanical

Design and Communication Skills (personal communication, April 27, 2018). To my knowledge, the same is true with these global grants. Since they were faculty-specific in their creation, those global learning activities may not have been incorporated across other sections outside of those by the grant recipient. The department counterpart to ATC is the combined Math, Science, Social Science and Communication Skills department, and it is part of the larger General Studies division. Adult Basic Education, ELL, and Global Studies are additional departments in this division.

These two sites demonstrated distinctly different approaches to integrating global learning in the college, programs, and curricula, which included leadership and international student recruitment and support. While the approaches at both colleges were different, the focus on students' global mindset growth is present for both institutions, and faculty support and resources for internationalization of curriculum were also present in both institutions. However, in this study, I did not intend to compare courses to evaluate their methodologies; rather, I considered the institutional goals, resources, and faculty who ultimately shaped curriculum delivered to students for examination. The gatekeeping mechanisms and how I accessed these two sites is described in the Research Schedule section of this chapter.

Data Collection Methods: Interviews and Document Analysis

The phenomenologist seeks understanding of the lived experience and how participants interpret the world, and “the only way for us to really know what another person experiences is to experience the phenomena as directly as possible for ourselves” (Patton, 2015, p. 116). That statement has methodological implications and impacts this study's research design. Thus, the primary tool for this dissertation study was face-to-face interviews since they allow for the researcher to gain insight into participants' lived experiences (van Manen, 1990). In addition, to

focusing on students' experiences through interviews, I also used student-learning reflections for data analysis. Both interviews and personal document analysis were coded and analyzed through the lenses of andragogy and transformative learning while considering the outcomes associated with global learning-based curriculum.

Interviews. I used participant interviews to collect data since “asking good questions is key to getting meaningful data” (Merriam, 2009, p. 114). Whether these questions pertained to personal experience, knowledge, or demographics, open-ended, follow-up questions or probes were very important in understanding the lived experience. The phenomenological method relies on the researcher's ability to be a true listener while being sensitive to the “subtle undertones of language” (van Manen, 1990, p. 111). Thus, my dialogue with students provided an opportunity for in-depth discussion and follow-up questions and clarifications. Sociologist and Professor of Education, de Marrais (2004) defines an interview as a conversation between two people focused on a given topic. The context created by researchers for participants is crucial so that participants are able to share what they have learned through the essence of their experiences. As a researcher, my role was to keep the participants focused in describing their experiences. I bracketed out my assumptions to keep track of my beliefs and assumptions. As Husserl (1913) suggested, researchers momentarily erase the world by suspending judgment about the natural world.

The interviews took place in a private room on each of the college campuses in order to maintain privacy while remaining in a casual campus location with which participants are familiar. Consent forms were signed and collected at the beginning of the interview. This consent form also disclosed that I was using an outside transcriptionist and this would be the only other person to have access to the audio recordings. Each student was reminded that the interview was

voluntary and that they had the right to stop the recording or the interview at any time.

Participants were made fully aware of the purpose of the study as well as the anticipated time commitment in advance of the interviews through the recruitment mechanisms (emails, etc.). I also offered students a \$20 Amazon, Starbucks or bookstore gift card as compensation for their time; this was included in the recruitment communication. I encouraged students to talk with me about their experiences in their own ways while assuming I was unfamiliar with the goals or activities of the courses they discuss. Below are example questions, which guided our conversation:

- Tell me about your other roles and responsibilities besides being a student.
- Describe what you think of or feel when you hear the term *global learning*.
- Please tell me what has contributed to your understanding of global learning activities, either on a personal or professional level. Do you find them useful? If so, in what ways?
- When you think about yourself as a professional, how would you describe the effects global learning activities have had / will have on you?

In my pilot study and during my proposal, a definition of global learning was included on the interview guide. However, I eliminated it for this study so that I could allow my participants to guide the conversation so as to further understand what their experiences were like. The interview protocol is included in Appendix D, and it includes several probes, which were not present for students at the interview.

Upon conclusion of each interview, I described the written student learning evidence reflection questions; participants emailed these reflections to my UWM email. This methodological tool is described next. Overall, there were no direct anticipated benefits other

than the gift card for the subjects; this information will benefit faculty and administrators seeking engaged students in internationalization practices.

Document analysis. In the pilot study, only participant interviews and field notes were used as data sources. In order to achieve reliability and validity, I triangulated data by adding examples of student learning evidence (SLE) reflections. Personal documents can take many forms, but generally, they “refer to any first-person narrative that describes an individual’s actions, experiences, and beliefs” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 133). Even though a key component of transformative learning is critical reflection, which allows students to learn for themselves instead of acting on the concepts or beliefs of others (Mezirow, 1998), I did not assume the internationalized courses were designed with assessment tasks that encouraged reflection. However, this student learning evidence collection offered an additional opportunity for reflection which Collier and Williams (2005) define as a person’s “intentional and systematic consideration of an experience, along with how that person and others are connected to that experience framed in terms of particular content and learning objectives” (p. 85).

After each interview was completed, I described reflection questions to be completed on one of the participant’s past global learning activities, projects, or units. There were simple parameters that the reflection should be around 250-300 words in length. Questions included:

1. Please describe the global learning activity (project, paper, etc.). What were the goals and guidelines of the project, and what were your thoughts or feelings after the project was assigned? (Why did you select this assignment for reflection?)
2. What were the most interesting/fun/unique/challenging aspects about completing this project?

3. Describe how your thinking may have changed during the activity/after the activity (either before or after completing your degree program?)
4. What do you feel may be a suggestion for improving this learning activity for future students?

Glaser and Strauss (1967) found that documents and/or artifacts have been underused in qualitative research due to the fact that researchers prefer to produce their own data. Merriam (2009) also suggests that documents can often be incomplete especially when used as a secondary data source that seeks to verify findings. However, these documents allowed for an additional opportunity for the student voice to describe what students interpret as goals and outcomes of internationalized curriculum. It helped cultivate rich, thick description to the findings of this study while increasing validity of the study (Creswell, 2014).

Selection of Participants

In collecting information, different procedures and approaches exist and can be influenced by the qualitative framework chosen. Thus, purposeful sampling is key in locating a site and individuals for a study since many possibilities exist from which the researcher can choose. Creswell (1998) suggested that for a phenomenological study, the key is to find multiple individuals who have experienced the phenomenon, and as discussed in Chapter Two, students who had completed a communication skills/social science (CS/CS) course were part of the sample population. Patton (2015) states that maximum variation (heterogeneity) sampling has strengths in that “any common patterns that emerge from great variation are of particular interest and value in capturing the core experiences and central, shared dimensions of a setting or phenomenon” (p. 283). Participants in the study were representative of the KTCS demographics and represented a mix of ages (roughly half born before 1993 and half born after 1993). Age 25

and older is the cutoff that the KTCS uses in its reporting, and it allowed me to roughly group traditional and non-traditional students. In addition, they collectively represented students from five different divisions across their colleges. This allowed for representation across the various occupations of interest. Students younger than 18 were excluded. At Alpha Technical College, my goal was to exclude students I taught in previous courses only if I had enough interested participants. This helped approach maximum variation that is representative of technical college students while allowing me to discover different groups' experiences of the phenomena. Because this dissertation is a compilation of their stories, profiles of participants are shared in Chapter 4.

IRB Approval

I sought IRB approval at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee first and then at Alpha Technical College and Beta Technical College. This research study was not controversial, and any physical, psychological or economic risks from participation in the study was minimal. I respected the privacy of the institution as well as the human subjects who were interviewed. Each student was given a pseudonym to ensure confidentiality so that I could elicit reliable information should the students feel anything they shared could have been detrimental to their academic standing in the course or at the institution.

Transcribed interviews will be stored in a secure location until five years after the study has concluded at which time they will be destroyed. The data was analyzed qualitatively and has been reported anonymously through pseudonyms for participants. I received IRB approval for the pilot study in Spring 2017. I submitted a New Study to the IRB for this dissertation research in Fall 2018. I received IRB approval for this work on September 26, 2018. Appendix G shares a copy of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee letter of approval.

Research Schedule: Accessing Sites, Selecting, and Interviewing Participants

I kept my research schedule as flexible as possible given the short timeframe from my proposal defense to the data collection phase. While waiting for IRB approval, I created the demographic survey for potential participants using UWM Qualtrics. The purpose of this survey was to obtain a representative sample should I have had more interested participants than I could accommodate. Appendix H shares this survey instrument. I engaged in two separate yet similar processes at each research site.

Accessing Alpha Technical College, selecting, and interviewing participants. Given my insider status at Alpha Technical College, I met with the Associate Dean of the Communication Skills/Social Sciences department in late August 2018. Together, we identified 16 sections of courses as a sample. These sections were chosen based on a mix of communication and social science courses, a mixture of day and night courses, and a mixture of courses taught by both adjunct and full-time faculty. These sections were drawn from the Fall 2017, Spring 2018, and Summer 2019 semesters. The sections were shared with the intuitional research office, and I received a compiled list of student names and email addresses for any student who completed the course by earning a C or higher. I sent my recruitment email to this first batch at the very end of September. When interested participants responded, I sent them a follow-up email with a link to the Qualtrics survey, and we exchanged emails to establish an agreed upon interview date and time.

Ten days after the initial recruitment email was sent, I only had one respondent and interview scheduled. Therefore, I identified 12 more sections from the three previously mentioned semesters, and I used the same mixture of courses to identify sections to draw from. While I was waiting for the second batch of student names and emails, I sent a follow-up email

request to batch one, and this included a truncated email message with the recruitment letter as an attachment. Six additional students responded, and I eliminated one of the additional students since he was a current student in one of my courses. The six other students received the survey link, and we scheduled interview times on campus.

While the first batch was scheduling interview times, I received the second batch of email addresses one week after the request. I combined the second list with the first list, eliminated any duplicate names from batch one, and I also eliminated any past or current students I was able to identify. Similar to the first batch, I also sent a follow-up request to batch two. Three additional students replied to this second batch request; we made appointments that went beyond Thanksgiving and into the last week of November. My first interview at ATC was on October 11 and the last one was completed at the end of November; each of the 10 interviews occurred on one of 10 separate days. One of the 10 participants was a past student of mine in Spring 2015; I did not know this because his name was unfamiliar until I met him in the student center. I still conducted the interview, coded the data, and included him in the sample of 10 since he was the only student enrolled in the school of applied technologies and was a male.

Accessing Beta Technical College, selecting, and interviewing participants. In April 2018, I was able to identify a gatekeeper at Beta Technical College via a colleague who was knowledgeable about the landscape of comprehensive internationalization in the Kanaska Technical College. He connected me with an instructional manager at BTC with whom I spoke in April 2018 when I learned about mini grants offered to help faculty internationalize. I also spoke with three faculty about their curriculum development projects and implementation. Later, I was connected with the Dean of General Studies, and we spoke in June 2018. After I had received BTC's IBR approval request in early October, I met with and the Dean and Associate

Dean of General Studies. Together, we developed a similar approach to identify courses from which to draw a sample of students. Given that there are two main campus locations for BTC, and that a larger majority of course offerings were online, we took these considerations into effect to achieve a representative sample. After this request was shared from the Dean and Associate Dean with the institution's research office, I received three different spreadsheets – one from each semester of Fall 2017, Spring 2018 and Summer 2018. I consolidated these three lists, eliminated duplicates, and sent my first recruitment email the next week. This email was the truncated version that I used at ATC with the full recruitment letter included as an attachment. Sixteen students from the first batch replied with interest; 11 completed the online survey, and nine had appointments scheduled for interviews. One had to cancel due to a family emergency, and I ended up interviewing eight students at two different campus locations over the course of three days in November. One participant at each college completed a paper copy of the demographic survey before the interview officially started.

Prior to each interview across both institutions, I emailed a copy of the interview questions and the consent forms to each participant; these are included in Appendices D and E. I met each participant at the respective student centers and conducted the interview in a private room. Before the official interview started, participants signed the consent form, received paper copies of the interview questions, and were encouraged to ask any questions they may have had. In the time I had with each participant, I was able to establish credibility and draw out the stories of their experiences with an internationalized curriculum. I completed the interviews at ATC over the course of 10 days at one campus location; interviews ranged in length from 26 minutes to 60 minutes with an average of 36 minutes. I completed the interviews at Beta Technical College over the course of four days at two different campus locations; the interviews ranged in

length from 30 minutes to 88 minutes with an average of nearly 44. Collectively, the interviews allowed for a rich exchange of information when participants shared their stories.

During each audio-recorded interview I jotted down field notes on an interview guide with the probes present; I shared the four guiding reflection questions at the end of each interview and gave each participant a paper copy of the reflection questions. After each interview concluded, I created a page reflection in my research journal either directly after the interview if there was time or by the end of the day. I put the signed consent forms, my field notes, a copy of the demographic survey, and any other supporting materials in a separate file folder for each participant.

Six of the 18 participants emailed their reflection within two weeks of their completed interviews. I sent a follow-up email reminder to participants about the reflection at the end of December, and three more emailed their reflections by the end of the first week of January 2019. Overall, four of the 10 ATC participants completed reflections and five of the eight BTC participants submitted reflections. After each reflection was submitted, I mailed or emailed a \$20 gift card to the participants. I shared all 18 audio files on a flash drive with an outside transcriptionist.

Analyzing the Generated Data

Qualitative research is more about creating something comprehensible *out of* data rather than the mere process of *gathering* it (Wolcott, 1994), and writing is the continuous process that gives a sense of purpose to that data. As co-creators of meaning *with* participants, qualitative researchers provide context in order to situate the lives, issues, and stories of what researchers see and hear in field observations and in interviews. Moustakas (1994) goes so far as to refer to research participants as co-researchers – a term that indicates that both parties are integral to the

process of developing meaning.

In January and February 2019, I reviewed transcripts and analyzed data. In February and March, I started writing Chapter Four; in April, I wrote Chapter Five and revised Chapters One, Two and Three, which were all part of my initial proposal.

The analysis of interview transcripts and reflection documents was based on an inductive approach to identify patterns in the data. “Inductive analysis begins with specific observations and builds toward general patterns. Categories or dimensions of analysis emerge from open-ended observations of the inquirer comes to understand patterns that exist in the phenomenon being investigated” (Patton, 2015, p. 64). After my data analysis of the semi-structured interviews and document analysis from all 18 participants at both colleges, three categorical themes emerged: (1) People, (2) Place, (3) and Occupation.

As mentioned, I listened to audio files and reviewed transcripts and written reflections in January and February before I analyzed all interviews and reflections collectively. Analysis is the careful, “systematic way to identify key factors and relationships among them” (p. 10), which funnels a path to attributes and relationships that help visualize and highlight findings for a sharper focus. First, I added each student’s reflection to the end of his or her transcribed interview and analyzed that data to figure out what was going on in the participants’ recounted experiences. In order to eventually identify significant themes, I first analyzed the data by reading, rereading, listening, and jotting down initial thoughts and observations in a right hand-side margin of the transcripts. I manually coded all data, and preliminary codes were assigned in the margin or by using rich text features of bolding and italics. Based on my theoretical lenses of andragogy and transformative learning theories, larger selections of text were identified.

To honor student voice, I used In Vivo Coding –words or short phrases from the

participants' own language – to understand their perspectives via the language of participants. Saldana (2013) suggests that In Vivo Coding “is appropriate for virtually all qualitative studies” (p. 91), and this allowed me to grasp the meaning of their feelings through action-oriented words, emotions, and even the inflection in their voices upon listening to their spoken words. Their specific words were also incorporated into one master theme subtitle in the following chapter. I also used versus coding since binary terms were apparent in participants' identification of descriptions and emotions related to their experiences; this allowed themes to emerge with regard to shifting points of view and subtle conflict, both internal and external. Next, I re-read the transcripts and applied Focused Coding to help see themes develop the three major themes using different colored fonts and highlighting. Appendix I shares photos of my coding room where this re-analysis allowed for the most relevant themes to emerge while comparing participants across both institutions given the swampland of initial codes assigned for all 18 transcripts. Appendix I also includes photos of coding within transcripts. Interpretation is the bridge from the known to the unknown, relating back to theory. This interpretation is how researchers make sense of participants' experiences while acknowledging there may be missing pieces in the puzzle. This coding structure yielded three master themes to dry land as presented in Chapter Four. Lastly, Appendix I includes my coding manual.

This personal involvement with the data provided a great opportunity for an immersion into data, which is critical to thick description (Geertz as cited in James, 2012). Making sense of the data and stitching together the stories my participants shared ultimately rested within my ability to balance a curiosity of *who* people are and the meaning behind the words they shared. James (2012) shared that in interpretation there are no shortcuts to be taken; even though computers aided sorting and organizing of the data, the human element of the craft was

something that I continually practiced.

Reflexivity in the Research Process

Reflexivity, which involves self-questioning and critical self-exploration and attentiveness to my own political, social, and linguistic perspectives, “turns mindfulness inwards (Patton, 2015, p. 70). As a researcher, positionality plays a direct role in what is categorized as material of “what matters” and how I transformed what I saw and heard into a meaningful narrative. Kuntz (2015) discussed the nature of “extracting” information in the interview process and how it rests on a cultural assumption that “authenticity of insider experience [is] represented by a shared external language” (p. 50); yet this can result in a manipulated version of reality when interpreting meaning. In fact, it is a privilege of researchers to “give voice” to the marginalized groups, though Kuntz warns that it is incorrect to assume that said group previously had no voice to share.

Berger (2013) explains the researcher’s need for reflexivity is paramount in terms of identifying how the self is an active part of the creation of new knowledge. However, she also concludes, “shared experience may also color the power relationship between researcher and participant” (p. 6). This ushers in a sense of responsibility as it pertains to my own epistemological and ideological beliefs. As a researcher, I needed to turn the mirror inward to take routine inventory of my own “situatedness” within this study.

Currently a communications instructor at Alpha Technical College, I have been leading a team to help develop a global mindset in faculty, staff, and students at the college. In addition, I have developed and lead service-learning abroad experiences for students at both the high school and college levels for the past seven years. My experiences traveling abroad and developing curriculum that incorporates global learning outcomes and objectives could have led me to

transfer these types of goals and objectives into my participants' shared experiences of global learning in the "home" classroom. In order to minimize bias in the interview and analysis processes, I set aside any preconceived notions or judgment and entered into these conversations with students seeking to understand their lived experiences exactly as they were, not with how I hoped they would be.

My professional and personal experiences were not only drawbacks to be monitored, but they were also strengths which allowed me to more fully understand the aspects of a global learning curriculum and probe for an in-depth understanding of the phenomena. My experience also served as a resource for generating particular data and interpretations (Schwandt, 1997 as cited in Glesne, 2011). Participants may have assumed my familiarity with the general education courses, the faculty, and their understanding of, or interest in, course content given my role as an instructor. However, in my introduction at the onset of each interview, I encouraged students to share in their own ways, with their own examples, and be assured that there are not specific responses I was expecting or seeking.

Overall, I was vigilant to avoid leading questions, in searching for expected connections, and in letting my own personal history unduly shade my understanding. While complete objectivity is not possible, nor is absolute suppression of feeling likely, I remained open-minded as new perspectives entered my worldview; I allowed myself to be fascinated by the distinctiveness of each participant story.

My awareness of the multiple influences I had in the research process shaped how I framed the stories participants told (Gilgun, 2010). Stories like Luis' will undergird the findings, which bridge theory and practice; however, I was careful to suspend my bias as much as possible. When I started to feel my subjectivity getting in the way of my search for meaning in

participants' experiences, I made a concerted effort to pull back and let the research process work the way in which it was intended, which involved letting the participants talk about their experiences and connections in their own ways.

Reflexivity and empathy also guide the researcher interviewing as well as in the processing and usage of analytic notes (Merriam, 2009). I used my language to help connect with my participants, since this can benefit both parties in the research process to reach a shared understanding and acquired trust (Lippke & Tanggaard, 2014). A common data collection issue to be aware of is the difficulty in bracketing/epoché (Merriam, 2009; Maxwell, 2013; Patton, 2015) since I brought my own experiences, understanding, and assumptions to this research study. In Chapter Four, I used an abundance of description; a clear understanding of the story resulted by thorough description of what I saw and heard (along with description of the absence of it).

Establishing Trustworthiness and Credibility in the Research

The integrity of a study rests largely on the ethics of both the research design and implementation of the study. One key concern in all qualitative studies is validity and reliability. Maxwell (2013) addresses validity threats of researcher bias and reactivity that can compromise qualitative conclusions. He asserts that subjectivity in terms of choice in a theoretical lens and selection of data based on previous theory and preconceptions can be abated by integrity. As mentioned, my research was validated with triangulation of my interviews and document analysis to help ensure credibility and trustworthiness when different viewpoints and perspectives were incorporated (Saldaña, 2011). To rule out validity threats, I used rich data to paint a full picture of what was going on and member checks (respondent validation) to ensure that my findings were accurate with what my participants were sharing (Maxwell, 2013;

Merriam, 2009). Member checks were also a means of improving accuracy and validity throughout the interview process (Merriam, 2009). The majority of my member checking occurred in the actual interview with the participants by restating what I heard to ensure understanding of the content and context.

I sought maximum variation and diversity in my sample selection “to allow for a greater range of application of findings” (Merriam, 2009, p. 228), which enhanced transferability of findings to other settings. I aimed to assume a position of neutrality when my participants told their stories by refraining from leading them to any answers. Since my subjectivity was present, I engaged in the process of epoché – setting aside prejudgments and opening the interviews with an unbiased, receptive presence (Moustakas, 1994). The tradition of phenomenology suggests this subjectivity would also be a benefit to my research since I was able to probe deeper into responses based on the knowledge I have regarding the content along with the site. Glesne (2011) stated, “much ethical discussion and consideration in qualitative research, therefore, concerns the nature of relationships with research participants” (p. 163). Since I researched at a site where I encountered one past student without my prior knowledge that he would be participating, I encouraged all students to share their experiences in a way that was comfortable to them and not one that is perceived as “what the teacher expects.” I ensured that my follow-up questions did not lead to specific information or references given my knowledge of courses and the institution; when possible, the same follow-up questions were used across both institutions. If a student at my home institution referenced a faculty by name, I did not follow up with that faculty in any way. I used rich, thick description to the findings as a means to increase validity of the study, which allowed for the reader to more thoroughly understand the phenomena under examination (Creswell, 2014).

Limitations

As with any study, the findings from this research have limitations. First, the sample population was drawn primarily from communication and social sciences courses at both research sites as opposed to all of the general education courses, which would include science and math courses. While this does not necessarily preclude students from discussing these courses in terms of internationalization practices, it potentially led to a heavier focus on a humanities approach. In addition, since the best practice is to allow faculty to define their internationalization in the context of their discipline (Leask, 2009; Agnew & Kahn, 2015), the proposed global learning outcomes can differ from one discipline to another, thus impacting consistent exposure to students.

Even though there is a system-wide general education curriculum, how faculty reach course competencies varies greatly. Thus, a challenge to internationalization efforts is that it tends to focus on the individual faculty creating curriculum. In internationalized courses, each one is created and delivered by a faculty member with a separate interest and expertise. When the international experience is missing, the links between curriculums grow weaker, and the personal interest in making connections between global learning and students is diluted. Furthermore, with technical colleges being very reliant on adjunct faculty, the dissemination of verve and adequate training of faculty is difficult to enact. The Communication Skills/Social Science faculty at Alpha Technical College, with support from the associate dean, was intentional in developing global learning plans for courses, but this is not to say that there is consistency across courses within the department or across both colleges. Finally, as mentioned in the methodological tool section, interviews and participants' reflective documentation also have limitations, but I was mindful of these challenges and adjusted when necessary and able.

This chapter set forth the research design to help understand how students attending a technical college with an internationalized curriculum connected with the opportunity and assigned relevance to their learning. In the next chapter, I present the findings of the study based on my analysis of the data collected throughout the research process.

CHAPTER IV: THE DISSERTATION FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to qualitatively explore answers to the question: How do students attending a technical college with an internationalized curriculum connect with the opportunity and assign relevance? There were three attending questions: 1) What aspects of an internationalized curriculum in their course of study draw student interest? 2) What types of learning opportunities in an internationalized curriculum do students suggest help them make connections to their personal lives, workplace or occupational interests? and 3) In what ways, if any, do students assign relevance to the learning experiences in an internationalized curriculum to their personal lives, workplace or occupational interests? Three themes emerged from the generated data and were foundational to how students at both Alpha Technical College and Beta Technical College connected with their internationalized curriculum:

1. People paved, shaped, and wove formal and informal opportunities into the curriculum and through life experiences. These people included family, friends, classmates, and faculty;
2. Place-bound students, even those who had not ventured beyond their immediate locale, found interest in experiences that both included and transcended the local; and
3. Faculty provided opportunities to connect adult, working students to this global interconnectedness by linking the curriculum to their fields of work.

To present the findings that emerge from these themes, I utilize the image of a bridge to illustrate the connection between students and their internationalized curriculum. Thus, the master themes serve as pilings while the primary findings serve as guide rails, connecting students to their internationalized curriculum.

There were two cases within this phenomenological study of students’ experiences: Alpha Technical College (ATC) and Beta Technical College (BTC). I present the findings as a collective case study. I present the Alpha Technical College case first since the three themes are more distinct from each other and offer a clear picture of their role in connecting students to an internationalized curriculum.

At the onset of this dissertation process, I started with the story of a student named Luis. He validated student voice as critical in the transaction of curriculum decisions into learning opportunities. The 18 student voices in this study across the two sites amplify the path across the bridge to understand how they connect opportunity and assign relevance to an internationalized curriculum.

Part 1: The Shared Stories of Alpha Technical College (ATC) Participants

The 10 Alpha Technical College participants—both full-time and part-time students—comprised a heterogeneous sample with regard to gender, age, and familial status. Five participants identified as female and five identified as male; seven participants were under the age of 25. Students were enrolled in degree programs across all divisions of the college (Business, Health, Applied Technologies, and Public Safety/Service). A pseudonym was used in place of each participant’s name. Table 4.1 shares demographic data for the ten participants who attended Alpha Technical College (ATC).

Table 4.1

Participants from Alpha Technical College (ATC) who participated in the study

	Participant	Enrolled in School of	Completed Semesters	Enrollment Status	Age	Gender	Race/ Ethnicity	First Language	Military Service
A1	Kat	Business	7	Part-time	25	Female	White	English	None
A2	Jenessa	Human/ Protective Services	3.5	Full-time	22	Female	White	English	None
A3	Tonna	Human/ Protective	4.5	Full-time	19	Female	White	English	None

		Services							
A4	Wayne	School of Business	9	Part-time	22	Male	White	English	None
A5	Sam	School of Business	5	Full-time	21	Male	White	English	None
A6	Mary Ann	School of Business	4	Full-time	21	Female	White	English	None
A7	Chad	Applied Technology	8	Full-time	30	Male	White	English	None
A8	Celia	Health Services	5	Full-time	35	Female	Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish	English	None
A9	Colton	Human/Protective Services	3	Part-time	20	Male	White	English	None
A10	Shawn	Health Services	2	Part-time	21	Male	American Indian		None

These participants volunteered stories of their experience as global learners. Their stories undergird this research; thus, I first share a brief summary of each participant including motivations for entry or reentry into college and background, and I weave in factors they identified as having contributed to their understanding of global learning.

Participant A1 – Kat: Kat was in her seventh semester in one of the business programs at ATC. She was working full-time during the semester we talked, but she had recently been laid off. She anticipated switching to full-time enrollment so she could graduate within the year. Kat was also a single mom of three young children. Despite being in her mid-twenties, she had a variety of work experiences, which included doing non-profit humanitarian work in Eastern Europe and being a nanny. Doing these abroad experiences, coupled with her local interests in non-profits, contributed to her program coursework. She shared a story from abroad that was comprised of two emotions woven together. “To go there and feel so out of place, it’s like a good feeling because it’s growing you, you know, versus staying here in your own comfort zone.”

Participant A2 – Jenessa: Jenessa balanced working full-time in the field of education while also attending school full-time. While juggling two full-time jobs seems difficult, it is a circumstance common to at least four other participants in this study. The memories of her K-12 experiences peppered the responses and stories she shared in our interview. When she imagined

visuals associated with global learning, she described: “You know, when you’re in elementary school, sometimes you’ll see a picture of the globe holding hands around it. I think about different projects that I did growing up, different countries and just learning about the way that they live around in different places than what you’re used to.” She had a propensity for doing research on her own about educational practices around the world, and her curiosity and desire to help develop more global learning opportunities within curriculum for students prompted her to participate in the study. Jenessa’s goal was to transfer to a four-year college, “so it just made sense to start here [at ATC].”

Participant A3 – Tonna: "I'm an open book" she shared in a correspondence exchange before we sat down for our interview. Tonna worked in health services since she was a teenager, and during her senior year of high school, she started at ATC as a dual enrollment student, earning college credits while still in high school. At the time of the interview, she worked full-time at a hospital; she had previous internship experience in an urban area and preferred the diversity a large city had to offer. Having a sister-in-law from Africa marry into the family greatly shaped her learning on a personal level. This family experience, she said, helped her better connect with examples in her program’s courses. With regard to a personal application, she shared: “It’s creating a new dynamic in my family, so learning just kind of different ways to do holidays, and different ways of cultural norms of taking off your shoes.”

Participant A4 – Wayne: Wayne direct-enrolled from high school to college, and as a business student, he was looking for the ideal marketing job with a small company to hone his skills. He was one of two participants who asked for a definition of global learning at the onset of our interview. An avid hockey fan and self-described observer in his courses, he discussed the impact of his global marketing course project as a way to help find valid information about

countries that are often sensationalized in the news. “The teacher helped me find different resources we would go to and look at to get our own knowledge, which is good.”

Participant A5 – Samuel: Samuel was also a business student who worked at a car dealership. He initially started at the college with an interest in automotive technology, then accounting, and finally settled on business management. He shared that he liked to see the interconnections of how things work, especially from an historical context. “I try to keep in mind that we don’t live in isolated sort of world anymore and that having a global presence is not something that you can avoid. So it’s smart; there’s a lot of reasons to be globally and internationally interconnected, whether it be economically or socially.”

Participant A6 – Mary Ann: Recently engaged and a partial caregiver for her grandparents and a sick sister, Mary Ann worked at a bakery while enrolled as a full-time student. Prior to ATC, she attended a nearby community college with an initial interest in becoming a paralegal. Now a hospitality and culinary management student, she enjoyed cooking and viewed global learning as “learning the world is so big and everyone sees things completely differently.” She found the experiences of changing her views difficult. “No, it’s hard. I’m one of those people who’s set in my ways. It’s like, ‘no, it’s my way.’”

Participant A7 – Chad: Chad worked full-time, was a homeowner, and was also planning a wedding. After several back surgeries and contemplating the desire for a “better future,” he went back to school after a hiatus from college. He originally started at ATC right out of high school as a criminal justice student, but 10 years later, he was working towards completing a degree in media. Chad’s family had been a steady influencer in his ability to be open-minded and to possess a “willingness to help.” Similar to Sam, he understood that each of us is not isolated. “I can’t think of a single job where you wouldn’t be working with somebody who’s not

necessarily from here or hasn't had some type of global background. So, I think if you don't have that or have that general understanding of what's going on outside of your bubble, that it will definitely hurt you."

Participant A8 – Celia: Though enrolled in the nursing program at ATC, Celia previously completed a Healthcare Management certificate program remotely at another college in the KTCS. As a wife and mother, her diverse family ethnicity proudly shaped her actions in the world, both personally and professionally. "I think I'm a little bit more willing to want to help others because I have seen first-hand how others live that are not as fortunate as me or my family. I've always had that drive, whether it's taking care of somebody that's ill or just being there as a friend because somebody's going through a hard time. I've always had that instinctual drive of helping others. So, trying to do that on a global scale would be ideal for me."

Participant A9 – Colton: Of all participants, Colton had been enrolled for the fewest semesters. He was a third generation ATC student who envisioned helping people in some capacity in the future. In addition, Colton enjoyed Kanaska as his home although he would like to visit Niagara Falls and potentially the Eiffel Tower. His first words in the interview were: "One thing – I don't know what the global learning is. I've never really heard that before." His only exposure was through an extra credit assignment his instructor offered. He concluded that if there was no global learning, "I feel like it would just be a really basic class where you pay and you learn stuff without involving yourself in the outside world."

Participant A10 – Shawn: Shawn was the last of the 18 participants I interviewed, and he was the only one who had previously been enrolled at a four-year university. He worked full-time at a hospital, and both his upbringing and private schooling attributed to his development as a global learner. He shared: "It's very interesting because going from each kind of educational

institution that I've been at, everybody has a different idea of what the word global means. Luckily, I'm very happy with my upbringing in that I was raised in an American Indian household; I was brought up to value education and the people around me. But, when I went to high school, I attended a very conservative, ultra-Lutheran high school, but luckily it also prized education systems around the world and the importance of being empathetic with your fellow man."

Each of the students participated in semi-structured interviews, and four of the 10 submitted additional written reflections about experiences with internationalized curriculum in their courses. Despite differences in the programs of study, time, and personal demographics, there were common experiences across this group of students. Three master themes emerged: (1) People as Pavers, Shapers, and Weavers: Creators of the Bridge for Meaningful Connections; (2) Place Matters but Doesn't Place Boundaries: Local, Regional and International Spaces Help Students Transcend Geographic Boundaries; and (3) Application through Occupation: "We're in an Interconnected World, Whether We Like it or Not". The first theme, *People as Pavers, Shapers and Weavers*, focuses on the specific individuals students identified as supports in helping them make sense of an internationalized curriculum.

Theme 1: People as Pavers, Shapers, and Weavers: Creators of the Bridge for Meaningful Connections to an Internationalized Curriculum

People as Pavers in the bridge to an internationalized curriculum.

The students in this study suggested that people in their personal and academic spaces – family, friends, and faculty – helped develop students' interest in, and connection with, an internationalized curriculum. These people consisted of family members, instructors, classmates and co-workers, each with different roles that can be described as Pavers, Shapers, and Weavers.

Pavers aided in creating early pathways in students' lives, which helped develop future entryways for connecting with an internationalized curriculum. Shapers "shaped" the students' mindsets or students' classroom learning environments. And Weavers introduced or reinforced global learning topics and content within the course curriculum. Each of these supports allowed for students to connect with internationalized curriculum even if they were not formally part of the classroom learning experiences.

Robertson (2015) identified family encouragement as a way to support development on the global perspective scale, but the students in this study said they did so in a variety of ways. Students describe some family members as Pavers, who created paths early in life, which offered various entryways into connecting with an internationalized curriculum. Celia's story was rooted in the strong foundation that the Pavers in her life helped cultivate. As her profile revealed, Celia's European and South American heritage exposed her to several lifestyles and traditions, both through her travel abroad and also the "at home" exchanges through the stories that have been shared with family members. I asked students to first explain what thoughts, images, feelings, or even visuals came to mind when they heard the term "global learning." Celia envisioned this as coming out of one's bubble that we are each trapped in at some point in life by seeing what else is outside of our immediate perspectives. She then shared experiences that helped her personally achieve this, highlighting stories, recipes, and photos a family member shared with her as a child.

I love it. One of my favorite things is being able to hear stories from my family or getting those cookbooks from my mom where her little notes are jotted down. My grandma actually has her index cards of recipes that she's written throughout the years, so I have all of that stuff now. (Celia at ATC, November 19, 2018)

Though Celia grew up in a predominantly white suburb, a diverse group of friends from childhood provided a sharp contrast in the dominant social system, so she routinely saw the perspective of others. “So for me, it was just another way of my every day life was just incorporating other people from different countries” (Celia at ATC, November 19, 2018). This familiarity with other perspectives, cultures, and getting outside “the bubble”, from childhood on, allowed her to develop her own personal interests, which had relevance to her roles as a student, wife, and mother. Researching daily life and cultural practices in other countries, along with international travel to Madagascar and Peru, were two of the many interests that piqued her curiosity.

In addition, she shared insight into life on a Native American reservation from her husband’s college experience with him serving as another Paver in her life. With her husband, Celia paves the way for her children to develop a picture of the world outside the bubble. “The television series, *Expedition Unknown*, is something our whole family likes to sit down and watch because it’s exposing my son as well to all of these other cultures and countries and ways of life; I don’t ever want him to think that this is all you have” (Celia at ATC, November 19, 2018). This curiosity pushed her to be self-directed in her learning, as transformative learning suggests, by allowing a student of the world to be open to new perspectives and create new meaning for these altered perspectives (Mezirow, 1990).

Through global learning, students become more informed, open-minded, and seek understanding of how our world is interconnected (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2014). Shawn also shared his experiences with family members, who functioned as informal Paviers of early experiences in life, allowing him to make future connections between his education and internationalized courses. He described observations of early modeling from

his mother, who helped identify the path to his chosen field in healthcare. “Growing up, I watched my mom be a caregiver for others, and it motivated me to understand why the life that I grew up with was the way it was and how it might be different in another setting” (Shawn at ATC, November 27, 2018).

He explicitly shared that his Introduction to Psychology and Introduction to Sociology courses reaffirmed experiences he had outside the classroom while fine-tuning his future application of these lessons learned. He also described a project to address the issue of global poverty in his Sociology course. I asked him to share his future vision of practicing skills gained from his classroom learning.

Empathy is one of the biggest things that I’d really like to continue to take on in my work. Since I need to be aware of all these different niches, different demographics, and different socioeconomic positions that people are in, I need to be very empathetic and very kind, especially in the field that I work in. (Shawn at ATC, November 27, 2018)

As mentioned in Chapter Two, there is an apparent overlap of the six global learning dimensions and the skills, concepts, and attitudes that define the role of general education courses in the Kanaska Technical College System. In Shawn’s story, all references to his learning addressed his general education courses since he had not yet started his specific program coursework.

Interestingly, in this study, the students’ stories frequently referenced general education courses instead of isolated internationalized opportunities or courses in their programs, which speaks to Theme 3. Table 4.2 shares participants’ references to internationalized general education courses. A cell with a “1” indicates the student described some aspect of the course or a concept/idea he or she felt related to global learning. A “2” in the cell indicates he or she went

into depth about the course and its connection, perhaps by describing a project or a key event that stood out. An example of descriptions or stories that are represented as a “1” is Mary Ann’s reference: “My Economics instructor was actually from Russia, and she does talk about stories related to her culture and the language barrier.” An example of a description that included depth, detail, or strong emotion – a “2” – would be Jenessa’s story of the critical conversation that turned into a “fiasco.” This example is shared later in this theme.

Table 4.2

Participants from Alpha Technical College (ATC) and the courses they referenced in interviews and in written reflections

	Participant	General Education Courses								Program of Study: Course or program reference	
		Oral Interpersonal Communications	Speech	English Composition / Written Communication	Reading Skills	Intro to Sociology	Intro to Psychology	Economics	Intro to Diversity		Microbiology
A1	Kat	1		1	1						
A2	Jenessa	1		1	1				1		
A3	Tonna	1									Generally discussed paramedic courses
A4	Wayne										Global Marketing (course)
A5	Samuel	1						1			Global Business Fundamentals (course)
A6	Mary Ann	1		1				1			Generally discussed international cuisine
A7	Chad	2									Generally discussed one web design project
A8	Celia				2			2			Nursing Fundamentals (course)
A9	Colton		1								
A10	Shawn				2					1	
	Frequency	6	1	1	5	1	1	2	1	1	
	Intensity	7	1	1	7	1	2	2	1	1	

Table 4.2. A “1” in a cell indicates a student mentioned an example in one of their general education courses; a “2” in the cell indicates the students mentioned an example with depth,

*detail, or emotion.*²

O'Connor, Farnsworth, and Utley (2013) posited that faculty perceived problem solving, critical thinking, and analytical skills as a high or very high priority in internationalized curriculum, but the authors neglected to investigate how students, in turn, perceived these skills or how students understood those skills as relevant. In this study, participants made references to similar skillsets, but they used phrases like “finding out what’s true” or needing a “firsthand source.” Tonna, a student in the field of health studies, shared an example of those who helped pave an approach to critical thinking early on in life. She reflected:

My parents raised me with the “ask questions, don’t believe everything you hear” kind of mindset. They didn’t really give me the global learning mindset, but how they raised me was to ask questions, the “do not believe everything I hear” kind of mindset. I’ve done my own investigation, not really research per se, but I’ve been more open to the ideas of people being different. (Tonna at ATC, October 16, 2018)

The skills of seeking information and asking questions were carried from a personal space to the academic space with Chad as well. When I asked what contributed to his ability to make sense of global topics in his courses, he echoed the sentiment about his parents’ role in his upbringing. “I would have to just say, my family has always encouraged to ask questions and not be afraid to ask the hard questions – even if they not have been the most PC questions” (Chad at ATC, October 29, 2018)!

This mindset, first planted by parents or guardians, was also cultivated in a classroom setting by the types of activities and learning opportunities students were asked to participate in

² A similar table will be presented and discussed for students at Beta Technical College in Part 2.

and complete. However, the consequences of being ill-equipped to handle difficult conversations may have had adverse effects both in personal and academic settings. Chad talked about the difficulty in seeking answers or going below surface level conversations when he described the lack of discussion regarding controversial topics in today's classrooms.

Everybody's too scared and worried about offending somebody, but people don't realize you can offend anybody with anything you say or do; it may not even have to do with someone directly related to them. Not enough people take the time to actually have a conversation, so they can't learn how to dialogue respectfully.

(Chad at ATC, October 29, 2018)

Where research has defined skills like critical thinking and critical analysis as tenets of a global learning curriculum (AAC&U, "Global learning", 2014; Clifford & Montgomery, 2017; Fezzey, Fujieda, Goerdt, Kahler, & Nikoi, 2017), students' lexicon included terminology like "asking questions" instead. Interestingly, this ability to see a connection between critical thinking and global awareness is something faculty in the O'Connor, Farnsworth, and Utley (2013) study did not speak to or make note of.

For Jenessa, her experiences in classes that addressed elements of global learning included primarily general education courses. In particular, one experience in a communications course was vivid and palpable in her recollections, even though it occurred two semesters earlier. She described a discussion in class as a "fiasco," which mirrored Chad's observation about the difficulty that existed in having open conversations that challenged people's personal beliefs or political ideologies. Jenessa's example, however, included critical conversations that were presented in the context of her classroom. In her class, an instructor attempted to share perspectives about a particular minority group and the impact of word choice on a particular

racial group. According to Jenessa, students in the referenced racial group experienced frustration with the examples “always being about them.” Jenessa remembered how the instructor was addressing tough topics to help all students expand their understandings about the impact of language. “The conversations were almost borderline with fighting where some students had to have meetings because they were so distraught about the situation” (Jenessa at ATC, October 15, 2018). Out of all 18 participants, the situation Jenessa described, where things got heated or uncomfortable in the classroom was an outlier. This example, however, underscores the need for faculty to feel empowered and adequately coached to help a classroom community navigate unfamiliar topics or that include perspectives of people unlike themselves.

People as Shapers in the bridge to an internationalized curriculum.

Family members were also identified as Shapers, people who, from early on, impacted participants’ mindsets in a manner that they were able to make sense of global learning within their curricular course work. A salient example of family members playing this role was evident in my conversation with Tonna. She repeatedly included her brother’s intercultural marriage and wove in examples with how she was presently making sense of global learning on a very personal level. She described the “new dynamic” that took place within her family, which in turn shaped her sense of awareness as a global citizen. She was able to challenge her belief of what defines “normal” in cultural practices and then applied it to her career. This notion will be further developed and referenced in Theme 3.

Tonna also mentioned the combination of her experiential learning with family members and how global learning in her required general education courses complemented this. When asked to describe what influenced her interest in the coursework, she shared a combination of formal and informal learning:

Really, I think it's like my sister-in-law being married to my brother, and then also the classes that I've taken. It may sound bad, but they are the classes I *have* to take because I really did not think about taking Oral/ Interpersonal Communication for my degree. So, when we talked about it in class, I realized I'm so used to my norms that I haven't really thought about that there could be another normal other. (Tonna at ATC, October 16, 2018)

Tonna referenced communication and understanding of different cultures in this general education class, but she did not draw on an artifact from this class to reflect for this study. Instead, she submitted a reflection on a high school project. It was consistent with her description that classes included general references and interesting stories about cultural practices in the medical profession. However, there appeared little indication of any structured learning activities or projects for her, whether they be patient simulation labs or practice-based case study scenarios.

Classmates of participants in their courses also played the role of Shapers. Having different cultures and demographics represented in a classroom can provide opportunities to engage with the Internationalization at Home framework (IaH). The IaH model pays special attention to providing students with limited mobility to have purposefully integrated international and intercultural activities in either the formal or informal curriculum (Leask, 2009; Beelan & Jones; 2015). And though international students do not need to be present for these types of learning to occur, they can be a benefit to classroom learning.

Participants in this study uniquely identified that the diversity of their classmates with regard to ethnicity, age, gender, and experiences and how they shaped the connections with internationalized activities in their coursework. Though there were mixed feelings about how

diverse the student body was, per the following descriptions offered by Shawn, Kat, and Colton, yet they still described its influence on their classroom learning. Shawn, for example, at the time of our conversation, was enrolled in an online Introduction to Sociology course, and one of the key assessments for him was to determine how to address the issue of global poverty. He described the fairly homogenous nature of his classmates and how the project could have used to shift their perspectives.

This is not the most diverse school I've ever attended, and I think based on the profile of students attending the college, the project might have challenged the status quo of their thinking or the common expectation of what they might believe coming from their backgrounds. . . In one of my classes, it is all young adult, white women from the surrounding communities. So, there's not a whole lot of diversity. (Shawn at ATC, November 27, 2018)

Kat, on the other hand, was enrolled in one of the college's accelerated programs, which tended to be marketed to students who also worked. Having experienced a mixture of day and evening classes, she reflected on classmates' diversity.

[In my day class,] most students are fresh out of high school, so it's a very different group than my night class. The night class has 20 to 50 years old, and it's men and women and different backgrounds. Seeing how someone who is African American and commuting from the city, her perspective versus my perspective versus a guy that's 50 and has been in the workforce for 30 years—we all have different experiences and viewpoints. (Kat at ATC, October 11, 2018)

This perspective was also shared by Colton, one of the youngest participants. He openly talked about his ability to learn from those who were not straight out of high school. He

described how during class conversations they would “get into some deep stuff, and older people will share what they’ve been through and like how us younger people, and how our generation really needs help with some stuff” (Colton at ATC, November 26, 2018). In a later reflection, he added: “They’ve been doing things that I don’t even know yet like going through a divorce. They are kind of preparing the younger generation for just how to be strong in the future” (Colton at ATC, November 26, 2018). Given that slightly over half of the degrees were earned by students 25 years of age or older in the Kanaska Technical College System, these types of discussion presented as an opportunity for experiences to be exchanged amongst students when a variety of ages is present (KTCS Factbook, 2018).

Sam was one of two students to mention international/transnational students in projects that were part of classroom learning. In an Oral/ Interpersonal Communication class activity, Sam and his classmates were assigned to talk with ESL students on campus, and he remembered the goal of the exchange was to learn about what life was like in their home country.

It still sticks out to me. I remember that vividly now and asking her about the cartels [in Mexico]. It was pre-election, and it was very hot politically, so I was trying to understand what that was like from a firsthand source. (Sam at ATC, October 22, 2018)

In the interview, Sam reflected positively on the activity, but the absence of a critical reflection as part of this learning was noticeable. He remembered some sort of brief reflection in class regarding what he learned instead of a more systematic approach intended to draw associations of how to integrate any new understandings about what he learned. The absence of this reflection points to challenges with simply bringing domestic and international students together because development of the “mutually beneficial cross-cultural understandings and friendships” may not

occur (Leask, 2009, p. 207). If students have limited experiences beyond their current lives, an internationalized curriculum in their courses must capitalize on the experiences they bring to the classroom and provide a space for letting students interrogate and reflect on the expansion of their perspectives.

In addition to cultural diversity, the students, through their interviews, offered an interesting juxtaposition that at times played out as a binary of “young versus old” or “those with or without life experiences.” Younger students were perceived to lack life experience, and both Celia, age 35, and Wayne, age 22, made connections with these factors and talked about how it bolstered the need for content and conversations that went beyond a myopic view of the world. As mentioned, Celia viewed a goal of global learning to “help you come out of your bubble and see what else is out there” (Celia at ATC, November 19, 2018). She attributed introductory courses in sociology and psychology as those, which “ingrained my brain of how even though I don’t want to live in a bubble, I still kind of do” (Celia at ATC, November 19, 2018). She included several instances in her classes when she inwardly reflected with a mixture of shock and awe about the insular world that her peers seemed to inhabit.

It was interesting to see the other students and their responses to some of the assignments that we had about global learning opportunities. And I thought I lived in a bubble! Some of them were so much more in their bubble, but I’m very grateful that I’ve had at least the little bits of outside the bubble kind of living. (Celia at ATC, November 19, 2018)

Wayne also observed the perceived disproportion of knowledge regarding how “it’s not just us” in the world.

I definitely know that there are a lot of other students that take the marketing class

that don't watch the news, don't read the news, that wouldn't know much about it.

I wouldn't see their future because I don't know how they would handle other people. (Wayne at ATC, October 17, 2018)

Exposure to these global topics to expand students' understanding of the world beyond their immediate space may be the only opportunity and preparation some students ever receive with preparation for a globalized society. For those who lacked this exposure, the formal or informal learning opportunities in their courses become more critical.

In this study, four of the 10 participants from ATC were parents. One participant also referenced future children as a way to bridge new or reinforced learning in internationalized curriculum and transform future action. The reality of the role of a parent cannot be escaped for the nearly 19,000 single parents in the KTCS (KTCS Factbook, 2018). Mezirow's theory, which includes an enhanced level of awareness of one's beliefs and feelings, is also applicable for adult learners, especially those in the role of parent, given the notions of active participant and frames of reference (Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007). Kat, a parent, shared several statements that illustrated different orientations to life decisions "before and after" kids. She mentioned her Introduction to Sociology course incorporating a variety of media analysis assignments that helped her better understand what was going on in the world. One example illustrated the difficulty she had balancing her role as a parent in society:

I mean, it's hard because I have kids, and I have to look out for their best interests and what's their future going to look like. Part of me is like I'm just going to live my life and do my thing and what happens, happens, and especially with like all the politics that are going on. No matter who's in office or who's elected I'm still going to be living my life and doing my thing, and then also how do I protect my

children's future? (Kat at ATC, October 11, 2018)

Though not a parent, Jenessa's immediate response to my question about how she would apply her knowledge and attitudes cultivated by global learning in her courses went to a very personal level: "I want to have kids, probably a lot of kids, but instilling them with open-mindedness and the desire to learn will be important" (Jenessa at ATC, October 15, 2018). Just as people shaped the path for students in their ability to connect to a global learning-based curriculum, several participants also reflected on their current or future roles as parents themselves. Both family members and classmates helped shape formal and informal global experiences for the participants interviewed.

People as Weavers in the bridge to an internationalized curriculum.

For those who did not have individuals or supports who helped create a path to global learning, the Weavers may be considered the most integral part on their journey. Weavers, by definition, are at the forefront of offering students opportunities to experience the integrated outcomes of an internationalized curriculum as the purveyors of curriculum design. In general, students are introduced to global topics from their faculty, and faculty development in the internationalization process is a key concern (Malkan & Pasani, 2011; Richardson, 2012; Nienhaus, 2015).

There are different ways Weavers use their ability to further strengthen the bridge between students and an internationalized curriculum. Tonna shared general examples of a program faculty's ability to draw in peripheral aspects of global learning. "Our instructor was actually a teacher in the Middle East, so it's been incredible learning about that culture and their practices because our instructor has been able to provide us a lot of information" (Tonna at ATC, October 16, 2018). She continued by including how this faculty member was able to help the

class understand that country's different format and structure of the national paramedic test, and she found this new knowledge "really interesting" (Tonna at ATC, October 16, 2018).

One advantage of technical colleges is that instructors are hired for their occupational experiences and are expected to remain current in their respective fields. Similar to Tonna's example, when instructors' experiences have an international component or the faculty member has been abroad, they are able to share these experiences with students through course design and delivery. Mary Ann also mentioned the added value of two general education course instructors, who brought an international perspective because of their travel interests and citizenship outside of the United States. She added:

My Economics instructor was actually from Russia, and she does talk about stories related to her culture and the language barrier. My Oral/ Interpersonal Communications teacher used stories from when she traveled. She was able to use like things that she learned outside of the country I guess, to relate to her students.

(Mary Ann at ATC, October 23, 2018)

This student reaffirms Richardson (2012), who underscored the importance of a global teacher being able to provide first-hand knowledge of customs, cultures, and practices from experience traveling or living abroad.

New instructors in a technical college, who may be entering a classroom or lab setting for the very first time after working in their trade or field, might only have access to a textbook, which in turn could limit students' participation in any internationalized curriculum. As Shawn articulated:

Unless the editor of the textbooks themselves had a mindset to tie in their information to a global mindset, they're going to be very focused on ensuring that

the student learns the concepts for that subject and not necessarily include any other information. (Shawn at ATC, November 27, 2018)

The trickle-down effect from textbook authors to faculty developer to student becomes problematic if faculty are unaware of how the absence of their own experiences can potentially detract from development of a global mindset.

That said, the explicit role of faculty as the deliverers of global content rests on the assumption that teaching is necessary for learning to occur. While participants shared their understandings about the role of faculty in developing curriculum, students also noticed the limited integration of global learning activities in their courses. Generally, students spoke about the broader stroke of topics that were introduced or mentioned in their courses. Jenessa, with her experience as a nanny and volunteering both domestically and abroad, participated in this study because she felt the curriculum lacked these opportunities.

The reason I was like “ooh, this interview is kind of interesting” is because there really hasn’t been a whole lot of that in my courses yet. There has been quite a bit of diversity, though. I took Introduction to Diversity, but I feel like they kind of mesh that into everything here. Really, there hasn’t been a whole lot of focus on the global part. (Jenessa at ATC, October 15, 2018)

Her interpretation of diversity, as something separate from global learning, was interesting. With a bit more probing, I was able to understand more about her interpretation.

When I hear diversity and learn about diversity, for me, that’s in our everyday interactions by just being aware we are living in a diverse area and in a diverse world. When I hear *global learning*, I’m thinking more about learning things from all around the world by doing comparison and implementing things from

different areas of the world. So, if Japan is doing something in the technology field, we should learn about that here if that makes sense. So, somebody in the technology industry should be making all of those different connections. (Jenessa at ATC, October 15, 2018)

Her statements highlight the idea that cultural diversity is framed in the domestic sense as opposed to the larger more global context (O'Connor, Farnsworth & Utley, 2013). This has been a criticism of how global integration can be carried out in a limited fashion in curriculum design. As noted, "there is a disconnect in the minds of many faculty between diversity education and international education" (p. 977). Jenessa was able to articulate the essence of this broader understanding and both its contribution and additional applications. She added, "I've done a lot of research like on my own about school systems around the world. I haven't really learned any of it through coming here" (Jenessa at ATC, October 15, 2018). This personal curiosity and motivation could be contributed to her experiential learning, both domestic and abroad; she attributed it to her desire "to see things change. I want every child, no matter what, to have equal educational opportunities" (Jenessa at ATC, October 15, 2018).

Shawn, with his public and private educational experiences at two and four-year institutions, noted two approaches faculty utilized to bridge the needs of a diverse array of students. Here he delineated that faculty are called to both introduce concepts and weave global topics into the core content:

If the instructor were to meld in some sort of outside study or how it's prevalent to a global situation, I think that that's how the students would soak it up. And I think that that would be a very positive spin on just the traditional practical setting that I've seen here so far. I think that it would be really important that it's up to

the instructor or the curriculum to expose the students because I don't think the student population is going to be changing very much, whether I like it or not. So I think it's very important that the instructor is the one to introduce this stuff. (Shawn at ATC, November 27, 2018)

Later, Shawn provided an example of how he could envision a general education course being internationalized:

In my Anatomy and Physiology course right now, we do case studies. We do case studies on people with various medical conditions and with various demographics that might impact these medical conditions. I think that's an opportunity where they might meld in some of these things that I mentioned earlier. That how might this condition be different in this setting, in this country, or in this place or this town. (Shawn at ATC, November 27, 2018)

To Shawn, incorporating a global perspective relevant to some aspect of our globalized society could enhance a component of the class, such as the instructor's use of case studies, which already existed.

Though there was not a prevalence of in-depth content in internationalized curriculum as understood by participants, they described the importance of a learning environment and how integral it is developing a community in courses. Participants in the study looked to instructors to help them "find the truth" in media and other sources of information. In tandem with this ability to talk openly with classmates, faculty helped students try to peel away the layers of misconception or inaccurate truths that are shared either in media or even espoused by friends and family.

Kat, with her dual exposure to traditional daytime classes with a homogenous group of

younger students and the eclectic mix of night students, emphatically added:

I think it's definitely helpful to create an open space for dialogue because there are certain instructors that just kind of lecture and don't really leave room for that. And I think just pushing people to investigate further and like you know and talking about a topic or whatever and where did that come from. Even in Sociology we did a project on the eight or 10 largest media companies and learning that really, they're all connected, and they're mostly owned by the same six or seven people. (Kat at ATC, October 11, 2018)

Open conversations in a classroom environment that allowed for the exchange of ideas and options can help students peel away the layers of misconceptions in media or even unintentional stereotypes in their peers.

Chad echoed this need when I asked him to describe anything his instructors may have done to help him better connect to global topics or concepts in his courses. He mentioned the need for safe spaces of discussion. He also referenced how conversations were facilitated in class so students could find their own voices. He described how current news topics were discussed in his classes. "Sometimes the classroom is the only place that people can still talk freely. I've been lucky enough to be in classes where there was open dialogue" (Chad at ATC, October 29, 2018).

The participants in this study identified people in their lives as Pavers, Shapers, and Weavers of both formal and informal global learning experiences. Their experiences with these people constructed bridges between themselves and their ability to connect with the internationalized course content. Each participant shared how he or she encountered these human supports and then described the ways they were able to make stronger connections with learning activities when these individuals were present. And when personal experiences with global

exposure were limited, the role of instructors for both creating and introducing meaningful learning activities was heightened and shown to be more critical.

Theme 2: Place Matters but Doesn't Place Boundaries: Local, Regional and International Spaces Help Students Transcend Geographic Boundaries

Participants in this study also identified local, regional, and international placements and experiences as opportunities for connections with an internationalized curriculum. These places often included their immediate locales. Students also included geographic references to past, present, and future opportunities for deeper engagement in their communities. There were also regional and international travel experiences that prepared students' mindsets and piqued their interest in making sense of global learning content.

Cohen and Brawer (2008) suggested that students attending community colleges tend to be place-bound with fewer opportunities for exposure to the world; however, this study intimates something different. The Internationalization at Home framework suggests students and faculty at Alpha Technical College are capitalizing on local community resources and people (Leask, 2009; Agnew & Kahn, 2017). First, participants shared examples of past, present, and future engagement in the local community as opportunities to see how a global learning-based curriculum applied to their lives. They also described the impact of regional travel and experiences on their understanding of global learning. Lastly, they were able to articulate a variety of international experiences and interests as meaningful to them.

Local communities as a place for students to transcend geographic boundaries.

Alpha Technical College is situated in a suburb that supports a large metropolitan area in Kanaska. Placement of this college in close proximity to a large, urban city provided early

opportunities to develop an orientation to foundational elements in their internationalized courses. This was illustrated in their previous K-12 exposure in their cities. When I asked Shawn how he was able to make connections in his courses regarding global learning, he described his early decision to attend a private high school in the city of Centerville. He chose that school because of the volunteer work that was expected, both in the state of Kanaska and in different parts around the United States. In turn, this allowed him to make connections from his Introduction to Sociology class to where he grew up and from his engagement in the local, urban community. He described the correlation:

In my class, one of the recent sections we did complete was on poverty and inequality within the United States, which was something that I found really interesting because I grew up in a very diverse background. I was raised in a poor environment, and I went to a very rich school. I also worked in a very poor environment in Centerville but traveled to different parts of the world where that contrast is even more blown up than it is here. (Shawn at ATC, November 27, 2018)

This echoes Davis, Snyder, and Widmar's (2014) assertion that finding the "global in the local" allows students to transfer their behaviors locally to a more global landscape, but it also acknowledges the rich reservoirs of experiences that adult learners possess.

Earlier, Chad referenced his classmates as Shapers of his global learning experiences in the classroom. Similar to Shawn, Chad also attended a private high school in Centerville with diverse peers in his classes. "Half of my school was Black or Latino, and then the other half were white, but I had friends that were from all kind of backgrounds, so I knew how to deal with different people with different views" (Chad at ATC, October 29, 2018). However, while he

found his previous experiences in a city school beneficial, he noticed a difference in his peers at ATC and perceived this an advantage:

I feel like we have a lot of students here that come from more isolated towns and places where diversity wasn't necessarily something they have been around. I mean, I was lucky enough that I went to private school in Centerville. (Shawn at ATC, November 27, 2018)

While experiences in a local, urban city provided opportunities to experience diversity firsthand, stories of early job experiences also served as links to their internationalized course curriculum. Elias and Merriam (2005) posited that experiential learning opportunities are as necessary to adult learners. Like Shawn's volunteerism in Centerville and in other parts of the United States, Tonna's experiences volunteering and in internships in urban areas functioned as a trigger either for making meaning with global learning outcomes of Tonna's experiences, which spanned both urban and rural:

I actually worked in Centerville for a couple weeks, and I loved it. I worked at Medical Access Now, which is a private company, and we had all different types of calls that I assisted on. When I was with the patients, there were all different types of cultures that I come into contact with. There were definitely different types of ways of thinking within the inner city versus out in Grove City. (Tonna at ATC, October 16, 2018)

Her description led me to ask a follow-up question regarding whether or not her paramedic program required any type of field placements in both urban and rural settings. Tonna said there was no formal requirement to have a clinical directly located in an urban area, even though different experiences were encouraged.

Regional experiences as opportunities for students to transcend geographic boundaries.

In addition to students' reference to their local communities and urban affiliations, participants also described regional differences in the United States, which helped them develop a global mindset. When Wayne thought about which experiences contributed to his ability to make connections between global learning and his courses, he discussed his exposure to other parts of the United States through travel. "I don't know if it would really count, but I would say my trip to Nashville just culturally was unique with how different it is from Kanaska. It just seemed a lot more people are friendly around there" (Wayne at ATC, October 17, 201). Tonna also described her classmates' shared stories regarding volunteering in the southern part of the United States:

We learned about their fire departments in Louisiana, and even though it's the same job, they do it completely different down there. It's kind of cool just to learn about and while it might not seem like it's global, it's still learning about different areas within the United States. (Tonna at ATC, October 16, 2018)

These examples illustrate a cognitive awareness that global might not necessarily only refer to places that are remote, distant, or beyond the United States borders. Robertson (2015) found that students at a community college lacked a strong interest in international topics, but the United States was the topic of most interest (54% of students identified this with "strong interest"). However, allowing students to specify what aspects within regional or national borders may allow for a deeper understanding based on student interest along with the ability to apply these skills, either in a personal or workplace context.

As a business student interested in someday working for a smaller business or company, Wayne made several references to his interest in various activities that had a global perspective;

however, these interests were uniquely rooted in projects in his local community. He described a project in his global marketing class where students marketed a product to three different countries outside of the United States. However, when I asked him if there were any different opportunities in the local area that he would be interested in pursuing, he spoke candidly about transferring what he learned in class and applying a global spin on marketing local authentic Chinese food to Americans.

I'd like to find a small mom and pop shop that maybe is different from what you'd see in the U.S. I think it'd be really fun and interesting to look at Chinese food or something where people kind of take for granted that there is a unique culture to that food. Here, the food is all Americanized, but I'd like to find a store or restaurant that actually has real, unique Chinese food and figure out a way to market that authenticity to Americans. (Wayne at ATC, October 17, 2018)

In these examples, place-bound students did not distinguish their local and regional interests as limitations of international exposure. Instead, they identified local and regional learning experiences as inroads to develop skills related to their fields of study. They also identified international spaces to engage with concepts that are part of an internationalized curriculum.

International experiences as opportunities for students to transcend geographic boundaries.

Participants' international experiences provided context for understanding issues of equity in their course curriculum. Clifford and Montgomery (2015) suggest the increasingly interdependence of a globalized world and workplace situates issues of equity and justice within the curriculum. Kat and Jenessa's volunteer experiences outside of the United States contributed to their sense-making in their general education courses. Kat traveled to Eastern Europe a half

dozen different times and worked with nonprofit organizations in orphanages and rural areas serving single parents and impoverished families. Her description of everyday life abroad paralleled her interest in looking at local inequalities in her own community.

Slovakia was a really interesting country because they have poverty and wealth just like we have here in the United States. What I found in the capital was like going to Chicago or New York. There were fancy, busy shopping areas and housing, and then you go out to the countryside and there are people that live with no running water or electricity. There were single moms with 5, 6, 7 kids that lived in a one bedroom apartment it's a really different culture there. (Kat at ATC, October 11, 2018)

Kat also used descriptors that her general education classes like Sociology and Psychology helped her “see the bigger picture” of global learning. She created a visual that included global learning as “being aware that and zooming out to not only what’s happening right here right now but also with what’s happening around the globe” (Kat at ATC, October 11, 2018).

Later in our conversation, she described a global learning project she would like to create, and it had a local component.

I would like a project that examined the resources available for people who have no insurance in our surrounding counties because it's insane. I would love to look at the Dodge County Coalition for Women's Equity and why black women don't breastfeed at the same rate that white women do, and it's because of lack of supports offered and the issues systemic in our history. I think that would be something really interesting to dive into. (Kat at ATC, October 11, 2018)

She attributed these new perspectives to her international global exposure, but she also cited her

Introduction to Sociology class, which allowed her and classmates to see inequity on a local level. Discussions in that class included the demographic structure of Centerville and the disparity in geographical placements of stores and shops that are “systemically set up for certain people to fail” (Kat at ATC, October 11, 2018).

Like Kat, Jenessa also volunteered several times in South America; her experiential learning experiences outside of the United States contributed to her interests in volunteering locally. During our conversation, she linked the global and local in a vivid story where she included the indigenous people and the daily lifestyle she was able to observe. She, like Kat, illustrated a sharp contrast between the urban wealth and rural poverty in the following juxtaposition:

Five miles from town, where there were cars and motorcycles, it was really different. Outside of the city, in the smaller towns, there was a lot of drug abuse, so just having that experience, when I came back from both of my trips, I got really involved here with Centerville’s Project Home. I’ve also been to the Urban Abbey quite a few times to volunteer because I have to have an open mind about that and know that people do live a different life than I do. (Jenessa at ATC, October 15, 2018)

This led me to ask how she envisioned global learning impacting her professional role in the future. She shared, “these experiences kind of sparked this curiosity in me and my wanting to know more than just what is happening in my city or in my state, or country. I can definitely bring this to my future workspaces” (Jenessa at ATC, October 15, 2018).

Students illustrated how curriculum based on the Internationalization at Home (IaH) concept was applicable to students in technical colleges because it intersected a local and the

global mindset. Literature suggests the need to have structured assessments for intercultural activities that have meaning within the context of the course that relate to the local and global (Zimitat, 2008; Leask, 2009). Participants also shared how their travel outside of the Midwest contributed to their development of a global mindset. These stories demonstrated that students already come to their college careers with local, regional, and international experiences, which serve as rich sources of learning already. These examples also illustrate two commonly used pedagogical practices used to increase students' global learning: comparative learning strategies and inclusion of experiential learning (Fezzey, Fujieda, Goerdt, Kahler, & Nikoi, 2017). Students like Jenessa had both local and international experiences, which also helped connect her interests in an internationalized content relevant to her program of study with future work in her field. The participants' connections to their workplace unfold as the third theme.

Theme 3: Application through Occupation: “We’re in an Interconnected World, Whether We Like it or Not”

Globalization has impacted our society and global economy in a manner that “transcendent skills”—cross-cultural competence, critical thinking, and increased understanding—are of paramount importance for employers and employee’s long-term career success (Dellow, 2007; Milliron, 2007; Hart Research Associates, 2015). In turn, globalization shapes the demand for higher education to create learning opportunities that prepare students to participate in society as well as the job market. Participants in this study described their opportunities to connect what they are learning to their everyday lives, jobs, and fields of study.

Earlier, Table 4.2 presented a visual with students’ references to an internationalized curriculum to both their general education courses and specific program courses. Generally, students made more frequent reference to their general education courses; however, they were

able to describe their program courses as presenting more specific links to an internationalized curriculum in their disciplines.

Wayne, a business student, was one of three students who described global business courses where global learning content was present. For him, some of the content and themes in the class were initially not top priorities of interest.

I guess before I took that global marketing class it was kind of like ‘eh’ I didn’t really care all that much. But then, as I learned about different ways to interact with people, I kind of started to like it a bit more. (Wayne at ATC, October 17, 2018)

In his conversation with me about this course, he described the notion of “being forced” into learning what was going on “outside” in the world. At the same time, he pictured relevance to his future work, despite his limited travel experiences.

I don’t want to be rude to anyone I’m in business with or people who I’m trying to connect with. So, the content in the course was a nice eye-opener in class because I haven’t ever personally gone to a different country or anything like that. However, to learn about it and to kind of be forced into that area is definitely needed for someone in business. (Wayne at ATC, October 17, 2018)

He extended this belief to his participation in a group project where his teammate was an international student. “I had to find a new way to connect with him” (Wayne at ATC, October 17, 2018). Here we see how a formal classroom can serve as a practice space for students before transferring intercultural skills to the outside world. For Wayne, these simulated projects provided a platform to practice skills, try out new roles, and to also make mistakes.

Zimitat (2008) discovered that less than half of university students felt their curriculum

prepared them for work in an international context, but more than half also believed their futures depended on the ability to understand international perspectives in their fields. In this study, Wayne also described the potential lack of knowledge had he not completed his global business course.

In the field of business, I am going to have to think outside the box like to consider people in different countries; how do I reach out to them? How do I connect with them more? A market here in the United States might be more dedicated to friendship and honesty whereas a market somewhere else may not feel that way. So I have to figure out different cultural differences and norms and learn a way to connect with that. This is something I wouldn't have understood if I didn't take that class. (Wayne at ATC, October 17, 2018)

Sam, another business student, made several references during our conversation about his interest in seeing the world through a historical lens regarding decisions and outcomes being interconnected across time. When I asked him to define what he meant by “interconnected” he explained:

You could say I'm a history buff. I've learned about US foreign policy, especially during the 1800s and early 1900s, when we ignored everybody around the world. And then in a post-World War 2 world, we kind of figured out that ignoring the rest of the world doesn't really work in the modern world. Now we know we are interconnected with different trade agreements and having foreign exchange students as well as workers. (Sam at ATC, October 22, 2018)

This echoed one of the six tenets of a Global Learning-based curriculum, the understanding of Global Systems, which operate in observable patterns including historical, political and

economic systems (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2014, Global learning).

Sam continued by describing the impact for students if there was no global learning present in his courses at the college.

I think it comes back down to the theme of, we're in an interconnected world whether we like it or not, and had I not gone to ATC without offerings like a global course or other global learning, we would be graduating and be kind of behind the eight ball; it would be inadequate. (Sam at ATC, October 22, 2018).

The Association of American Colleges and Universities (2014) definition of global learning also includes understanding the interdependence of our decisions, both for people's lives and with regard to the earth's sustainability. Chad shared one of the opportunities he expected having in his future career, which would be developing or reinventing a company's brand. His interest and relevance extended beyond doing a job as he anticipated making a positive social impact as well. He described his future ambition:

Hopefully I'll work for a company with a global brand, and I hope it would be something that made a positive shift beyond just economic purposes. Perhaps if the company didn't do things in the greenest way, I could help them leave a better print on a global scale. (Chad at ATC, October 29, 2018)

Chad was the only student at ATC to reference the intersection of sustainability and a given field.

In addition to business program students, participants in patient care fields also identified the importance of cultural competency in the workplace. Tonna, a paramedic student, described the impact of cross-cultural competency playing "a huge role" in her past and future experiences in her field.

I've already seen the need, particularly in one past experience. For some patients, when I enter their rooms or their homes, they don't want any shoes inside, so we have to take our shoes off. For other cultures, they are not permitted to touch the opposite gender. There are people who also want to stay clothed during exams, and there are specific procedures that we have to perform like placing stickers on their chest to take a picture of the heart to perform an ECG. But there are certain cultures that don't want this because of their privacy so it has and will play a huge role. (Tonna at ATC, October 16, 2018)

Shawn and Celia were in fields similar to Tonna. They also described the relevance of cultural competence in their specific disciplines. Earlier, I shared Shawn and Celia's accounts of their general education courses as spaces to examine shifting perspectives about cultures and broader global issues. In order to understand how they assigned relevance to a curriculum void of global learning, I asked students to describe their reaction if global learning was eliminated from their programs of study. Celia emphatically stated:

It would be devastating. I don't think we'd actually have a decent nursing program if we didn't have global learning because we are dealing with so many different nationalities and ethnicities on a daily basis. To not have that background knowledge of there being more out there and that people are different, I think it would just really be poor healthcare in that regard. It would seem like that professional would not really want to get to know people. They would just looking at them like a body part. Yeah, and I don't think that's right. (Celia at ATC, November 19, 2018)

Both Shawn and Celia had experienced informal global learning opportunities with family,

friends and previous job opportunities. Shawn's response to the previous question illuminated his understanding about the diverse nature of students at the college in terms of life experience, age, and demographics. He described the impact on the students at ATC if they didn't have access to internationalized course content:

If I were a student that were coming here for a degree, and I had little experience outside college experience, I think it would be a disservice to me on the school's part because it would be the school's job to educate the student not only in a practical sense, but in a wider world sense. I think that's what truly sets the college apart. (Shawn at ATC, November 27, 2018)

One of Qiang's (2003) four rationales for comprehensive internationalization in higher education was the Academic Rationale, which considers internationalization as central to comprehensive internationalization efforts in a college with regard to objectives for teaching, learning, and research. In fact, for these students, the integrity of curriculum is viewed in such a way that they would have access to an incomplete curriculum if global learning opportunities were not present.

Students also identified their desire to take a deeper dive into an internationalized curriculum. They made specific references to their program courses and future occupations.

Mary Ann described what she would like to see in her culinary program:

One thing I wish we had was a baking class specifically about learning about other cultures' desserts. Every once in a while, we would have these things but there never was a time for us to sit down for us to learn specifically about the other countries and what they eat. (Mary Ann at ATC, October 23, 2018)

Sam also explained how he would like to take a hands-on approach to a project in a business

course. “I think I’d maybe like to be involved in supply chain, trying to figure out how to get a product from one country to the next or trying to market to foreign audiences, which can be difficult” (Sam at ATC, October 22, 2018). Wayne identified a similar marketing project of interest, which would include more application that extended beyond research about a country that was conducted within his course. He shared:

I think a fun project would be global marketing outside the U.S. We take our advertisement project and brand it globally. If we picked three different countries like we did in global marketing, it would be neat to *actually* deliver that campaign. (Wayne at ATC, October 17, 2018)

Regardless of the program of study, these students described ways in which bridges between curricular opportunities and their lives could be strengthened. Students drew from their interests, from their need to see application, and from the relevance to the impact of their own lives.

For participants at Alpha Technical College, this orientation to learning stemmed from direct and relevant learning activities and curricular opportunities to their personal, academic, and professional lives. They shared interests in achieving greater depth in a hands-on, applicable manner. In addition, their lived experiences described how people and place help them start understanding or further developing the skills of perspective-sharing, critical thinking, and diversity inclusion.

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Across the state, Beta Technical College has almost twice as many students enrolled in programs to obtain Applied Associate Degrees, certificates, and technical diplomas. It supports a smaller urban city surrounded by rural farms. The region is also home to industrial and

commercial businesses with both national and global reach. This is the home institution for the final eight participants.

*

Student Profiles at Beta Technical College

The eight participants at Beta Technical College (BTC)—both full-time and part-time students—comprised a heterogeneous sample with regard to gender, age, and familial status. Five identified as female and three as male; four of the eight were under the age of 25. Students were also enrolled in degree programs across all divisions of the college (Business, Health, Applied Technologies, and Public Safety/Service). Each of the students participated in semi-structured interviews, and five of the eight submitted additional written reflections about experiences with internationalized curriculum in their courses. Table 4.3 shares demographic data for the eight participants who attended Beta Technical College.

Table 4.3

Participants from Beta Technical College (BTC) who participated in the study

	Participant	Program	Completed Semesters	Enrollment Status	Age	Gender	Race/Ethnicity	First Language	Military Service
B1	Brandt	Transportation / Construction	2.5	Full-time	45	Male	White	English	None
B2	Stephanie	Business	6	Graduated	24	Female	White	English	None
B3	Molly	Human/ Protective Services	4	Full-time	21	Female	White	English	Reserves
B4	Andwar	Business	3	Full-time	20	Male	African		None
B5	Sarah	Health Services	12	Full-time	39	Female	White	English	None
B6	Felix	Business	10	Part-time	25	Male	White	English	None
B7	Kelleigh	Business	5	Graduated	35	Female	White	English	None
B8	Felicity	Health Services	3.5	Full-time	22	Female	White	English	Reserves

Seven of the eight student profiles that follow include distinct differences from their counterparts at ATC. Two participants had completed their programs of study, two participants had military experience, one was an international student, one student had participated in a short-

term education abroad experience offered through the college, and one student was completing a technical diploma. This is the second part of the student stories, which together, help construct the bridge of understanding students' lived experiences with an internationalized curriculum in their college courses. I now share a brief summary of each participant including motivations for entry or reentry into college and background while in factors they identified as having contributed to their understanding of global learning.

Participant B1 – Brandt: Brandt worked in the transportation industry and was just about to complete his technical diploma in December. He enrolled at BTC to obtain advanced training. As the oldest participant of both colleges, he was dually enrolled in a technology program. He had three children, and his wife and a son were also enrolled at the college; Brandt also had an interest in geography and travel.

Participant B2 – Stephanie: Originally, Stephanie took one year off from formal education after high school since she changed her career interests many times. Stephanie enrolled in the business school and graduated in May 2018. She was able to complete her program while working and attending school full-time. "Human resources is exactly what I wanted to do out of school and the employment connections kind of hooked me up with that." Her participation in this dissertation study stemmed from an Introduction to Diversity class, which she described as being "one of the most memorable things about my time in college."

Participant B3 – Molly: Molly was in the School of Protective Services, and she aspired to continue service in the military. While she was in school full-time, she planned to complete her degree in the next semester in addition to working in the field of corrections. Serving in the military was one of her several roles and experiences that shaped her views on the interconnectivity of the world. "I learned through the military that just because you see a

person's skin doesn't mean that you know who they are or where they come from at all."

Participant B4 – Andwar: Andwar was enrolled as a business student. He included his role as friend, son, and grandson as important in his life, and he was planning on transferring to a four-year institution after completing his degree. He was the only international student in either college. An avid reader of books on great leaders, Andwar had a desire to lead and relate to others. "I want to learn different aspects of business rather than just accounting because there's much more to business you know than just numbers. You have to be able to manage a team, learn how to say no, and know the team's purpose. It's not easy to work with people; you have to be flexible and open-minded to differences." He preferred to be called Steve by his classmates and friends, and his preference will be described at the beginning of Theme 2.

Participant B5 – Sarah: Sarah was a mom with three children in her household. Enrolled as a full-time student, she was not working at the time of the interview because of a previous work injury. Prior to enrollment in the health services program, Sarah completed a certificate several years ago at BTC. Sarah had taken a number of online courses, and these allowed her to see opportunities for connecting global learning in the online courses given the flexibility of online courses. This had implications in daily interactions as well. "My whole perspective is just making sure that we understand each other."

Participant B6 – Felix: Out of all 18 participants, Felix was the only student who had participated in an education abroad opportunity offered by the college. Those experiences, along with knowledge from internationalized courses, stirred up many feelings and emotions for Felix during our conversation. He has been involved in multiple student clubs like student government and debate. As a business student, he was interested in numbers as a child and able to see global learning and its impact beyond just business. "I feel like you could learn about global learning in

any area of study whether it is cooking or business or whatever.”

Participant B7 – Kelleigh: In addition to Stephanie at BTC, Kelleigh was the second participant who already completed her degree program when we sat down for the interview. Her decision to go back was due in part to her daughter and her parents. The entirety of her program was offered online, which suited her well as a “night learner.” A pivotal experience for her was developing a friendship in an online class with a student from Russia. “I’m a pusher, if I want to know somebody more than just through the class I’ll reach out.” Like other students, she had additional career interests beyond business, and hers included welding and human services.

Participant B8 – Felicity: Felicity was a full-time student and only the second of all participants to have previous military experience. She had a full-time and part-time job and previous nanny experiences that allowed her to travel. She shared many stories throughout our 90-minute conversation. Her varied experiences and work in the military allowed her to always seek understanding of others while withholding judgment and seeking deeper understanding. “I am a soldier, I do support. As medical in the military, you have to take care of both sides. You kind of start meeting these people, and they’re not always the bad guy. Sometimes they’re just civilians. Sometimes they’re just decent people.”

Part 2: The Shared Stories of Beta Technical College (BTC) Participants

The three themes of People, Place, and Occupation were consistent across both Alpha Technical College (ATC) and Beta Technical College (BTC). However, the students’ stories at BTC had additional characteristics in the ways that they connected with an internationalized curriculum. Like the ATC case, I begin with the students focus on the specific individuals students identified as supports in helping them make sense of an internationalized curriculum. Then I share the themes of Place and Occupation while drawing parallels between the two

colleges and highlighting characteristics unique to BTC.

Theme 1: People as Pavers, Shapers, and Weavers: International Students Bridge Campus Learners to the World

People as Pavers in the bridge to an internationalized curriculum.

Similar to ATC, the students at BTC also described family and personal relationships as opportunities to make connections and see relevance within an internationalized curriculum. However, their interest or perceived need to learn a foreign language also emerged from their relationships to the Pavers in their lives. Molly, who was nearing completion of her degree in criminal justice, came from a family with a background of hosting foreign exchange students. She shared:

My step-mom used to do that before she got married to my dad, which was only a few years ago. Then my aunts and uncles have foreign exchange students stay with them every two years. (Molly at BTC, November 9, 2018)

She described that conversations with her family's current German exchange student offered her a unique perspective on the challenges and opportunities of life in a new country along with second language mastery. She also attributed her K-12 experiences in both public and private school as contributors to her ability to have an open mindset to the different viewpoints and practices of others. She said, "I went from being with the same 16 kids every day to being with tons of different people every different hour and like not knowing who they were, so that was a hard adjustment" (Molly at BTC, November 9, 2018).

The formative years for Felix were his elementary and high school years. He referenced his wish to have learned a second or even third language when he was younger, but it was not

something encouraged by his family. He said his parents viewed learning a new language “like learning how to walk all over again.” Despite not being able to “get my feet wet” with this new knowledge, Felix felt very strongly that kids should be introduced to global learning opportunities beyond just being able to learn a foreign language. He found it “important and imperative” for children to learn more about cultures so “if they want to do something globally in the future or in college, they have the opportunity to start at a younger age” (Felix at BTC, November 13, 2018). For Felix, increasing the amount of global touch points for students is necessary both in college courses and even earlier in elementary and high school.

Sarah was the eldest female student and also a parent. She thought about her own interaction with language classes for herself and for her teenage son. I asked her if and how learning another language might connect to any of the global learning knowledge, skills or attitudes either personally or outside her career field. She reminisced about her previous French classes in high school as something that she struggled with but also wished she had gleaned more from. “This is kind of irrelevant but, my son is taking French courses, and he’s going to France. So he’s going to be on the opposite side of the cultural shock” (Sarah at BTC, November 13, 2018).

When asked about global learning topics or areas of interest that Molly wanted to pursue, she mentioned study abroad but quickly clarified that her lack of exposure to foreign language was a drawback to participation in global activities abroad. She elaborated:

I think that’s hard if you’re not in a language class because those opportunities get taken away, but I think that even if we went to like a law enforcement place in a different country and learned how they did theirs that would be so interesting.
(Molly at BTC, November 9, 2018)

Molly attributed to this role of foreign language as an early hook into developing a broader global mindset; however, not all have access to this opportunity. Foreign language exposure was included as a contributing factor to global learning at BTC, but this may be attributed to the fact students were exposed to other languages through the diverse nature of their international classmates.

Soria and Troisi (2013) found that university students' participation in on campus global/intercultural – such as taking a global-based course or interacting with international students – may result in greater perceived benefits regarding intercultural competencies than study abroad participants. In their study, the researchers controlled for factors that might predispose students' development of global, international and intercultural (GII) competencies, such as foreign language skills beyond native languages. However, in this dissertation study, the students' perceived benefits of knowing a second language stands out as intriguing. The importance with allowing students to elaborate on their interest in the general background knowledge of culture through language acquisition will be discussed as a potential area of research in Chapter Five.

People as Shapers in the bridge to an internationalized curriculum.

Though she had already completed her program, Stephanie shared about her Introduction to Diversity course and its diverse composition of classmates. These classmates can be viewed as Shapers of the classroom learning environment. Despite a class size of only 10 students, the experiences she had in it stood out. She described it this way: “Every single one of us was completely different” (Stephanie at BTC, November 6, 2018). The set-up of the classroom was unique from the first day of the semester with its U-formation so that each student had the opportunity for face-to-face interaction. At the end of the semester, her instructor sent the class a

group photo. Stephanie referenced it as significant and meaningful when she was previewing the interview questions in advance of her study participation.

Actually, when I was looking at these questions, I still had the picture in my email of our class because at the end we were all friends, but we were all so different. It was just a really good experience. (Stephanie at BTC, November 6, 2018)

Stephanie also included that, with the instructor's help, she and other classmates had a lot of "informal conversations the whole time, so that made it easy to talk about things" (Stephanie at BTC, November 6, 2018).

In addition, Stephanie cited her participation in this dissertation study stemming from her overall experience in this class, which she described as being "one of the most memorable things about my time in college." Thus, it was not surprising that she emphasized a sense of sadness when the class actually ended. During our conversation, she pulled up the photo on her phone to share with me. Later, she emailed the photo, and I saw Stephanie surrounded by nine other smiling students, and her instructor was standing by her side. She attributed the diverse perspectives of her international classmates as an opportunity for learning as opposed to her program class where there was less diversity. She also described diversity in her classes as a mix of programs compared to a cohort model. "In my General Ed classes, we were with the culinary people and the firefighters, so I think those were more diverse" (Stephanie at BTC, November 6, 2018).

For students in this study, the diversity of Shapers had a broad definition, which included diversity in classmates' program of study. Andwar, a business student, made frequent references to his desire and need to understand issues from multiple perspectives. He shared how classmates' in his general education classes offered an opportunity for him to expand his

mindset, especially as it pertained to his field of business:

I'm the kind of person that has to learn from different perspectives. I don't want to hear business, business, and business perspectives over and over and over again. I want to hear something else. Maybe someone in the natural resources who have work experience outside; they have something else to share. Some people in the medical field, they might teach us something else like proper sanitation. It could really be anything. (Andwar at BTC, November 9, 2018)

This is an advantage of general education classes, which bring together students from various programs across the college as opposed to the cohort model traditionally offered in program courses.

Again, similar to participants at the ATC, Beta Technical College students mentioned the diversity related to age; the disparity between students right out of high school and those returning to programs as adult learners was frequently referenced. In the interview, Sarah seemed to suggest that conversations were generally cordial in class. However, her written reflection on a global learning project from her Sociology class shed additional light onto her classroom learning experiences. In the reflection she emailed, she referenced a group project assignment. In the class, learners were tasked with developing a product focusing on one general population of people, and her group chose to advertise an elderly living home with the goal of making it as inviting and positive as possible. There were difficulties with the project being carried out, and she remembered several moments of frustration with other team members because of their “know-it-all attitudes.” She wrote:

They were all young and never even had experience with the elderly population. They overlooked things such as activity choices. Not everybody is

able to dance, or sing. I had to point out that some may not be able to stand up or hear. (Sarah, written communication, November 13, 2018)

When asked to explain what topics or themes from her classes she found interesting, Sarah referenced her general education courses and the ability to have conversations about globally relevant topics.

I remember talking about a lot of the cultural things happening and a lot of the things are going on in the news since it was used for our basis of learning how to communicate effectively. (Sarah at BTC, November 13, 2018)

To find out more about what this added to the class, I asked how the discussions went. She continued:

I think they went fairly well. You didn't see a lot of people nodding off or not paying attention. It was quite interactive when it was something that interested us or when discussion topics were about what's going on in the community or the United States. (Sarah at BTC, November 13, 2018)

The age differences among students served as a micro practice space for developing skills, behaviors, and attitudes she understood as global learning. In her written reflection completed after the interview, she described changes to her own thinking and behavior:

I learned a lot about working with other generations. This may have changed my thinking in two ways. I learned to not be so pushy with my thoughts and ideas. I also learned how difficult it may be at times for different age groups to work effectively. I still apply these ideas today that not everybody will see eye-to-eye all the time. Be courteous of others' thoughts and feelings so I don't unintentionally make others feel the way I did. (Sarah, written communication,

November 13, 2018)

Kelleigh, also a returning “adult learner,” was able to identify similar feelings during her time at the college. Although, she felt unable to connect with a lot of the younger students, she did reach out to some in the online classes. One online class in particular drew her interest into global learning, and she talked about her means of connecting with “students from the other side of the globe” in that course. This online, Oral/Interpersonal Communication course was the basis of her connection with global learning. She recounted her experience:

I actually became friends with a student from Africa who moved here. Even though he was living here, he traveled a lot, and he had so much information to share about his travel and about how different people acted and learned and worked. (Kelleigh at BTC, November 13, 2018)

As she shared more about this online class and how it was structured, she mused about what it meant to be an adult learner. She used the term “adult learner” several times in our conversation and also placed air quotes around the term.

Like, I know I’m an adult because I hold jobs, I have a child, and I’m in my 30s, but does that make me an adult learner? Maybe they need like a new twist on the term adult learner to make it feel friendlier. Maybe more people would go back to college then. (Kelleigh at BTC, November 13, 2018)

While she did not directly relate this to her internationalized curriculum at first, it established her experiences as a student entering college at an age that extends years beyond her high school days. Sarah grappled with what it meant to be a non-traditional student at the college, and her entry to college happened only because her program was offered solely online. This Oral/Interpersonal class was significant in her experience with internationalized course

content and her meaningful experiences with international classmates.

Similarly, Brandt's experience in coming back as a "new-traditional" learner was illustrated repeatedly in our conversation about how the "kids" in classes have a completely different mindset to school and orientation to work. His written reflection for this study was also on a group project in his Oral/Interpersonal Communication course wherein his group presented about distractions in the workplace. This fit his understanding of global learning because of the diverse nature of his group members—a younger student in the diesel program, a younger student in the fire program, and a girl from Vietnam. He wrote about what was interesting about the project. "It's surprising, but most of the research was about overseas cell phone use versus American cell phone use. I learned more about cell phone use in Africa and Russia and China than over here" (Brandt, written communication, January 7, 2019).

An additional closing in his reflection referenced the generation gap present in the classroom and how it helped him reach his own conclusions about the research he conducted in his class. "Given how all the young kids couldn't put their cell phones down, I know that, when I was driving for a living, cell phones were a major distraction" (Brandt, written communication, January 7, 2019). Through his observations of the classmates and the perception of their experiences and motivations, the reflection on his own experiences and behaviors shaped his learning.

Students at BTC also expressed international/transnational students as Shapers, people who provided additional opportunities to connect with course content in a more personalized and "up close" way. The initial thought in two students' minds when they read the term "global learning" in my email was similar. Brandt pictured "foreign students coming over here to learn or our students going over there to learn" (Brandt at BTC, November 6, 2018). Stephanie shared:

“I think of it as learning about different cultures, different areas of the world, just different people” (Stephanie at BTC, November 6, 2018).

An example from Stephanie’s Diversity course sounded similar to Sam’s experience at ATC. It allowed both students the opportunity to talk with and learn from ESL students on campus.

Across the hall were foreign students learning English. So one day in class, I don’t know why, but my whole class went in their whole class and we were like partnered up and you just had to talk to them about like life. For us, it was really good because then we could swap stories. (Stephanie at BTC, November 6, 2018)

Stephanie also wrote about her Intro to Diversity class in the written reflection. She described a group project students completed, and each group selected a demographic group of people and shared current, relevant topics with the rest of the class. Her topic about Islam prompted similar introspection about how to find “the truth” in media and everyday conversations that was expressed by other participants. She wrote:

The most challenging aspect was trying to decipher what was true and what was not with the information we were finding online about Islam. I believe that a lot of media really does try to portray Muslims to be bad people” (Stephanie, written communication, November 12, 2018).

Being able to differentiate truth from fiction, especially as it related to media, was mentioned in several conversations at ATC but with more intensity or depth at BTC.

The need and desire to discern truth was also present several times in my conversation with Sarah. As a returning student with an interest in online classes and distance learning, she spoke of the news and why she would be interested in issues of diversity and culture if they were

integrated in her classes.

With the news, you don't know what to believe from whom. So, I think if it were presented something in a non-biased part of the classroom like this is going on here, just give me the facts and let me make my own decision. (Sarah at BTC, November 13, 2018)

She continued, "I don't have time to wade through information right now to find out what's best for me." For Sarah and others, being able to apply the skills of critical thinking to evaluate sources would allow them to make informed decisions.

At ATC, classmates—both home and international—were Shapers of classroom learning experiences, and though the diverse composition of classrooms was included was attributed to these enriched learning opportunities, there was the general perception that these classes lacked diversity in terms of student ethnicity. This was not the case at BTC as students shared more vivid accounts of the learning exchanges from classmates who tended to be more diverse in terms of ethnicity and culture. The "young versus old" and "those with or without experience" dichotomies were still referenced as a factor in curricular experiences. Sarah tried to identify her logic behind a closed mindset she typically noticed in fellow classmates who were younger. "I think as a society we're lazy. We're closed minded and we're not wanting to know more than we have to" (Sarah at BTC, November 13, 2018). To her, this tendency impacts students who seek only the easy answers and avoid developing an awareness of other practice, alternative positions, or even new information about the world. "Why go out and learn something new when we can use what we already know and just reuse that?" The classroom setting was a micro-level example of a macro level, societal issue; it allowed her to reflect within the

class about issues she noticed on a broader world scale.

People as Weavers in the bridge to an internationalized curriculum.

BTC participants also came into contact with Weavers, people who wove together opportunities to connect with internationalized curriculum. Table 4.4 provides a comparison in the number of times students made reference to internationalized content or concepts in their general education and program courses. I offer it because, overall, BTC students shared their experiences with internationalized courses in more depth or intensity than at ATC. This comparison illustrates that this was especially present in their general education courses. Three students at ATC described four courses with depth, detail, or emotion whereas four students at BTC described six courses with depth, detail, or emotion.

Additionally, students generally mentioned that there were more links made in their program courses to global learning at BTC as opposed to ATC; this is present in the right-hand column of Table 4.4 where six out of eight students at BTC talked about their program courses in more depth than a general reference. BTC had a substantially larger online course offering with nearly 40% of classes in this delivery method. The role of a faculty member is important in internationalized curriculum regardless of delivery method, but it may be heightened due to decisions about the type of course structure and interactions amongst students and between faculty that are possible through the particular way a course is delivered.

Table 4.4

Participants from Beta Technical College (ATC) and the courses they referenced in interviews and in written reflections

	Participant	General Education Courses									Program of Study: Specific course or general program reference		
		Oral Interpersonal Communications	Speech	English Communications	Reading Skills	Intro to Sociology	Intro to Psychology	Developmental Psychology	Economics	Intro to Diversity		Microbiology	Anatomy and Physiology
A1	Kat	1		1	1								
A2	Jenessa	1		1	1				1				
A3	Tonna	1											Generally discussed paramedic courses
A4	Wayne												Global Marketing (course)
A5	Samuel	1						1					Global Business Fundamentals (course)
A6	Mary Ann	1		1				1					Generally discussed international cuisine
A7	Chad	2											Generally discussed one web design project
A8	Celia			2		2							Nursing Fundamentals (course)
A9	Colton		1										
A10	Shawn			2								1	
	Frequency	6	1	1	5	1	1	2	1	1		1	
	Intensity	7	1	1	7	1	2	2	1	1		1	
B1	Brandt	1											Introductory Welding (course)
B2	Stephanie		2							2			Global Business (course)
B3	Molly		2										Principles of Emergency Management (course)
B4	Anwdar		1		1	1							Business Management (course); Intro to Business (course)
B5	Sarah		1							1			Generally discussed paramedic class
B6	Felix	1		1				1					Intro to Marketing (course)
B7	Kelleigh	2						1					
B8	Felicity				2			2					
	Frequency	3	1	3	1	1	2	2	2	1		1	
	Intensity	4	2	4	1	1	3	2	4	1		1	

A “1” in a cell indicates a student mentioned an example in one of their general education courses; a “2” in the cell indicates the students mentioned an example with depth, detail, or emotion.

Given Kelleigh's unique perspective in that she completed all of her program courses, I have chosen to include a lengthy description of her insight regarding how the Weaver of these online experiences provided opportunities for meaningful global learning in the course. She described her understanding of internationalized content in her courses:

I think my Oral/Interpersonal Communications teacher was important because those experiences that happened for us in that class, he was the one that set us up for that. He was involved in our discussions; not a lot of the teachers through my online courses *involved* themselves in those discussions – it tended to be just the students. He commented on everybody's posts, and that was impactful to get his side of it. He would post questions that we would have to answer which would start the discussion, and he asked about traveling and what we felt played into that week's chapter in different places around the world along with how that affected us or how that opened our minds to whatever. And then he would reflect on our answers, which I think really helped me go week-to-week with those questions because that's tedious doing those sometimes. (Kelleigh at BTC, November 13, 2018)

In this course, the faculty modeled both reflective practices and interaction with students in a delivery format that students routinely believe as one-dimension or as Kelleigh termed, "being in a bubble." Yet the ability for the faculty to create an environment where students can engage meaningfully did not go unnoticed. In her written reflection, she concluded: "He was different than the others by interacting and reflecting alongside each student and putting in the effort that I didn't experience with mostly all of the other teachers/courses" (Kelleigh at BTC, November 13, 2018). The pedagogical decisions faculty make can be a wall or a bridge to

learning in all delivery methods but is heightened in online courses. Kelleigh commented: “his interaction helped us also to kind of come out of our bubble and share some of those personal experiences that involve global learning and whatever else we were working on.”

Sarah also shared the weaving of course content when she reflected on her Written Communication course taught in the traditional face-to-face format. Students were investigating research sites online and working on in-text citations, and their goal was to also research something that they were unfamiliar with; it also needed to address an issue or view in another country. Students chose their own topics, and they discussed a wide range of topics, including how food was processed elsewhere around the world or how differently the livestock consumed was raised or prepared in other countries. These conversations also included practices in treatment and even various hormones or incubation periods. Sarah could not pinpoint what it was about that instructor since it was a course from a while ago except that “he might have just been a well-rounded open-minded person” (Sarah at BTC, November 13, 2018).

Stephanie, too, expressed a perception of faculty possessing a breadth of knowledge and she was asked about different aspects in her class experiences that helped her relate to global learning. She talked about her global business class instructor, who had previously served in the Navy. Stephanie described him as a person with “really broad knowledge of everything almost everything. He had a lot of really interesting information like how to interact in business with China and different countries” (Stephanie at BTC, November 6, 2018). The instructor was also able to make connections with the students about how to interact in business situations with people from other countries and abroad.

At BTC, faculty and students with previous or current military experiences also shaped students’ ability to connect with global topics. This was a finding unique to Beta Technical

College. In addition to Stephanie, Brandt described how his instructor helped him understand the impact of culture and global issues in the automotive field. “One teacher was in the military, and he worked in Owasso, but he got sent all over the world to work on trucks. So, he had a lot of stories from all over the world that he shared” (Brandt at BTC, November 6, 2018). Brandt and Stephanie each also referenced classmates with military experience, who brought in different perspectives into the classroom, which allowed them to make connections with internationalized curriculum.

Molly was one of two participants who expressed her own expanded worldview through her military service. She shared a story about what drew her interest in thinking about the world around her, and it started with living in a small town with a very homogenous group of people. She went on to explain the impact of her interactions with other servicemen and women of different racial backgrounds:

Before I had gone into the military, I had never really talked to a person of color or even any Hispanics . . . I learned through the military that just because you see somebody’s skin doesn’t mean that you know who they are or where they come from at all. So that was really cool, and now I have a very open mind when it comes to meeting new people like. (Molly at BTC, November 9, 2018)

Her language depicts previous isolation from peers or elementary/high school classmates different from her, but she felt an opportunity present in this experiential learning as it developed an interest in global learning when presented in her coursework.

Molly made explicit references to instructors as Weavers of relevant global topics and content within learning activities. As a student interested in environmental issues and social responsibility, she made connections within her English Composition course and later with one

of her program-specific courses. In her general education course, she wrote two different essays on the effects of tsunamis and the effects of pollution. “My instructor even came up to me at the end of the class, and he was like, ‘You know, I did not know that things were this bad.’” One thread in my interview with Molly was her curiosity and interest in understanding how practices can be improved in the United States, and she was able to observe how interconnected our world is and how her instructors incorporated this within her course:

My instructor talked a lot about emergency management and what goes with that is the environment and how people as a whole are affected with all the tsunamis and stuff like that. And he talked about FEMA, which is the federal aspect of emergency management. So, he really was the one who was like, “Oh, that’s kind of cool” because FEMA is a big deal in this field. (Molly at BTC, November 9, 2018)

For Molly, this instructor’s previous roles in emergency management teams and organizations, in addition to his role as police officer, helped her and other students make real life application beyond what a textbook might offer. The cumulative effect of these types of exposures to and a deeper engagement with issues of the environment “sparked the interest.” As with most students, they may not remember the names of movies, the type of speech, or the mode of writing they had to demonstrate, but they had deeper connections with the topic and with the topic’s broader impact.

Bond, Qian, and Huang (2003) discovered that for curriculum to be internationalized, faculty must be internationalized. In the study, 85% of faculty strongly agreed that their courses helped students to develop a broadened worldview about their respective content or discipline expertise. Kelleigh, Sarah, and Molly described these enriched experiences. Felicity did as well

by offering an example of an active learning strategy her instructors used to broaden perspectives. A student in the health sciences field, Felicity mentioned her Introduction to Diversity instructor routinely tried to find different ways of doing things in the classroom. She utilized different methods or tools connect with students through visuals and through movement, and even encouraged involvement in campus and community activities.

One visual activity used in class was to help students understand the high suicide rate among non-heterosexual teenagers. Felicity remembered each student receiving a colored, 5-point star in class, which represented the collective support system a teenager could possess. With the instructor's guidance, different students were asked to fold down a corner of the star, which would symbolize what it is like when a friend, family member, or organization failed to provide social support for a teenager revealing a sexual orientation other than that of heterosexuality. This active learning strategy cultivated the transfer of knowledge; additionally, the instructor encouraged participation in on-campus, off-campus activities, and participation in Discovering Diversity Day.

Felicity's instructor also encouraged students to seek out additional global learning opportunities:

She talked about certain restaurants or certain stores that were very diverse. For example, she shared about a Hmong store that was owned by a first-generation Hmong. There was a coffee shop that's very diversity based, and she would point to things outside of college as well like, there's also this and there are these support groups, and there are these organizations, and this is what's happening in school, or even outside school. (Felicity at BTC, November 13, 2018)

These internationalization conversations and activities "at home" bridge students to global

learning opportunities in the college, local communities, and beyond.

Some courses may not have the explicit ability to draw from the community as Felicity's instructor did, but Andwar/Steve mentioned the way culture was woven into his Introduction to Psychology course. He shared what his "fantastic" instructor did:

It helped me when she used Maslow's Hierarchy because we talked about how it's different in different cultures. For example, safety might be number one in Iran and Iraq when there's war going on; food might be number one in different countries. (Andwar/Steve at BTC, November 9, 2018)

The introductory classes could be a way to start laying the foundational beams in the bridge for students to make connections with an internationalized curriculum. They provide an opportunity to introduce concepts early on so there can be additional opportunities for students to re-investigate or reaffirm their understanding in their advanced level or program level courses. Together, this broader range of internationalized course may present a clearer path for learners to make additional connections to their personal and professional lives.

Molly suggested exposing students to global learning opportunities even earlier, like the elementary age levels: "I think it would make them think more at an earlier stage, and if they keep bringing it up, it would help. Take math for example; I still know my time tables from the sixth grade because it was always talked about and it was something we used" (Molly at BTC, November 9, 2018). As previously mentioned, Felix also found it "important and imperative" for children to be exposed to global content and topics to help them where bridges exist to access their global interests at a younger age.

For students with strong interest in internationalized course content, they felt more could and should be included in the construction and delivery of their courses. Like Jenessa at ATC,

when asked about what faculty members offered to help her or other students to understand global content more, Molly expressed that it was less than she'd like "because they're so focused on just getting their curriculum" (Molly at BTC, November 9, 2018). This speaks to the faculty concern about the challenge of internationalizing curriculum due to time constraints, class size, and limited support of innovative curricular design (Bond, Qian & Huang, 2003).

Similarly, Felix was grappling with trying to understand why there were not more internationalization opportunities present in the courses he had taken. Felix shared the following thoughts when I asked him to think about potential reasons there was not more internationalization present in his courses:

I'm not sure exactly. I mean, it *can't* be because it's too high level because obviously, that couldn't possibly be the case. We learned some in econ obviously, but I think it may have to do with the amount of time within a course and how long a semester runs. That's the only reason I could think of that they would cut some of it out is because they don't have enough time to cover enough of the topic. It would be nice if maybe they made more classes that could cover more of it perhaps or more of the global topics in depth. (Felix at BTC, November 13, 2018)

It was interesting to hear their desire to see more woven into course projects and learning activities with both students. As Felix reflected towards the end of our conversation, he noted, "teachers can only choose so much to put into a course" (Felix at BTC, November 13, 2018).

Felix also described his European education abroad experience as one of both culture shock and first-hand look at the world beyond Kanaska. This was a self-described transformative experience for him, which seemed to prompt his perception of the lack of an internationalization

of curriculum in his courses. Even though he referenced examples of faculty including global topics and themes throughout his courses, he seemed intent on trying to understand why there was not more, throughout his courses. He described his feelings when he noticed a lack of international perspectives being included in his courses:

I guess I feel a little short changed, only because I'd like to be able to see things with different currencies being used in classes. Maybe it could be incorporated in math with business apps or some other course like that. If we're going to do a money-based unit, I would rather see something with different types of currencies, rather than just the US dollar. Perhaps it could well with accounting, too. (Felix at BTC, November 13, 2018)

Felix remembered minimal global references in an economics course. He noted, "The only problem is I don't remember much of it because it was a very short section. I would love to see more" (Felix at BTC, November 13, 2018). This was one of the classes he took after his return from his short study abroad experience, which heightened his awareness when he perceived an absence of internationalization. His insights also extended to other introductory level courses like Introduction to Sociology or Introduction to Psychology. "I think they find it more important to have a variety of topics in the class, which is why many global things aren't in there as much as people would sometimes like" (Felix at BTC, November 13, 2018). Each of these students points to the importance of instructors as Weavers of global perspectives and cultures.

Understanding the interdependence of complex global systems—be it through a social, cultural, or even economic perspective— can be woven within the fabrics of a formal curriculum. However, across both institutions, instructors were the creators of those

opportunities, and at times, they were also those who inadvertently limited exposure and understanding. Kelleigh discovered the opportunities late in her program where one internationalized course became the beacon of her experience:

No, I literally think that that was the only class. Maybe we touched on it in economics, but it wasn't as in depth. Like I got more out of it with peoples' stories, and I feel like, as my definition replays in my mind, I feel like that one class rounded up my whole education for global learning. (Kelleigh at BTC, November 13, 2018)

I asked if she noticed other classes incorporating or missing this global aspect and she responded, "I think it hit me more when you emailed me about this research project" (Kelleigh at BTC, November 13, 2018).

Molly and Felicity, like other students at ATC, understood this opportunity to share their experiences of global learning as a means of continuing their development. Molly interpreted this study as a way for her to extend the benefits she experienced from classes to other students.

I think the study that you're doing is pretty cool. There's people that actually care about this stuff and want people to be more involved with it, so um it was just another thing I really didn't know about and I was curious. (Molly at BTC, November 9, 2018)

Likewise, I was curious as to why Felicity in this study, given her self-described tendencies to be an observer. Her initial thoughts were:

'Oh, there's something I can talk about!' There's something about me like wanting to pass that information on. I'm not very good at big huge groups, but I do like to pass information on, I do like to be like 'Oh, this is what I've learned,

and here is something you've learned that I can have.' (Felicity at BTC, November 13, 2018)

This volunteering of time to help others beyond themselves, too, is an extension of global learning. AAC&U's formal definition of global learning includes that students should "seek to understand how their actions affect both local and global communities" (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2014). Students extend what they learned through classroom conversation and exchange of ideas by sharing them more widely beyond a semester course. Felicity's interest and involvement with this dissertation study was similar to Celia's interest and involvement in the study at ATC. When asked about why she was participating, Celia concluded:

It's awesome to give back. I want other students, younger and older than me, to have more of a global opportunity to learn – even if it's just in a classroom and doing projects, or even traveling abroad. People don't really think of a tech college having a program abroad; they think of like a four-year college doing that kind of stuff. (Celia at ATC, November 19, 2018)

Students at both institutions shed new light on their experiences with internationalized curriculum at their technical colleges. They viewed participation in this study as their ability to help contribute to the develop expansion of future global learning experiences for the other students.

Theme 2: Place Matters but Doesn't Place Boundaries: Also Levering Technology Helps Students Transcend Geographic Boundaries

Harder (2014) concluded that rural community colleges experienced more difficulty in gaining momentum in internationalization practices. Additionally, O'Connor, Farnsworth and

Utley (2013) found that community colleges located in urban Missouri areas were more successful internationalizing general education curriculum than their suburban and small town college counterparts that showed no significant differences. However, Beta Technical College (BTC)—which supported a smaller urban city along with rural communities—also had a robust Global Education Office as mentioned in Chapter Two. BTC was among the top colleges in the KTCS with recruitment of, and support for, international students. Similar to ATC, participants in this study at BTC also mentioned the need for students to develop a global mindset based on the college’s demographic placement but made fewer references were made with regard to opportunities students saw within an urban setting.

Local communities as a place for students to transcend geographic boundaries.

Andwar/Steve, as international, business student, had direct experience with his college’s “amazing Global Education Office”. He described the college’s ability to host different students from different countries as global learning:

It’s learning different stuff from different point of views and to get to know people you know and what’s the story behind them. Because everybody has a story, everybody has a story, and it’s just *listening* to people. So, it’s just, we need to hear somebody’s story and learn something because there is always something to learn from somebody. (Andwar/Steve at BTC, November 9, 2018)

Admittedly, the college’s dedication of money and efforts spent on international students impacted *all* students by bringing different nationalities together so “people just kind of learn from each other” (Andwar/Steve at BTC, November 9, 2018). He also reflected on differences in East Africa regarding communication and access to technology. Like students at ATC, Andwar/Steve and others, interpreted geographical placement as a way to understand other

perspectives and practices while withholding judgment. “I cannot say it’s better there in my home country or it’s worse here; it’s just different, you know” (Andwar/Steve at BTC, November 9, 2018)?

That said, apart from experiences in his specific classes, he had been asked to share his story so many times that he was “sick of it.” He just liked being one of the guys and went by his American name of Steve. In terms of his classroom experiences on campus, “I just go with Steve, so some people don’t even know I’m from a different country.” When I asked him to expand on what he meant, he shared:

I just like being Steve or being viewed as a person from here. I mean, I’ve shared my story so many times, and I have just gotten sick of it. I’m at the point now that I just say, “stop.” You know? So, I just like being Steve and just being one of the guys here, like one of the farm guys, like hey I’m just Steve. (Andwar/Steve at BTC, November 9, 2018)

This was a powerful statement when I heard it, and he showed disgust on his face while he shared his feelings about being pointed out and singled out as the international student who had a story to share, whether he felt like sharing it or not.

Stephanie’s home state was Kanaska, and prior to a global business class, she had not really made such connections in her understandings about business operations. “It’s not something that I really thought of before. I just kind of thought about the United States; I didn’t really think of manufacturing companies where you are dealing with different countries” (Stephanie at BTC, November 6, 2018). She also believed that other students were probably not as interested in that type of perspective because: “Owasso sometimes has a more small business type of mindset.” Her connections of these concepts to being aware of one’s own biases while

also “celebrating” difference was reflected in her personal experiences of being in an interracial relationship and having friends with interracial marriages. In terms of whether this is something people can remain open-minded towards, she shared: “I think it depends on where you live and what your family is.” The boundaries of support system and place merge, and she understands the solution as “giving people equal opportunity.” With regard to being able to communicate with individuals who have “old-fashioned beliefs”, she suggested that it was “important not to force things on them. Getting really mad about it doesn’t help either, but it’s something that I have to work on myself.”

Both Sam and Wayne at ATC were interested in taking a more local approach to global learning. This was similar with BTC business student, Felix, who described his interest in creating a project where students would interview locally owned businesses while understanding their willingness to possibly take their business globally. He explained:

It could be any type of global I guess, whether it be through the World Wide Web or personally going and building a store in that country. I would just like to see more people’s thoughts are about global communities. (Felix at BTC, November 13, 2018)

Felix’s interest included him potentially using social media to gain insight into understanding global beliefs from the local business community. He pointed out a unique understanding that global can mean it is physically located in another country *or* that a student or even business has access to a diverse audience through other means like the Internet.

Online experiences as opportunities for students to transcend geographic boundaries.

Sarah was one of only two students out of all 18, across the two cases, who shared her interest in using online classes to increase global exposure. This delivery mode also shrinks

regional or national borders or virtually eliminates them as an obstacle to an internationalized curriculum. When asked, she described a global learning activity she would like to create for herself or other students. She explained:

I would like to set up an activity where students would have to learn something about another person in the class and give them the opportunity to dialogue openly by using FaceTime or something that they could see each other to video chat. If people from all over are taking this class together, why not explore what can we learn from each other aside from the course content? (Sarah at BTC, November 13, 2018)

Kelleigh's program, as mentioned in her short bio, was solely delivered online, and this was a chief reason she applied to BTC given that she was a "night learner." Her interest in, and insight from, one of her last classes at the college made a significant impact on her understanding of global learning and her decision to participate in this dissertation study. Kelleigh's Oral/Interpersonal class was delivered online, and she described the transformative experience:

In class, we talked a lot about different feelings and different places that we've visited. And everybody in that class had pictures of themselves they posted, and I was thinking "That's so cool, that this person is not even from around here. Like they're from the other side of the globe and they're still pursuing their dreams here." (Kelleigh at BTC, November 13, 2018)

As Theme 1 described, people shaped the experiences that contributed to participants' understanding and ability to connect within an internationalized curriculum. For Kelleigh, the two themes of people and place merged to form a clearer picture of her experiences with an internationalized curriculum. Shapers impacted this course experience with global learning. In

addition, her interest in learning from these Shapers in an online delivery method shrank geographic space for her. In doing so, a bridge was created for her to engage with students from other parts of the world who were also enrolled in the course. In her interview, she talked about experiences from her personal life and how she drew connections with these past experiences while she was in her communications course:

I dated men from Africa prior to that and from Haiti, too, and I feel like those experiences maybe surfaced during that class. Then, I was also thinking about my other friends from Owasso that only grew up in Owasso who became adults and started traveling. They bring back their knowledge of traveling for work. And also, my dad worked at Universal Materials and traveled a ton when we were kids, and it was funny how much I remembered from my childhood that I didn't remember before that. It all came back to me after some of my conversations my classmates outside of class. (Kelleigh at BTC, November 13, 2018)

Kelleigh suggested in-class activities were a way to experience and informally reflect on the different practices of people around the world. At the end of our conversation, she also added her definition of the global learning; learning that transcended Owasso:

There's a whole other world out there. I mean, people do things differently in different places around the world, and that might be really odd to us, but to adapt our work life to that or even our personal life to that – I think that is my definition of global learning. (Kelleigh at BTC, November 13, 2018)

Kelleigh did not leave the country for her Oral/ Interpersonal class, but she was able to have intercultural exchanges in the context of an online course.

For Felix, his study abroad experience in Europe provided different cultural experiences,

which broadened his mindset for the courses once he returned stateside. However, there was one event that he shared was a transformative experience; this happened late one afternoon after having some free time with classmates to explore the city and local shops. He was with a classmate but got separated from her, and he spoke of getting lost – wandering the streets for over an hour – but in our conversation, he was very composed. However, it was evident this was a pivotal experience. I asked if he eventually made his way to his classmates. “Yeah, I did. It was a little scary to be honest, but it was a learning experience to say the least” (Felix at BTC, November 13, 2018)!

Study abroad can trigger a disorienting dilemma for students in their new environments, which can be full of new sights, sounds, and cultural practices (Miller & Gonzalez, 2009). Feelings of being scared or even unsettled are natural, and the feelings associated with getting lost in terms of geography can also be symbolic of students’ experiences, in general, with encountering the unknown or the unfamiliar. This can happen in a different country, or it can happen within the four walls of a classroom when confronted with difficult conversations like the participants in this study have mentioned. These disorienting experiences can serve as a tension that affects emotions, allowing learners to be both excited and scared at the same time.

An example from Stephanie’s Introduction to Diversity class offers an “at home” illustration of the discomfort that can lead to personal self-examination when students are out of a familiar comfort zone. For Stephanie, she described how her instructor helped build a safe classroom space where the teachers always stressed that nothing from discussions left the classroom; this resulted in students sharing vulnerable experiences with each other. Stephanie described an activity she felt related to internationalized learning experiences:

There was one exercise where we had to hold up a card with a stereotype on it

that people might feel about us. We all had to do it, and it was kind of different seeing what everyone picked as a stereotype that someone had placed on them.

(Stephanie at BTC, November 6, 2018)

I asked what that exercise made her feel. She continued: “I thought it was kind of hard because you don’t want to be judged. But when everybody is just vulnerable at the same time, then it’s not as bad.”

The stories of place—whether in the local Owasso community or in a digital or international landscape—illuminate how students at Beta Technical College were encouraged to access their local communities, engage with diverse cultures, and investigate global practices. While there was little reference to other places around the United States when compared to student stories at Alpha Technical College, these students had unique opportunities to explore intercultural relationships with both international and transnational students at their school. Agnew and Kahn (2017) add, “Disagreement and discomfort are clearly part of global learning, and educators may design learning activities that pull students out of their academic and cultural comfort zones” (p. 59). For the students in this study, participating in experiences that transcend ‘known’ boundaries offer opportunities for students to make notions of local move beyond the ‘known’ and start exploration.

Theme 3: Application through Occupation: “We’re in an Interconnected World, Whether We Like it or Not”

In the beginning of this chapter, my decision to share the student stories of participants of Alpha Technical College prior to those at Beta Technical College was based on the fact that the three major themes were more distinct from one another at BTC. The first two themes described thus far in the student stories at BTC have also included students’ inclusion of their occupational

interests and experiences; additional examples of workplace application and relevance are offered in this final theme. Generally, students at BTC also described how working with people from all walks of life was an integral part of their past, present, and future workplace experiences. The participants in this study felt that the inclusion of more intercultural and diverse experiences with people from around the world into classroom learning activities would help us improve as human beings; improvements, which would ultimately impact their performance in a job or career.

Stephanie had completed her business program one semester prior to her participation in this dissertation study, and she has been in a role in human resources for seven months already. She described how she viewed content from internationalized classes applying to that job. “I think the occupation that I’m in now has made me have to be more open minded to everybody and give everybody an equal chance at the job” (Stephanie at BTC, November 6, 2018).

Kelleigh, a student who also completed her program one semester prior to the study, made no reference to how skills, abilities, and attitudes applied to her current employment and workplace.

Like Stephanie, Brandt mentioned the ability to understand and get along with others as important in his field of truck driving and being a mechanic.

There are a variety of people that work where I’m at now too. We’re going to see younger kids coming into the field and families that don’t speak English as much. It’s not too hard to get along. It’s something that truck driving has taught me, too. If somebody’s upset where I see them working on a train or if they’re not always happy, I have kind of learned how to get along with them. As long as everybody does what they’re supposed to be doing, I think that’s the biggest advice. (Brandt at BTC, November 6, 2018)

Brandt also mentioned his need to learn the metric system and its conversion for reading blueprints in his occupation. Technical skills and interaction with equipment or technology were secondary to the ability to interact with humans with different linguistic or cultural backgrounds.

International topics and content are often utilized in curriculum to help facilitate students' comparative understanding of differences among societies. It can also be used a theoretical construct to help facilitate reflective thinking by establishing reference points within the local or students' own societies (Fezzey, Fujieda, Goerd, Kahler, & Nikoi, 2017). Molly worked in the field of corrections, and she saw relevance to understanding how her field could be improved by looking at how other justice systems operate around the world. Much like Jenessa at ATC, Molly understood and viewed global learning as an integral piece to being able to determine better practices within our national borders. The themes of place and occupation extend and create a capacity to each of us to be change-makers. Molly described the potential impact of people applying global learning skills and behaviors in the United States:

We can implement what other countries have in our system to help make us better people. I'm really intrigued about that because we just don't know what people on the other side of the world are thinking or doing. I'm more intrigued to find what there is for us to do that other countries are doing that we don't even know about. It makes me want to find out more about like what's happening on the other side of the world. (Molly at BTC, November 9, 2018)

This comparative approach extends beyond one of the routine curricular approaches to global learning, which can include assignments that require students to solve problems we perceive in other countries. The comparative approach can also serve as a starting point in courses or disciplines where internationalization efforts seem less obvious.

Three students at ATC in patient-related fields—Tonna, Celia, and Shawn—all understood that without directly applying a global mindset inclusive of all patients, they would be not be effective in their jobs. Sarah, in a similar field at BTC, also identified this skill as empowering. When I asked her to describe the effects global learning have had or will have on her, she shared:

I think about the diversity and the different groups of people I've worked with from prisoners all the way to colleagues at the clinic. And you know, people may not see eye to eye on everything since not everybody's molded the same, but I think it just helps me to just understand how difficult it can be to work with people yet how easily I can change a situation. (Sarah at BTC, November 13, 2018)

Felicity, also with patient care experience in several past positions, described her interest in seeing similarities across other cultures and groups of peoples. She had a deep fascination with seeing these strands as ways to link our understanding by building bridges of understanding, and she also understood yet pondered universal thoughts and beliefs. I asked her to share additional global learning topics that would interest her, and her examples traversed different matters of finding truth about the Middle East and understanding monotheistic religions. She also shared this example of discussing universalism and ethics:

The U.S. places an emphasis on children. Asian countries place an emphasis on the elderly. So consider, if you were on a boat and there was an 80-year-old drowning and an 8-month-old drowning, who would you save depending on cultural influence? Most Americans are going to say that they're going to save the 8-month-old because of all the life they have left, whereas in Asian societies,

they are going to save the 80-year-old because of all the wisdom they have.

(Felicity at BTC, November 13, 2018)

Felicity's contextualized learning offers an example for potential ways to strengthen bridges between students in an internationalized content in their programs of study. It also offers evidence of a comparative pedagogy for understanding different social and cultural contexts (Fezzey, Fujieda, Goerdt, Kahler, & Nikoi, 2017). Examining these topics, in the context of a healthcare or an ethics course, may be able to help shift the lens for students in patient-related fields.

Responses to the Research and Attendant Questions

This chapter identified three primary findings to the research question, which examined how students connect with the opportunities present in an internationalized curriculum and how they assigned relevance to that learning. First, students in this study had meaningful connections with internationalized curriculum when they leveraged topics of personal, professional, or academic interest to them. Second, they drew from experiences both inside and outside of the classroom, which reinforced their learning. In fact, they were unable to tell their stories without describing the experiences they had in their personal or professional lives and the impact within their academic spaces. Third, despite students identifying the application of global learning in their occupations and workplace, they placed a stronger emphasis on working collaboratively with others. The ability to work with others ultimately impacted their effectiveness within their field, regardless of occupation. Each of the three primary findings created a bridge that connected students to an internationalized curriculum, and these findings are supported and illustrated by the three master themes identified in this chapter. A visual representation of this relationship between the three primary findings and three master themes is illustrated in Figure

4.1.

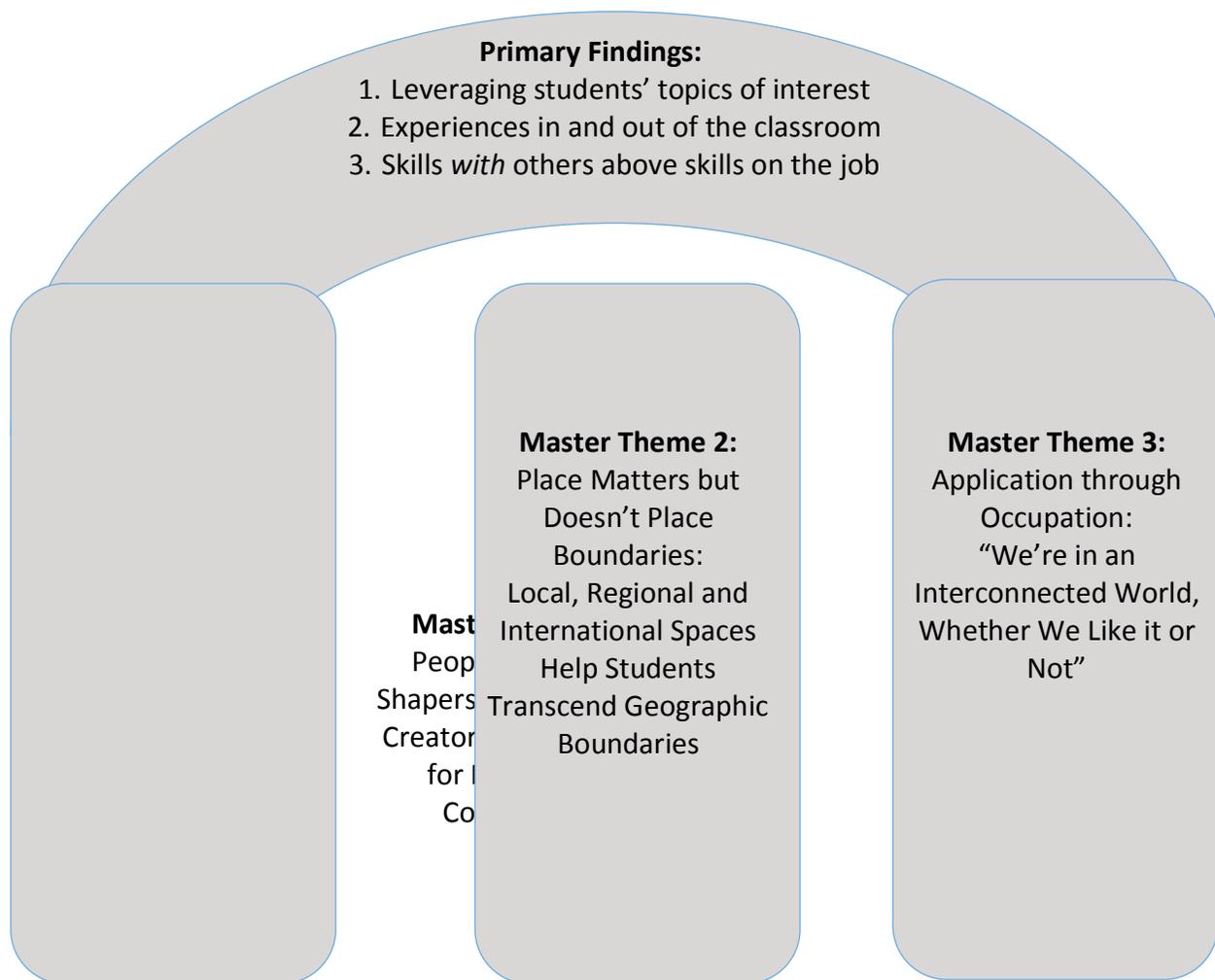


Figure 4.1. Visual representation of the primary findings and master themes.

Pilings of the Bridge

The chapter also identified three master themes that help illustrate students' responses to the three attendant questions in this research study. Additionally, these three master themes

support the three primary findings and are the foundation elements of what connect students to their internationalized curriculum. These themes include: 1) People as Pavers, Shapers, and Weavers: Creators of the Bridge for Meaningful Connections; (2) Place Matters but Doesn't Place Boundaries: Local, Regional and International Spaces Help Students Transcend Geographic Boundaries; and (3) Application through Occupation: "We're in an Interconnected World, Whether We Like it or Not." The three themes worked in tandem with each other in participant stories, and they were foundational elements of a bridge to connect students with learning. They interact with one another to help support and illustrate the three primary findings. The three themes are represented in Figure 4.2.

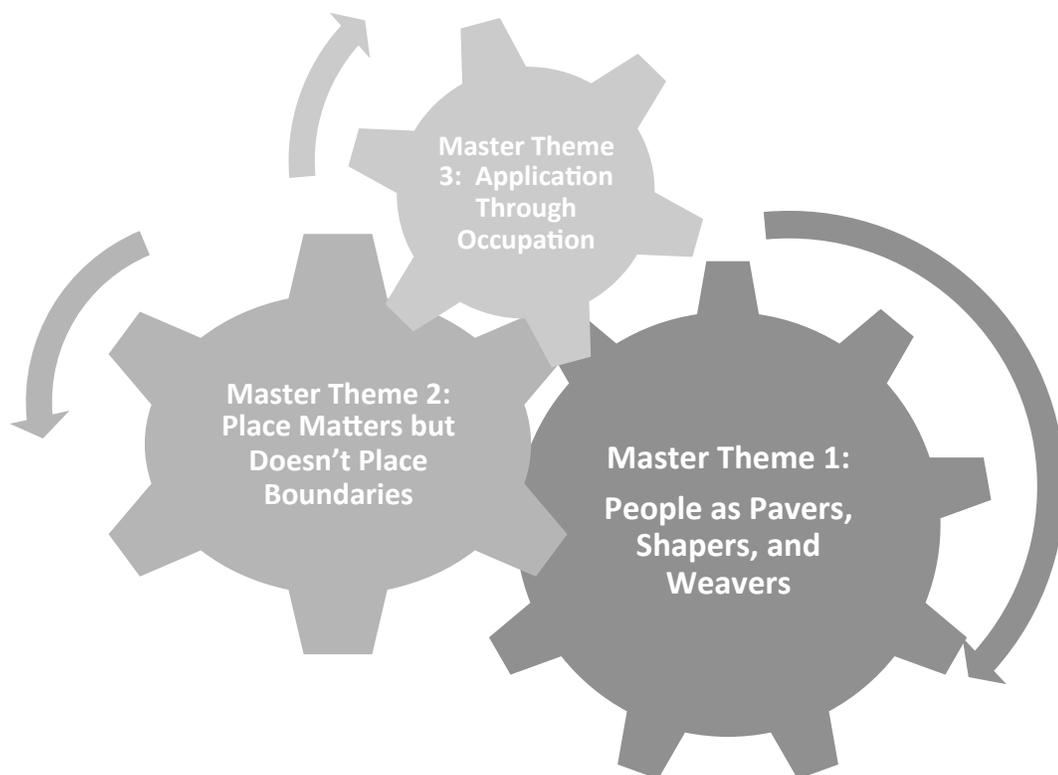


Figure 4.2. Three emergent themes. The three master themes of People, Place, and Occupation work in tandem to help students attending technical colleges connect with an internationalized curriculum.

Though the master themes were present across both institutions, there were subtle differences

between the two colleges. These differences are referenced below in the master themes. They are also delineated in the three master theme tables located in Appendix J.

The first master theme illustrated how different individuals in the students' personal and academic spaces presented as opportunities for student to connect with an internationalized curriculum. These people were family members, friends, and instructors. Many participants identified family members or friends who created various entryways for connecting with an internationalized curriculum. Participants' classmates also shaped global learning experiences. Unique to BTC participants were meaningful opportunities to interact with ESL or international students; this resulted in first-hand global learning. Lastly, faculty functioned as Weavers who were integral in offering students opportunities to experience the outcomes of an internationalized curriculum as the purveyors of curriculum design. A safe and inviting classroom environment increased opportunities for learners to connect meaningfully with global topics and allowed for authentic, critical conversations. However, when Weavers presented international/cultural topics in breadth, this approach limited the ability for students to take a deeper dive into topics of interest.

The second theme demonstrated that place-bound students viewed their local, regional, and national spaces as past and potential global learning opportunities. The placement of ATC in close proximity to a large, urban city provided unique opportunities that drew in students' interests, personally, academically, and professionally. Also unique to ATC was participants' regional travel within the United States, which shaped their development of a global mindset. When participants perceived their classmates as coming from smaller towns or from a homogenous cultural background, participants identified this as a need for expanding a global mindset in classmates. It appeared that geography was irrelevant when interaction with

international and transnational students offered first-hand global learning. Unique to BTC was the integration of technology used to bridge learning experiences with students outside the United States.

The third theme reflected how students envisioned jobs and careers as part of an interconnected, global society regardless to their program of study. If topics or global learning concepts were to be removed from their programs of study, students felt it would negatively future work within their professions. In addition, they desired more internationalized content in their courses because of their cultivated interest and innate curiosity. Overall, these three master themes tell a story of how these participants drew from their rich repositories of experiential and formal learning opportunities to connect with their internationalized courses.

In this study, the attendant questions highlight details on the connections between students and an internationalized curriculum. Responses to each attendant question follow.

Attendant Question 1: What aspects of an internationalized curriculum in their course of study draw student interest?

Collectively, Alpha Technical College students described their general education courses and their program courses more frequently in their interviews than those at Beta Technical College. However, these more frequent references were generally representative of a greater range but with a more cursory description as opposed to isolated descriptions with more depth. These courses served as the basis of internationalized experiences in students' courses; they are outlined in Table 4.4.

Learning activities in general education courses encouraged awareness of the life “beyond the bubble,” but research projects and application of knowledge from students' programs of studies were of interest since they allowed for more depth. Within these courses,

faculty functioned as Weavers who were integral in offering students opportunities to experience the outcomes of an internationalized curriculum as the purveyors of curriculum design. Global learning topics and concepts were introduced in introductory level courses, and students sought deeper understanding on topics presented in their classes.

Internationalized curriculum was also meaningful when local community topics, opportunities or resources were utilized in classroom content to help connect students to global learning outcomes. Placement of a college near an urban city provided early opportunities for ATC students to develop an orientation to foundational elements in their internationalized courses. They noted interest in future engagement in their local communities, either in course activities or in future work. This reference to their work sheds light on responses to the second attendant question.

Attendant Question 2: What types of learning opportunities in an internationalized curriculum do students suggest help them make connections to their personal lives, workplace or occupational interests?

Within these internationalized courses, students viewed their classmates' diversity—with regard to age, experience, and race/ethnicity—as opportunities to help them make sense of a global learning based curriculum. The classroom community shaped learning and the experiences students brought to internationalized course curriculum. Classmates and peers, and meaningful interactions with them, helped replicate the need for understanding multiple perspectives and various practices in today's society.

A safe and inviting classroom environment increased opportunities for learners to connect meaningfully with global topics and allowed for authentic, critical conversations. Interaction with international/transnational students offered enriched, first-hand global learning

that allowed for engaging conversation. Specific to BTC was the reference to online learning and technology to bridge learning experiences of local students with those outside of the United States. Meaningful interaction from faculty, along with intentional ways to engage student interaction in an online learning environment, was necessary. The meaning and relevance gleaned from these learning opportunities was directly relevant to students' future occupations and workspaces.

Attendant Question 3: In what ways, if any, do students assign relevance to the learning experiences in an internationalized curriculum to their personal lives, workplace or occupational interests?

Students envisioned their jobs and careers as part of an interconnected, global society regardless of their programs of study. There was interest to applying global learning skills and knowledge in the students' program of field of study, especially for those students enrolled in patient care program and in business programs. If topics or global learning concepts were not present in their programs of study, students felt this absence would present as a disservice to preparing them for their future work and interaction with others.

Given these influences on student experiences into consideration, we learn that adult learners already possess global learning in their lives beyond what a faculty member may create. However, when personal experiences with global exposure are limited, the role of instructors for both creating and introducing meaningful global learning activities becomes more critical. These findings can guide institutional leadership as well as faculty members in future internationalization efforts in two-year technical colleges. Chapter Five offers a discussion and implications of the findings and outlines future research.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This dissertation originated because of a student named Luis who shared a unique story describing the ways in which he connected with an internationalized curriculum. This study then examined the stories of 18 participants who shared their own experiences regarding their ability to connect with and assign relevance to global learning opportunities in the program curriculum at the technical colleges they attended. Their stories offered responses to the research question - How do students attending a technical college with an internationalized curriculum connect with the opportunity and assign relevance? Their stories also yielded responses to three attending questions: 1) What aspects of an internationalized curriculum in their course of study draw student interest? 2) What types of learning opportunities in an internationalized curriculum do students suggest help them make connections to their personal lives, workplace or occupational interests? and 3) In what ways, if any, do students assign relevance to the learning experiences in an internationalized curriculum to their personal lives, workplace or occupational interests?

Taken together, the three findings – leveraging topics of interest, experiences in and out of the classroom, and skills *with* others above skills on the job – offer conclusions that extend beyond the learning theories and instructional supports, which two-year technical college faculty and administrators use to operationalize internationalization efforts. As evidenced in this study, introducing an internationalized curriculum to students at a community or two-year technical college, although it may seem contradictory or difficult, is possible. The findings in this study shed light on what students learn with an internationalized curriculum and how their lived experiences, roles, and interests extend and enhance the expected outcomes.

This chapter begins with summary conclusions drawn from my analysis of the participants' interviews and the written reflections they submitted in this study. Each of these has

implications for faculty who design and deliver an internationalized curriculum along with institutional leadership and administration at technical colleges. Thus, the second part will address implications for these two groups. I also include implications for the field of adult learning before I close this chapter with considerations for future research to help build additional bridges between theory and praxis.

Foundations of the Bridge between Students and Global Learning

Research suggested that students build global competence through internationalized course curricula, yet there was little connection about what orientations to global learning these adult learners already possessed (Zimitat; 2008; Davis, Snyder, & Widmar, 2014; Robertson, 2015; Roberts & Komives, 2016). The three primary findings show how students connected with their internationalized curriculum as adult learners. First, students had meaningful connections with internationalized curriculum when they leveraged topics of personal, professional, or academic interest to them. Second, they drew from experiences both inside and outside of the classroom, which reinforced their learning. In fact, they were unable to tell their stories without describing the experiences they had in their personal or professional lives and the impact within their academic spaces. Third, despite students identifying the application of global in their occupations and workplace, they placed a stronger emphasis on working collaboratively with others. The ability to work with others ultimately impacted their effectiveness within their field, regardless of occupation.

The three master themes in this study highlight the foundational elements of what connects students to their internationalized curriculum: 1) People as Pavers, Shapers, and Weavers: Creators of the Bridge for Meaningful Connections; (2) Place Matters but Doesn't Place Boundaries: Local, Regional and International Spaces Help Students Transcend

Geographic Boundaries; and (3) Application through Occupation: “We’re in an Interconnected World, Whether We Like it or Not.” I begin with formal recognition that learning for adults builds from various educational experiences before students come to an institution in higher education.

The Unique Position of Adult Learners on the Bridge of PK-20 Learning Continuum

Student participants in this research study made multiple references to their own global learning experiences that spanned their primary, secondary, and post-secondary schooling. A multicultural education for elementary students originates from a fundamental ethic of respect for all persons, which implies intrinsic value for all of us (Lynch, 1983). This approach to education can also help reach children in their earliest experiences to teach citizenship given the society they are a part of. Schools are one of the initial places that they learn to be a part of a community, deal with conflict and change, and learn to accept differences. Research shows that children should be introduced to global issues and perspectives as early as possible and that the elementary years are the most suitable time for this (Diaz, Massialas, & Xanthopoulos, 1999). However, children must first learn about the world around them before learning about the distant world. Elementary school classroom lessons can be interwoven, first, with local references or regional information either through extending the knowledge of capitals of the states. Then introduction of topics beyond our national border may include topics like food, customs, world religions, or the usage of the metric system. This instruction can also come informally and outside of the traditional classroom.

Students like Jenessa, Felix, and Molly made references to early exposure to global learning in their elementary grades. An image Jenessa associated with global learning stemmed from that exposure.

When you're in elementary school, sometimes you'll see picture of the globe holding hands around it, so it makes me think of being linked up. I also think about different projects that I did growing up about different countries and just learning about the way that they live around. (Jenessa at ATC, October 15, 2018).

A multicultural approach to education early on can be the bridge that enables students to be part of a larger conversation in this diverse world. In the elementary and middle school levels, however, teachers have to build the context for students since children may lack the ability to see relevance or immediate need outside of their young selves.

In high school, teenagers can make additional connections with global learning that builds from the previous developmentally appropriate home, city, and state curriculum in elementary education. This might include specific courses like World History, World Literature, Art History, or foreign language courses. Chad, Shawn, Tonna, Molly, and Felix included references to high school learning experiences with volunteerism, foreign language knowledge or interest, or classroom projects that impacted their ability to connect with their internationalized courses at their colleges. In fact, Tonna's written reflection described a high school social studies project where she was asked to research different cultures and religions from around the world. She wrote about her struggle during those earlier years with adapting her mindset and accepting others.

I found it hard to expand my base knowledge at the beginning of the project, and I tended to go with what the media portrayed about the cultures instead of what the actual culture was and what they stood for. I was very biased regarding the "American way" and disregarded that there could be other ways of living life. (Tonna, personal communication, October 18, 2018)

Internationalization of curricula intends to equip students with learning that seeks to develop critical thinking and reflection, perspective sharing, and empathy (Clifford & Montgomery, 2017; Fezzey, Fujieda, Goerdt, Kahler, & Nikoi, 2017). Students in this study shared many examples in which they were able to realize and practice these skills within their formal college curriculum. While their lexicon and syntax, at times, may have not matched the formal definitions set forth by the Association of American Colleges and Universities Global Learning Value Rubric, they describe lived experiences in ways that made these criteria accessible for them. This was reflective in their desire to “find the truth” in media and other informational sources they accessed.

The framework of andragogy situates students at the center of the learning transaction where the role of an instructor is secondary. Understanding students’ experiences can be understood through the stories they shared. The participants in this study, because they were continually making connections of an internationalized curriculum to the personal, professional and academic spaces, illustrate how one’s lived experiences add to the field of adult learning. Kahn and Agnew (2017) noted global learning “has the capacity to help students find their commitments, advocate for their position, and develop compassion and convictions within and beyond their immediate world” (p. 58). Perhaps, adult learners in a two-year technical college, given their interests and engagement in various aspects of society, are at the prime point on the PK-20 continuum to be able to determine significance and relevance of the impacts of globalization. This unique placement of adult learners on the education bridge has implications for faculty, who are the purveyors of the formal global learning opportunities for these particular students.

Implications for Faculty Internationalizing Curriculum

When personal experiences with global exposure are limited, the role of instructors to both create and introduce the learning opportunities of a meaningful internationalized curriculum is heightened. Faculty presented opportunities for students through their role as Weavers by introducing or reinforcing global learning topics and content within course curriculum. However, the implications of the role of faculty are intertwined with the role of classmates as Shapers who also impacted classroom learning environments and ultimately, students' mindsets.

Faculty must also acknowledge the role that students' experiences, interests, and goals play in the process of learning and internationalization. In this study, students leveraged their experiences and unique interests in topics and content of interest for developing a global understanding. They often self-scaffold these interests in one course assignment and then in subsequent course assignments or projects in order to build stronger and deeper understanding of topics in their internationalized courses. Students like Molly, Andwar/Steve, and Kat described how they built new meaning of internationalized content by challenging themselves to find more depth in their research projects and course activities. Molly was interested in environmental issues and social responsibility, and she made connections within her English Composition course and later with one of her program-specific courses. In her general education course, Molly composed two different essays on the effects of tsunamis and pollution. These selections stemmed from her own interests instead of hinging on any intentional orchestration from faculty since Molly was the one guiding her learning across multiple courses. Her curiosity and interest in understanding how practices can be improved in the United States helped her find her own motivation for learning. This appropriate level of challenge, along with the accumulation of practice, helps students remain motivated to sustain their efforts in learning (Ambrose, Bridges,

Lovett, DiPietro & Norman, 2010).

As faculty enact change in internationalization efforts, it is also important to engage in discussions about the relationship between diversity and internationalization.

At the intersection of diversity and internationalization. In this study, experience with an internationalized curriculum gave students' local experiences meaning, which stimulated perspective-taking and added value to their learning about diversity and becoming a global citizen. This happened, to a substantial degree, because of inclusion of the general education courses, which incorporated global learning tenets as part of their curriculum outcomes and learning objectives. A General Education Capstone Reflection—which is further discussed in the following section of Recommendations for Future Research—may help may help students tie their learning together where they make visible the notion of internationalization at home in the classroom.

Additionally, O'Connor, Farnsworth and Utley (2013) noted, “there is a disconnect in the minds of many faculty between diversity education and international education” (p. 977). This has the potential to inadvertently extend into curricular design and delivery. In this study, Jenessa described her perception of the heightened focus of diversity in her courses at ATC. She also added, “there hasn't been a whole lot of focus on the global part” (Jenessa at ATC, October 15, 2018). Her statement, along with other students' different examples of global learning, offers the opportunity to build upon the notion that diversity alone is not internationalization.

Kat, Tonna, and Shawn also shared examples of classroom learning activities and personal interests that intersected issues of local systemic inequities in the large, urban city of Centerville. The concept of diversity, when it is used in education, helps students understand societal injustices that may start with issues like privilege, oppression, racism, and sexism

(Davis, 2013). Thus, students' interpretation of age, race, and gender as global learning concepts illustrates how diversity is a part of internationalization. Internationalization can be viewed as an umbrella under which issues of local, national, and global dimensions are considered. Domestic diversity—either locally or nationally—is more so a concern with diversity education while internationalization also includes knowledge of cultures and regions outside of the United States along with global trends and systems (Olson, Evans, Shoenberg, 2007). The examples students shared, which included issues and topics closely related to domestic diversity, can serve as a reference point for faculty to lay initial beams in the bridge of internationalized curriculum.

Challenging the limited and literal view of “global”. The findings of this study align with Internationalization at Home framework suggesting the need to capitalize both on local community resources and people (Leask, 2009; Beelan & Jones, 2015; Agnew & Kahn, 2017). Given that topics of diversity can be an initial introduction to help students understand issues that extend beyond their immediate world, there are additional implications for faculty who may struggle with internationalizing curriculum or deem it irrelevant. When faculty feel the need to make global learning tangible for students, the evidence in this study suggests it is helpful to first consider local and even regional topics, issues, and resources. Sam, Wayne, and Felix who were enrolled in business programs, had specific interests in using local spaces as a means for practicing marketing strategies and understanding product or service design and implementation.

Two-year technical college students often desire to remain local, so experiences and interest with the local community can link them to opportunities they see within an internationalized curriculum. Additionally, 95% of the students graduating from the Kanaska technical colleges end up finding employment within the state, which further underscores the need for a more localized approach to internationalization (KTCS Factbook, 2018). The

examples of these students' varied interests and their desire to explore them locally provides opportunities that some faculty may overlook when thinking more literally about the word "global." The misconception that global does not mean local engagement can be re-envisioned to help students understand practices within a regional or domestic view. Local connection and students desire to remain local in employment can help them better understand and engage in the local community.

Faculty and program administrators who develop curriculum in their programs of study should also consider offering urban practicum, clinical, or internship placements. The creation and promotion of national/domestic exchanges or travel within the United States (e.g., a reservation in South Dakota, the Appalachian region) can also help promote understanding of our own country through different settings. This shift in mindset from "study abroad" to "study away" also aligns with providing equitable access to all students for enriched learning regardless of income or other external factors. An additional shift in mindset regarding challenges to internationalizing curriculum can also help faculty enhance curricular opportunities despite the challenges that may exist.

Addressing limitations of time and resources. Theme 3—Application through Occupation—illustrated students had the desire to see more international topics and perspectives woven into course projects and learning activities. Just as important, when these topics of interest were touched upon in a cursory manner like Felix and Jenessa suggested, students questioned why more depth was not present. Felix tried to understand the lack of depth in one of his general education courses.

We learned some in econ obviously, but I think it may have to do with the amount of time within a course and how long a semester runs. That's the only reason I

could think of that they would cut some of it out is because they don't have enough time to cover enough of the topic. (Felix at BTC, November 13, 2018)

This supported the faculty concern with regard to the challenges of internationalizing curriculum due to time constraints, class size, and limited support of innovative curricular design (e.g., Bond, Qian & Huang, 2003). To Shawn, incorporating a global perspective relevant to some aspect of our globalized society could enhance a component of the class, such as the instructor's use of case studies, which already existed in the course design. His Anatomy and Physiology course utilized case studies on various medical conditions and the demographics affecting those conditions. He shared, "I think that's an opportunity where they might meld in some of these things that I mentioned earlier. That how might this condition be different in this setting, in this country, or in this place or this town" (Shawn at ATC, November 27, 2018).

Additionally, faculty might start with a base approach of addressing topics of relevance to any college students, regardless of program of study. This could include topics of food, technology, transportation, or even work conditions. Mary Ann described what she would like to see in her culinary program:

The one thing I wish there was a baking class specifically about learning about other cultures' desserts. Every once in a while, we would have these things but there never was a time for us to sit down for us to learn specifically about the other countries and what they eat. (Mary Ann at ATC, October 23, 2018)

Faculty can then scaffold and build more challenging and meaningful units based on students' desires to learn more about concepts of interest to them. Though it may be difficult at times for both students and faculty, recognizing the importance of critical reflection is also necessary.

Structuring reflection. For the majority of students in this study, they did not indicate there was meaningful reflection present in their internationalized courses. Yet, “learning is understood as the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one’s experience in order to guide future action” (Mezirow, 1996, p. 162). Thus, critical reflection is essential in understanding how transformative learning can result in social change. In this study, Wayne described his understanding of reflective practices after a project:

I don’t know if personally if it’s ever meaningful. Sometimes they’ll have you do a reflection PowerPoint and give us a few questions. For most of the students, it’s just literally just a PowerPoint, and we type in random things and hope to get the full points. (Wayne at BTC, October 17, 2018).

Wayne also expressed his perception that it was common for instructors to ask students about what they would change about a project or assignment instead for future students in the subsequent semesters. He expressed a sense of confusion and dismay with the types of feedback they wanted in a reflection since “we’re not going to benefit from this feedback.” Providing faculty support with scaffolding meaningful, critical reflection can be valuable with it helps a student track their own growth instead of suggesting improvements for other students. If deeper reflection strategies can accompany global learning activities and assessments, this can help students determine their assumptions, beliefs, and one’s own worldview, not only for students but faculty as well (Nienhaus & Williams, 2016). Many instructors are not aware of privilege and oppression in their own lives, but this beckons close examination in the curricular decision-making process (Joseph, 2011). Additionally, reflection by key leadership and administration in two-year technical colleges can further enhance global learning opportunities for all students.

Implications for Curriculum and Institutional Leadership and Administration

This research identified various ways that internationalizing curriculum at home can enhance the experiences for all students. For students who lack global exposure or for those who may lack life experiences, faculty are the bridge to helping students connect to the wider world. This indicates that there are also implications for administration and leadership to enhance learning and further promote the Internationalization at Home framework in two-year community or technical colleges with regard to infrastructure and policy.

Opportunities within hiring and training. In the pursuit for comprehensive internationalization, institutions of higher education must consider operations and recruitment (Knight, 2004). Such strategies include active recruitment and selection procedures that recognize international expertise, policies to incentivize and reinforce faculty and staff professional development activities, and support for international assignments and potential teaching opportunities abroad. Onboarding faculty with the direct intention of providing support in examining their discipline or field of study from a global perspective is advantageous. In this study, students described their occupational work interwoven with an interconnected world with regard to patients, clients, and industry standards. Students like Wayne, Sam, and Chad described his need to understand international perspectives and trends in their fields. Chad shared: “Hopefully I’ll work for a company with a global brand, and I hope it would be something that made a positive shift beyond just economic purposes” (Chad at ATC, October 29, 2018).

Students like Sarah, Felicity, Tonna, Shawn, and Celia—enrolled in patient related fields—suggested global learning was imperative in their courses if they were to be effective in their work. Without exposure to an internationalized curriculum, Celia described: “It would be devastating. I don’t think we’d actually have a decent nursing program if we didn’t have global

learning because we are dealing with so many different nationalities and ethnicities on a daily basis” (Celia at ATC, November 19, 2018).

In addition, those who understand student experience and effective pedagogy can further strengthen the opportunities students have for increased global learning touch points in their programs of study. Faculty experience abroad can help them introduce customs, cultures, and practices from experience traveling or living abroad (Richardson, 2012). However, additional consideration must be given to transferring that first-hand knowledge into learning outcomes and objectives that transcend interesting or unique stories shared in classes. Tonna shared examples in her program courses about unique stories faculty members shared about training experiences from the Middle East, but there was no evidence that students were asked to demonstrate understanding of these global perspectives in the course. While engaging students with stories and examples can be a useful tool, pedagogy along with purposeful, meaningful assessment are at the heart of Internationalization at Home (Beelan & Jones, 2015).

If a faculty lack international experience or a personal interest with developing the outcomes associated with an Internationalization at Home framework, they are often limited to formal professional development opportunities such as conferences or incentivized curriculum revision. Both ATC and BTC have offered small grants as an incentivize for faculty to internationalize course content since 2013, and while more than 30 have been awarded since then at ATC, faculty applying for and implementing these curriculum revisions is not widespread. While I do not suggest these incentivized grants are the only way to ensure global curriculum internationalization is occurring, faculty who struggle with integrating global perspectives or topics into courses could more widely benefit from this professional development opportunity. Incidentally, it is common for new instructors at a technical college to be working in their

occupation one day and entering a classroom or lab setting the very next day as a brand new instructor in an unfamiliar role. Shawn noted a perceived limitation of using a textbook if there is limited inclusion of global considerations:

Unless the editor of the textbooks themselves had a mindset to tie in their information to a global mindset, they're going to be very focused on ensuring that the student learns the concepts for that subject and not necessarily include any other information. (Shawn at ATC, November 27, 2018)

Consideration of additional support for faculty around internationalization efforts and pedagogy can help enhance opportunities to first develop a faculty's own global mindset. While further development of faculty is a noteworthy endeavor, extending change to policy across the Kanaska Technical College System also warrants consideration.

Policy implications. There are various influences that shape policy and legislative issues of two-year community and technical colleges. These include but are not limited to: the demands of public K-12 education, the social needs of communities, and the demands of industry and workforce development. Thus, examining relevant opportunities in K-12 exposure to global learning along with formal Global Distinction Certificates or other "passport programs" in place is helpful to consider with regard to potential global education policy in the KTCS.

A current policy exists in Kanaska to offer graduating high school students the opportunity to earn a Kanaska Global Education Achievement Certificate. This Certificate was not previously introduced in the Literature Review given the limited scope which focused on two and four-year colleges and their historical role in international education. However, the student stories in this study also included references to K-12 experiences, specifically regarding opportunities presented to students in their secondary years of education. Given this emergence,

the inclusion of the Certificate, here, offers insight to additional supports available to students prior to the entry in higher education.

This Global Education Achievement Certificate is intended to validate excellent global learning opportunities already in school districts, encourage students to enroll in courses with global content, and “prepare globally competent students who are career ready in Kanaska and Beyond” (Kanaska Department of Public Instruction, n.d., par. 6). Students successfully earn the Certificate after completing coursework requirements (e.g., foreign language classes, history, geography, and art course) and reflections on international content (e.g., cultural media, books, and exhibitions), participation in co-curriculars, and community service. This certificate encourages both students and districts to provide intentionality in global and cross-cultural enhancement at the secondary level.

Additionally, two-year colleges nationwide have similar certificate programs as pathways to providing a framework for supporting students’ development as global citizens. The state of North Carolina offers a number of Global Distinction programs originally implemented in 2010. Davidson County Community College’s Scholars of Global Distinction initiative was intended to provide support in developing students’ global competencies while including curriculum, cultural immersion, and active campus engagement as part of the program requirements (de Wit & Furst, 2019). Techtee College offers a Global Studies Passport Program, which is an Interdisciplinary Global Studies Certificate earned upon completion of 15 global studies or world language courses. A policy issuing support of similar passport or Global Distinction programs in the KTCS would allow for a continuation of these effects beyond the secondary level and build links between curricular and experiential learning opportunities across the PK-20 system. Given this study’s conclusion that students already possess experiential global learning outside of their

formal curriculum, colleges should consider offering Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) as part of the pathway to these certificates of distinction.

If not through policy, then through General Education. The American Council on Education (2017) found that in 2016, nearly half of institutions reported that their general education (GE) requirements included an international or global component. Students fulfilled these requirements “with either courses that focus on global trends/issues (e.g., health, environment, or peace studies), or those that feature perspectives issues, or events from specific countries or areas outside the U.S.” (p. 15). In this study, the number of general education courses that were referenced by participants was higher than program specific courses like an Introduction to Accounting class or a Healthcare Fundamentals courses. These references were outlined in Table 4.4. If occupational programs do not systematically introduce global and intercultural concepts as part of their electives, students should at least be exposed to this fundamental knowledge in their general education courses.

For this study, I determined the sample population of participants by the crosswalk matrix presented in Table 2; this process allowed for the assumption that the overlap of global learning criteria and core General Education Skills and Attitudes would lead to an inherent internationalization of curriculum. One finding presented in Chapter Four was the frequent references to internationalized course content in the general education courses. Most commonly, General Education requirements in community colleges serve to enhance students’ breath of knowledge, critical thinking and written expression while providing them the “knowledge that will help them to make decisions in their everyday lives” (Zeszotarski, 1999, p 43).

Given that the Internationalization at Home (IaH) framework places a strong emphasis on infusing international and intercultural competencies into compulsory courses in a students’

program of study, herein lies an opportunity for more equitable access to global learning for all students in a technical college. The KTCS consists of 16 colleges and it remains difficult to determine how the role of General Education Skills, Attitudes and Concepts included in Appendix B are utilized in each of the colleges. Henceforth, deans, associate deans, and the System General Education Coordinator may want to consider starting to examine and coordinator efforts about how the skills are being used, either as outcomes or guiding principles in general education programs. Coordinating efforts and goal setting around how this document is used at the 16 colleges may start to further strengthen the intentionality of internationalization efforts in the general education courses. Since students are exposed to both general education courses and their program courses in various formats and delivery methods, it behooves institutions to consider the online format as another means to develop meaningful learning opportunities.

Technical colleges leveraging technology. As the KTCS technical colleges continue to fulfill their mission of providing a comprehensive technical education and industry training for the workforce, they will need investment in world-class equipment and facilities. However, the ability to strategically leverage technology to bridge local students to other students from around the globe and in different time zones should also be considered.

A higher percentage of classes existed online for students at BTC in terms of course options. That said, it was only with probing that Sarah remarked that there were very few opportunities to video chat or interact with other students outside of written form in asynchronous communication. She attributed this to time constraints. However, her interest in online classes for practical purposes was something that was also viewed as an opportunity to tap into students from other places around the world to learn together *and* from each other. A unique

insight is that the exposure to different culture and practices *could* come from students themselves. As she noted, “I’m going to be working with many different types of cultures and diverse of people, and maybe learning from another student that touching somebody in their culture is not appropriate” (Sarah at BTC, November 13, 2018).

As mentioned in the Literature Review, Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) offers opportunities for students to gain intercultural awareness and development in meaningful ways (ACE, 2017). COIL initiatives can offer technical colleges a means to utilize their technology while creating dynamic opportunities for students to even engage in improving their virtual teamwork skills with students in other classrooms and colleges around the world. Kelleigh, Sarah, and Shawn mentioned online courses that were internationalized or that had a culturally diverse group of students. However, there was an absence of any clear reference to COIL learning at both colleges. Given the nature of technical colleges in their readiness to be at or ahead of the curve with regard to technological innovation, this was a bit surprising. However, perhaps the more direct access to intercultural learning opportunities was right within the face-to-face and online classroom at BTC since the international student population was already enhancing these environments.

Nonetheless, the need for an instructor to be scaffolding meaningful learning opportunities – whether a COIL opportunity or traditional online class—is necessary. As Kelleigh shared in her written reflection, her instructor used pedagogy strategies that stood out from the remainder of her other courses she took in her online program. “He was different than the others by interacting and reflecting alongside each student and putting in the effort that I didn’t experience with mostly all of the other teachers/courses” (Kelleigh at BTC, November 13, 2018). The “guide on the side” strategy offered opportunities for students to see reflection

modeled by the faculty member. Kelleigh was the student who mused about what it meant to actually be adult learner. While she considered herself as a “night learner” who preferred online learning, other groups in higher education are referring to this group as “new traditional.” Regardless of the term used, the findings of this study suggest additional implications for the broader field of adult learning.

Additional Implications for the Field of Adult Education and Learning

Learning does not only take part in the single individual; we must consider the social and societal dimensions in order to more thoroughly understand the landscape adult learners navigate in formal learning opportunities. With the variety of roles that adult learners play, in addition to being a student, these responsibilities can serve as vast repositories from which higher education can draw (Knowles, 1980). However, these roles can also present situational challenges where a mother feels guilt over taking time away from her child to be in a formal classroom setting or frustration over fulfilling a family’s basic needs (Fairchild, 2003). The thoughtful and vivid examples that students in this study shared as their lived experiences played into these multiple social roles while developing as global learners should cause us to pause and re-evaluate. Instead of viewing these characteristics as deterrents, we can reverse the narrative and value how these past, present, and future relationships pave paths into their understandings about the world beyond the classroom.

Students like Celia, Shawn, Sarah and Felix who had exposure and interaction with various types of Pavers, Shapers, Weavers are presented with more formal and informal opportunities to continually examine and re-examine their understanding of what their role will be in a globalized society. Parents, siblings, and the family group are often the first influences in terms of how to act, behave, and think. From family traditions to rules and even communication

styles, they play a profound role in helping a child and eventually teenager and young adult develop. In short, these important people are situated in positions to pave and create paths to learning that have allowed students to enter into a space where they can start to make connections with experiences in life, both in from a personal standpoint or from an academic standpoint.

Data from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) showed that students who succeeded in their college efforts—despite encountering challenges—were able to directly point to and name individuals who made an impact (Schugart, 2014). This is similar to participants' stories about influences in their global learning. Faculty can also capitalize on one of their greatest resources when considering internationalization of their courses: the diversity of the students themselves. The participants in this study mentioned the composition of their classmates – with regard to age, race, and gender – as unique contributors to their learning about those with perspectives and experiences different from themselves. For participants, diversity also included students enrolled in various programs of study. Stephanie, Brandt, and Steve/Andwar viewed their general education classes as unique spaces to bring together students from various programs across the college as opposed to the cohort model offered in program-specific courses. As offered in the findings of this study, adult learners are built-in repositories of rich experiences from which all students can learn, and this can be reinforced in the field of adult learning and education. The implications for faculty, administration and leadership, and the field of adult learning present opportunities for future research. These recommendations are presented next.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on this study's findings, I offer four considerations for future research. The

findings of each will potentially strengthen the bridge between students and their global learning experiences in a two-year community and technical colleges.

Internationalization: Intentional or accidental? Both Alpha Technical College and Beta Technical College offered global mini grants as incentives for faculty to add an international component to their courses. I spoke with four recipients at BTC about the way they introduced these international perspectives within their courses, their rationale, and the student response to these topics or units. Throughout my interviews with students, I was always curious as to whether or not students described any of the projects or assignments that were infused into courses as a direct result and intentionality of those faculty interested in revising course delivery and outcomes. The faculty mentioned in students' stories may have included internationalized course content for various reasons: they could have internationalized by mistake; they could have used a textbook or previously created course documents and assessments with global considerations already embedded for them; they could have been instructors of naturally internationalized courses (e.g., Global Marketing); or they could have done so for other personal or professional reasons. Future research might examine the responses from all students within a grant-funded course while considering the intended global learning outcomes as a basis for students learning and engagement. Research could also investigate reasons that served as a catalyst for the international dimension in the course.

As students leveraged their own interests as part of their learning from an internationalized curriculum, they were able to make connections to their personal, professional, and academic lives. Since intentional reflection as part of their classroom work was largely void, future research could also examine whether these meaningful connections are made within the context of coursework or if it can only be done in hindsight after multiple internationalized

courses or at the end of student's completed coursework. Kelleigh participated in this study after she had graduated from her program, and she viewed global learning present in one of the last classes she completed. In the interview, I asked if she noticed other classes incorporating or missing this global aspect and she responded, "I think it hit me more when you emailed me about this research project" (Kelleigh at BTC, November 13, 2018). She made the connection most explicitly through this interview process. Given the aforementioned importance of General Education courses in curriculum internationalization, it is also worth developing a General Education Capstone Reflection to help students pull together the multiple touch points to global learning in their general courses, and it would focus intentional reflection for students regarding the change they may experience as part of their exposure to global learning in the curriculum. This would be beneficial for any faculty or institution internationalizing curriculum, especially those using the AAC&U Value Rubric as a framework for global learning outcomes and assessment.

Students' feedback on the AAC&U Global Learning Value Rubric. The six dimensions of the Global Learning Value Rubric were used as a theoretical framework. The criteria were also used in the data analysis stage of this research to help understand where students were exposed and demonstrated understanding of these tenets in their internationalized courses. Only three of the 18 students were unclear about what the term "global learning" meant. They were, however, able to use their own descriptors to illustrate their understanding. Stephanie, the student who showed me the picture of the diverse classmates who deeply impacted her learning, was interested in the more formal definition. "I would like to know like after this what you originally meant with the global learning, because I'm wondering, did I take it in a different direction?" (Stephanie at BTC, November 6, 2018). I then explained my interest

trying to understand how students interpreted this in their courses, and that there was no right or wrong answers to my questions. I also showed her a copy of the more formal definition as offered by Olsen, Green and Hill (2006). I asked her if there were pieces of the definition that did not fit or if she felt any that lacked sense. “No, I think it’s just worded a lot better than how I said it, but it’s kind of the same.” Stephanie seemed to understand the definition presented to her. However, other descriptions might present additional challenges or opportunities for student interpretation.

Future research that considers students’ understanding of, and experience with, the six global learning criteria in the Value Rubric would again place value on student Voice. It would also offer students the opportunity to share if they viewed each one as relevant and where they may have already accumulated or already experienced their own global learning outside of course curriculum and co-curricular activities. The Value Rubric was an essential piece in this study to help identify the terms and concepts of an internationalized curriculum. One was specifically named and referenced by students: perspective sharing. Other concepts, however, were described in different ways like “diversity” and “global awareness.” Understanding students ability to articulate and assign meaning to different global learning concepts could allow for a clear understanding of outcomes or objectives for students if faculty choose to list these on a syllabus or with key course assessments. Investigating students’ perspectives across all institutional types (e.g., two-year, four-year, public, private) would enhance AAC&U’s mission of quality and equity in education (Association of American Colleges and Universities, n.d.). This is particularly relevant with the unique student demographic at two-year community colleges.

Veterans’ experiences with an internationalized curriculum. Roughly 5 percent of

community college students are veterans with nearly 6.5 percent who include active military service members and reservists (Quarles, 2018). This is a growing part of the two-year community and technical college demographic. Felicity and Molly had each served in the military, and for Felicity, these experiences allowed her to always seek understanding of others while withholding judgment and seeking deeper understanding.

I am a soldier, I do support. As medical in the military, you have to take care of both sides. You kind of start meeting these people, and they're not always the bad guy. Sometimes they're just civilians. Sometimes they're just decent people.
(Felicity at BTC, November 13, 2018)

Both Stephanie and Brandt referenced instructors with prior military experience and how they were able to share experiences from that service into their internationalized courses. They also mentioned anecdotal stories that classmates with past military experiences shared in their classes as context for their learning from an internationalized curriculum. Future research that examined veteran students' experiences with an internationalized curriculum may help shed additional light on how they make sense of content in courses.

As outlined in Chapter 4, Stephanie shared that her instructor had “really broad knowledge of everything almost everything. He had a lot of really interesting information like how to interact in business with China and different countries” (Stephanie at BTC, November 6, 2018). Faculty with previous service in the military may have similar or different rationale and interests in their decisions to internationalize curriculum.

The bridge between study abroad and internationalized classroom curriculum. The Review of the Literature presented in Chapter Two drew from the historical references of Internationalization at Home through Experiential Learning (IaH-E), such as study and work

abroad experiences, international exchanges, and service learning. Felix was the only student in this study who had previously participated in a study abroad experience offered through his college despite other students indicating future interests in working or studying outside of the United States. His disappointment or confusion regarding his perceived lack of curriculum internationalization was present in the interview, and the correlation between his sense-making in his courses, along with his study abroad experiences, is an interesting intersection. A future study focused on the relationship between experiential learning and classroom learning could allow for a deeper understanding of how these opportunities complement, reinforce, or even contradict one another.

This study examined a previously unexamined segment of higher education, which are students who are enrolled in career technical education programs. The findings suggest that students have an interest in learning activities and coursework that includes local, regional, and global topics. The cumulative result of this learning aids in their development beyond simply filling a job or position in their occupation. Additionally, the interest and relevance students drew from an internationalized curriculum transcended the workplace as they were capable of making connections with their personal lives as well. This dissertation study centered on students' voices, which offers opportunity for faculty, leadership, and researchers position the *who* ahead of the *what* in future decision-making. Student stories, like those of Luis, Kat, Jenessa, Tonna, Wayne, Sam, Mary Ann, Chad, Celia, Colton, Shawn, Brandt, Stephanie, Molly, Andwar/Steve, Sarah, Felix, Kelleigh, and Felicity in this study, offer insights on their experiences with an internationalized curriculum. These insights provide a critical understanding on how higher education addresses the need for preparing students for an interconnected society and an increasingly collaborative workforce.

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APPENDIX A: GLOBAL LEARNING VALUE RUBRIC

GLOBAL LEARNING VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact value@aacu.org



Definition

Global learning is a critical analysis of and an engagement with complex, interdependent global systems and legacies (such as natural, physical, social, cultural, economic, and political) and their implications for people's lives and the earth's sustainability. Through global learning, students should 1) become informed, open-minded, and responsible people who are attentive to diversity across the spectrum of differences, 2) seek to understand how their actions affect both local and global communities, and 3) address the world's most pressing and enduring issues collaboratively and equitably.

Framing Language

Effective and transformative global learning offers students meaningful opportunities to analyze and explore complex global challenges, collaborate respectfully with diverse others, apply learning to take responsible action in contemporary global contexts, and evaluate the goals, methods, and consequences of that action. Global learning should enhance students' sense of identity, community, ethics, and perspective-taking. Global learning is based on the principle that the world is a collection of interdependent yet inequitable systems and that higher education has a vital role in expanding knowledge of human and natural systems, privilege and stratification, and sustainability and development to foster individuals' ability to advance equity and justice at home and abroad. Global learning cannot be achieved in a single course or a single experience but is acquired cumulatively across students' entire college career through an institution's curricular and co-curricular programming. As this rubric is designed to assess global learning on a programmatic level across time, the benchmarks (levels 1-4) may not be directly applicable to a singular experience, course, or assignment. Depending on the context, there may be development within one level rather than growth from level to level.

We encourage users of the Global Learning Rubric to also consult three other closely related VALUE Rubrics: Civic Engagement, Intercultural Knowledge and Competence, and Ethical Reasoning.

Glossary

The definitions that follow were developed to clarify terms and concepts used in this rubric only.

Global Self-Awareness: in the context of global learning, the continuum through which students develop a mature, integrated identity with a systemic understanding of the interrelationships among the self, local and global communities, and the natural and physical world.

Perspective Taking: the ability to engage and learn from perspectives and experiences different from one's own and to understand how one's place in the world both informs and limits one's knowledge. The goal is to develop the capacity to understand the interrelationships between multiple perspectives, such as personal, social, cultural, disciplinary, environmental, local, and global.

Cultural Diversity: the ability to recognize the origins and influences of one's own cultural heritage along with its limitations in providing all that one needs to know in the world. This includes the curiosity to learn respectfully about the cultural diversity of other people and on an individual level to traverse cultural boundaries to bridge differences and collaboratively reach common goals. On a systems level, the important skill of comparatively analyzing how cultures can be marked and assigned a place within power structures that determine hierarchies, inequalities, and opportunities and which can vary over time and place. This can include, but is not limited to, understanding race, ethnicity, gender, nationhood, religion, and class.

Personal and Social Responsibility: the ability to recognize one's responsibilities to society—locally, nationally, and globally—and to develop a perspective on ethical and power relations both across the globe and within individual societies. This requires developing competence in ethical and moral reasoning and action.

Global Systems: the complex and overlapping worldwide systems, including natural systems (those systems associated with the natural world including biological, chemical, and physical sciences) and human systems (those systems developed by humans such as cultural, economic, political, and built), which operate in observable patterns and often are affected by or are the result of human design or disruption. These systems influence how life is lived and what options are open to whom. Students need to understand how these systems 1) are influenced and/or constructed, 2) operate with differential consequences, 3) affect the human and natural world, and 4) can be altered.

Knowledge Application: in the context of global learning, the application of an integrated and systemic understanding of the interrelationships between contemporary and past challenges facing cultures, societies, and the natural world (i.e., contexts) on the local and global levels. An ability to apply knowledge and skills gained through higher learning to real-life problem-solving both alone and with others.

GLOBAL LEARNING VALUE RUBRIC
for more information, please contact value@aacu.org



Definition

Global learning is a critical analysis of and an engagement with complex, interdependent global systems and legacies (such as natural, physical, social, cultural, economic, and political) and their implications for people's lives and the earth's sustainability. Through global learning, students should 1) become informed, open-minded, and responsible people who are attentive to diversity across the spectrum of differences, 2) seek to understand how their actions affect both local and global communities, and 3) address the world's most pressing and enduring issues collaboratively and equitably.

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

	Capstone 4	3	Milestones 2	Benchmark 1
Global Self-Awareness	Effectively addresses significant issues in the natural and human world based on articulating one's identity in a global context.	Evaluates the global impact of one's own and others' specific local actions on the natural and human world.	Analyzes ways that human actions influence the natural and human world.	Identifies some connections between an individual's personal decision-making and certain local and global issues.
Perspective Taking	Evaluates and applies diverse perspectives to complex subjects within natural and human systems in the face of multiple and even conflicting positions (i.e. cultural, disciplinary, and ethical.)	Synthesizes other perspectives (such as cultural, disciplinary, and ethical) when investigating subjects within natural and human systems.	Identifies and explains multiple perspectives (such as cultural, disciplinary, and ethical) when exploring subjects within natural and human systems.	Identifies multiple perspectives while maintaining a value preference for own positioning (such as cultural, disciplinary, and ethical).
Cultural Diversity	Adapts and applies a deep understanding of multiple worldviews, experiences, and power structures while initiating meaningful interaction with other cultures to address significant global problems.	Analyzes substantial connections between the worldviews, power structures, and experiences of multiple cultures historically or in contemporary contexts, incorporating respectful interactions with other cultures.	Explains and connects two or more cultures historically or in contemporary contexts with some acknowledgement of power structures, demonstrating respectful interaction with varied cultures and worldviews.	Describes the experiences of others historically or in contemporary contexts primarily through one cultural perspective, demonstrating some openness to varied cultures and worldviews.
Personal and Social Responsibility	Takes informed and responsible action to address ethical, social, and environmental challenges in global systems and evaluates the local and broader consequences of individual and collective interventions.	Analyzes the ethical, social, and environmental consequences of global systems and identifies a range of actions informed by one's sense of personal and civic responsibility.	Explains the ethical, social, and environmental consequences of local and national decisions on global systems.	Identifies basic ethical dimensions of some local or national decisions that have global impact.
Understanding Global Systems	Uses deep knowledge of the historic and contemporary role and differential effects of human organizations and actions on global systems to develop and advocate for informed, appropriate action to solve complex problems in the human and natural worlds.	Analyzes major elements of global systems, including their historic and contemporary interconnections and the differential effects of human organizations and actions, to pose elementary solutions to complex problems in the human and natural worlds.	Examines the historical and contemporary roles, interconnections, and differential effects of human organizations and actions on global systems within the human and the natural worlds.	Identifies the basic role of some global and local institutions, ideas, and processes in the human and natural worlds.
Applying Knowledge to Contemporary Global Contexts	Applies knowledge and skills to implement sophisticated, appropriate, and workable solutions to address complex global problems using interdisciplinary perspectives independently or with others.	Plans and evaluates more complex solutions to global challenges that are appropriate to their contexts using multiple disciplinary perspectives (such as cultural, historical, and scientific).	Formulates practical yet elementary solutions to global challenges that use at least two disciplinary perspectives (such as cultural, historical, and scientific).	Defines global challenges in basic ways, including a limited number of perspectives and solutions.

APPENDIX B: ROLE OF GENERAL EDUCATION IN THE APPLIED ASSOCIATE IN ARTS & SCIENCES (AAA/ AAS) DEGREES

General Education in the Kanaska Technical College System provides a core of knowledge that imparts the common skills, intellectual concepts, and attitudes that every educated person should possess. General Education provides explicit instruction in the essential lifelong skills required for success in careers, at home, in a community, and in society. These skills, concepts, and attitudes, regularly identified by employers, employees, and educators, and which interact and interrelate, are broadly defined as follows.

Communication:

- Effectively conveys meaning through reading, writing, speaking, and listening
- Demonstrates the communication skills essential to seek, maintain, and enhance employment
- Displays effective communication skills vital to success at home, in a community, and in the global society

Critical Thinking/Problem Solving:

- Makes decisions through multiple perspectives, logic, judgment, and creativity
- Demonstrates an ability to analyze information and to design solutions, individually and within a team
- Transfers learning and knowledge from one situation to another
- Uses multiple investigative strategies including accessing, evaluating, and processing information when problem solving
- Makes informed decisions based on an understanding of cause and effect relationships

Ethics:

- Expresses appropriate social, professional, and work ethics
- Demonstrates responsibility, dependability, and respect for self and others

Global Awareness:

- Demonstrates an understanding of historical and environmental perspectives, interdependence, and the interrelatedness of world cultures and systems
- Uses an understanding of global economic systems as a reflective guide to decision-making
- Demonstrates responsibility, sustainability, and respect for the global environment and future generations

Inclusive Social Interaction:

- Functions effectively within, and demonstrates a commitment to, a diverse and multi-cultural society
- Functions effectively as a member of a team
- Demonstrates civic and social commitment

Mathematical Principles:

- Works effectively with mathematical symbols and concepts
- Effectively uses mathematical skills at work, at home, and in a community

Science and Technology:

- Applies scientific concepts and principles at work, home, and in the community
- Demonstrates an awareness of the impacts of technology on our culture and environment
- Uses technology effectively and appropriately
- Adapts to changing technology

Self-Determination:

- Recognizes one's own worth and obligations to self and others
- Recognizes one's self in relation to the world community and future generations
- Recognizes the value of a positive lifestyle, lifelong learning habits, and a work ethic

Revision of: General Education Task Force -- Kanaska Technical College System November 1989
Revised: 2009

APPENDIX C: RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Dear Student:

As a writing instructor for the past nine years at ATC, I am always eager to talk with students about their experiences in college and with their programs of study. Currently, I am a student myself working on my PhD at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee. I am conducting a study with students at your college entitled, *Student Connection with Global Learning in the Technical College Curriculum*.

The study will focus on understanding student perspectives from their experiences with certain course content/activity. I am interested in how students connect with global learning activities in their general education and program courses and what value these international or intercultural opportunities may have for students.

In this study, participants will be interviewed; this will take about 30 - 45 minutes, and I will send a copy of the interview questions in advance. The interview will take place in the Student Enrichment Center (SEC) on the college campus at a time this semester that is convenient for your schedule, and the conversation will be audio-recorded. After the interview, I will ask four questions about any of the global learning activities participants have completed. They will be asked to write a brief reflection on that project/assignment. Upon completion of both parts, participants will be given a \$20 Amazon, Starbucks or bookstore gift card.

Please let me know if you would be willing to participate by sending a brief email response. In the email, let me know which of the below general education courses you completed at ATC and earned credit for in the past academic calendar year (Fall 2017, Spring 2018, or Summer 2018).

Intro to College Writing	Contemporary American Society	Microeconomics
English Composition	Intro to Ethics	Developmental Psychology
Technical Reporting	Intro to Sociology	Abnormal Psychology
Oral and Interpersonal Communication	Intro to Diversity Studies	Psychology of Human Relations
Speech	Economics	Intro to Psychology

I can also follow-up with you by phone and answer additional questions if needed. My contact information is listed below. Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

Rachel Dobrauc
Doctoral Student dobrauc@uwm.edu (414) 708-3687
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
School of Education - Curriculum & Instruction

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Research Title: Student Connection with Global Learning in the Technical College Curriculum

Introduction: Share overview of our conversation, consent form, etc.

- Share survey with student if he or she has not completed it
- Interviewer/Interviewee Introductions
- Provide an approximation of how long the interview will take
- Explain the purpose of the study
- Explain of the sources of data being collected (reference Consent Form and get signature).
- Explain what will be done with the data to protect the confidentiality of the participant
- Explain it will be audio-recorded (so I can be attentive and listen while taking a few notes) and shared with an outside transcriptionist
- Encourage students to talk about this in their own way by assuming I am unfamiliar with the courses or the college. These could be from past or current courses you are enrolled in, and either general education or your program courses.

Do you have any questions before we start?

Ask permission to begin recording. (Turn on audio recorder).

<p>1. Tell me about your other roles and responsibilities besides being a student. Possible probes: a. Family, community, career and occupation, motivation to pursue your degree in _____?</p>	
<p>2. Describe what you think of or feel when you hear the term <i>global learning</i>.</p>	
<p>3. What types of global activities or global themes/topics have you experienced in your general education courses or your program courses? Possible probes: a. Describe your thoughts about these activities/topics? b. Did you notice a difference in how you viewed yourself, your classmates? c. Have any of your program courses used similar</p>	

activities or topics?	
<p>4. Please tell me what has contributed to your understanding of global learning activities, either on a personal or professional level. Do you find them useful? If so, in what ways?</p> <p>Possible probes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Any job-related experiences/activities? b. Experiences with foreign languages? c. Travel? d. Family/personal relationships? e. Were these voluntary or required? 	
<p>5. When you think about yourself as a professional, how would you describe the effects global learning activities have had / will have on you?</p> <p>Possible probe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Interest in working for a global company? Relocating outside of the U.S.? Impact on future goals? 	
<p>6. Tell me how you think you will use or apply some of your knowledge, skills or attitudes in the future?</p>	
<p>7. Tell me about any specific activities, topics, or projects that you'd like to learn more about?</p> <p>Possible probe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Is there a learning activity that you wish you could have participated in on campus/the community? 	
<p>8. Please share if you think you would be impacted if there were no global learning activities in your courses or program of study at ATC/BTC.</p> <p>Possible probe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What makes these opportunities unique for students? 	
<p>9. Can you describe how your instructor(s) may have helped you or other students to better understand some of the global content?</p>	

APPENDIX E: CONSENT FORM

University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee Consent to Participate in Interview Research

Study Title: Student Connection with Global Learning in the Technical College Curriculum

Persons Responsible for Research: Rachel Dobrauc (PhD candidate) and Dr. Barbara Bales (dissertation advisor)

Study Description: The purpose of this interview study is to learn and gain insight regarding student connection with global learning in the technical college curriculum. Approximately eight subjects will participate in an interview. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in an individual interview. During this interview, you will be asked questions about experiences in your coursework in addition to your thoughts about different learning activities in your program of study. This interview will take about 30-45 minutes of your time. The interview will take place at the Alpha Technical College, and it will be audio recorded. In addition, an outside transcriber is being used to transcribe the audio recordings. Lastly, you will be asked to write a brief, written reflection on a past learning activity or project.

Risks / Benefits: Risks that you may experience from participating are considered minimal. There will be no costs for participating. The benefit to you is a \$20 gift card upon completion of the interview and submission of a written reflection.

Confidentiality: During the recorded interview, your name will not be used. Your responses will be treated as confidential and any use of your name and or identifying information about anyone else will be removed during the transcription process so that the transcript of our conversation is deidentified. 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. Direct quotes may be used in publications or presentations. An online questionnaire will be used to obtain demographics and also to select participants, and this information is identifiable. Data from this study will be saved on a password-protected laptop for five years. Only the primary investigator will have access to your information. However, Dr. Barbara Bales, the Institutional Review Board at UW-Milwaukee or appropriate federal agencies like the Office for Human Research Protections may review this study's records. Audio recordings will be destroyed after five years.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part in this study, or if you decide to take part, you can change your mind later and withdraw from the study. You are free to not answer any questions or withdraw at any time. Your decision will not change any present or future relationships with the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. In addition, not participating will not impact your status/relationship with Alpha Technical College.

Who do I contact for questions about the study: For more information about the study or study procedures, contact Rachel Dobrauc at dobrauc@uwm.edu.

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:

To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must be 18 years of age or older. By signing the consent form, you are giving your consent to voluntarily participate in this research project.

Printed Name of Subject/Legally Authorized Representative

Signature of Subject/Legally Authorized Representative

Date

Research Subject's Consent to be Audio Recorded:

By signing the consent form, you are giving your consent to audio record your interview.

Printed Name of Subject/Legally Authorized Representative

Signature of Subject/Legally Authorized Representative

Date

APPENDIX F: PILOT STUDY

A pilot study is useful for challenging initial assumptions about a concept of interest and can help one “learn about [the] research process, interview questions, observations techniques [and the researcher herself]” (Glesne, 2011, p. 56). A pilot study conducted in Spring 2017 grounded the need for this research, and it informed the design with regard to theoretical constructs and methodology. The college where this pilot research was initially conducted is Alpha Technical College (ATC), one of the two research sites for the dissertation study.

This pilot study investigated how students in the technical college experience global learning as part of their general education courses. Six students from six different programs were interviewed in a semi-structured format. Interviews covered 12 questions and lasted around 30-40 minutes. This dissertation study offered several opportunities to address challenges encountered from the pilot study while building from an initial understanding of the adult learning experience. For example, the pilot student informed my decision to include the principles of transformative learning along with the tenets of a global learning-based curriculum. The addition of each then informs my analysis of the generated data.

Pilot Study – Participants

During the pilot study at ATC, participants were students were drawn from communication skills/social sciences (CS/SS) courses. I spoke with five faculty who had internationalized courses, and four of them identified students who had completed at least one of their courses and would be able to speak to their global learning experiences in their general education courses. One drawback to this was that faculty had a hand in selection, and I did not ask them on what basis they selected the students who should be contacted. Faculty interpretation of how students connected to global learning activities or understand curricular

goals was a variable that was eliminated by having students self-select into the dissertation study without faculty input. Thus, the specific selection for the final dissertation study varied slightly.

Originally in the pilot study, six students responded with interest in participating, and all six were interviewed (four female and two male students). However, I analyzed data for only four students. I eliminated one male and one female from the original six since those two were international students who had an inherent global perspective due to their experiences being born outside of the United States. In the dissertation study, this was *not* be exclusion criteria since students with a native language other than English, or students with limited English proficiency (LEP), do comprise 3% of the total system enrollment (KTCS Factbook, 2018).

The final four participants were representative of the student population since they varied across ages (between 23 – 48), but three of the four were non-traditional students, and all four were Caucasian. Nonetheless, the sample for this study still yielded a high-quality, detailed description for the case while providing important shared patterns of significance. All were from a different program of study, representing the fields of architecture/interior design, early childhood education, criminal justice, and nursing. Patton (2015) states that maximum variation (heterogeneity) sampling has strengths due to “any common patterns that emerge from great variation that are of particular interest and value in capturing the core experiences and central, shared dimensions of a setting or phenomenon” (p. 283). This pilot study helped me determine selection criteria for those who wish to participate in the full study. Should I have encountered more than 8-10 interested participants from each school, the previously mentioned screening survey would have been used.

Pilot Study - Data Collection

Data was collected through multiple sources as a means of providing extensive

information centered on my research question. Multiple sources of data collection should be obtained in qualitative research and particularly in case studies so that a more accurate case is developed (Creswell, 1998). Again, six students were interviewed, but I only coded the data of four students as mentioned above. The interviews were conducted in a quiet, private room in the student enrichment center. The participants were assured of the confidentiality of their responses along with their ability to withdraw from the study without consequence.

Pilot Study - Preliminary Coding of the Generated Data

In the pilot study, the decisions I made with regard to coding originated from phenomenological analysis as well as andragogy as a learning theory. Based on my research question, the goal was to seek information with how students' experiences are transformed into a conscious understanding that they share in our conversation (Merriam, 2009). By identifying the basic structure of the experience through various codes and themes, this helped elicit a deeper understanding of how they experience global learning as part of their general education courses. In addition, for the first round of coding, I sought to obtain horizontalization in that all codes would have weight without one being more important than the others. As I progressed in second round coding, the clusters developed into themes or "meaning units" which "linked thematically so that a full description can be developed" (p. 26).

The first strategy I used to generate meaning was clustering. Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014) suggest that by nature we want to arrange things in clusters or categories so that we can organize them to determine meaning. I also used numeration to determine how frequently certain codes appeared in the conversations with my participants. Lastly, I looked for examples of negative evidence to help fully develop the themes that emerged. I was either looking at how many of the four participants addressed each code or how many times a code was repeated by a

single participant. I used “in vivo” coding –words or short phrases from the participants’ own language (p. 74) and also processed coding when I looked for concepts pertaining to how teachers facilitated global learning in the classroom.

Pilot Study - Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of the Data

Reported observations helped me determine what was going on by identifying relationships amongst data, ultimately resulting in answering the question, “What does it all mean?” (Wolcott, 1994, p. 12). Description of participants’ behaviors in interviews assisted in contextualizing a clearer understanding of the learning experiences. Analysis is the careful, “systematic way to identify key factors and relationships among them” (p. 10) which funnels a path to attributes and relationships to help visualize and highlight findings for a sharper focus. Lastly, interpretation is the bridge from the known to the unknown, relating back to theory. This interpretation is how researchers make sense of it all while also acknowledging there may be missing pieces in the puzzle.

This analyzed data (from interviews and noted observations from the interviews in my field notes) was gathered directly by me in the pilot. Even though I used an outside transcriptionist, I coded the data myself. This personal involvement with the data provided a great opportunity for an emersion into data, which is critical to thick description in both the pilot and fully study (Geertz as cited in James, 2012). Making sense of the data and stitching together the stories my participants shared ultimately rested within the ability to balance a curiosity of *who* people are and the meaning behind the words they share. James (2012) shares that in interpretation there are no shortcuts to be taken; even though computers aid sorting and organizing of data, the human element of the craft is something that must be practiced in order to be mastered.

Pilot Study – Findings

After distilling this information in the pilot study, three key themes emerged. While the responses of these participants were the motivation behind expanding this pilot study into this research, I will enter my proposed research study with an open mind. The patterns of students' experience with internationalized curriculum in their general education courses are that (1) students underwent change, (2) the class community supported peer interaction, and (3) the importance of relevant personal and professional experience they brought to the coursework. The findings revealed that the integration of global content and topics allowed them to grow and see multiple perspectives. However, as students also pointed out, it was dependent on whether or not one was personally interested or open to change.

In order to succinctly describe the themes, I include one overarching assertion for each theme followed by sub themes for each theme. Below are the three different themes, assertions, subthemes, and participant quotes to support the clustering and frequency of codes.

Students experiencing change

Students in the study thought that the global learning classes helped them grow and see multiple perspectives. However, as students also pointed out, it all depended on whether or not one was personally interested or open to change. For example, Sarah pointed out:

I just think it's good to be aware of what's going on around you and if you can expand your knowledge in any way, that's always the better option. I feel like it's narrow-minded and keeps you in one place your whole life if you only know so much and it just limits you (Sarah).

In the segment above, Sarah reveals that her motivation was to become broad-minded and grow.

Expanding perspectives meant pushing past limitations. In her quote, it is also clear that she perceives growth of knowledge as an “option.” Personal motivations of students can drive the quest for increasing their knowledge, which is consistent with the basic principles of andragogy.

Class community supports peer interaction

Other ways in which the class helped the students to expand their perspectives was the mode of classroom activities and peer interactions. For example, one of the students pointed out:

It's like, we'll debate back and forth on a certain topic, and I just feel that the more knowledge that you learn has helped me think about not only my place in the world but my children's place and, you know, people in general. (Tina Marie)

The most significant point made by students was that their perspectives changed so that they became aware of prejudices. Besides learning from their own attitudes, they saw that they could learn from others who were not like themselves. The internationalized courses and experiences helped students to move out of insular “in groups” to view people around them with less prejudice.

I think that diversity is good. I mean, we all like to think we don't have any prejudice or bias, but I think we all do make snap decisions based on how we view other people. And it's hard to be just like I have this, and if everyone had this the world would be perfect because the way I see it is like what are we doing if it's not to become trapped in an elevator with someone who's like the complete opposite ourselves. Because we can learn from them and they might have what's missing from our own hearts. Which a lot of people don't really see. They just want to stick to their “in” group. (Michael)

Furthermore, the diverse demographics, a variety of programs of study and personal experiences,

provided a unique opportunity for students to practice tolerance and understanding of these new perspectives. Tina Maria went on to conclude: “I think there was a good mix, actually. I think there was a decent number of adult students that were going back to school, and maybe a little over half were younger kids right out of high school. . . . our class is diversified; I mean we have a 69-year-old woman in there and 18-year-old girls in there. We’re really diverse.” As mentioned in the Literature Review, students of all ages attend two-year community and technical colleges. In addition, since general education courses enroll students from a variety of programs in each section, this could be considered an opportunity over program courses, which tend to be more cohort-oriented with the potential for more homogeneity in perspectives and experiences.

Pilot Study – Contributions to Dissertation Study

This pilot study provided a foundational framework for further research. It served as motivation for more in-depth examination of how students connect with internationalized curriculum and see it relating to their personal and professional lives. The semi-structured interview questions focused on prior student knowledge/experience that shaped their global learning experiences in their courses. This same lens was used in the interview protocol for the proposed student. However, a key departure I made from this original path is seeking for students to both understand and articulate decisions that faculty made in facilitating these global learning activities. While I was searching for how students interpreted their general education instructors’ approach to interface with demands for internationalization of curriculum, this took the focus away from students.

The pilot study lacked additional data sources to achieve triangulation, and given the additional person-centered learning theory of transformative learning that will be added in the conceptual framework, students’ personal reflections on their learning will be included for

document analysis. In the interviews, half of the participants had one or more classmate they will refer to me should additional interviews be needed, so this confirmed the need for a potential second round of interviews. However, a second round was not needed in the dissertation study.

Based on the interview protocol used in the pilot, I eliminated several questions that were redundant per participants' feedback, and I included supplemental questions that addressed experiences outside of the classroom (i.e., current work experience) so as to engage shy interviewees with questions they could answer in a concrete manner (Creswell, 1998). Given that adult learners are apt to directly apply knowledge learned in a class or educational experience, hypothetical questions were included to glean insight on how participants may see themselves applying global learning outcomes. I also made the decision to add a second data source after the pilot study findings.

APPENDIX G: IRB APPROVAL LETTER



Department of University Safety & Assurances

New Study - Notice of IRB Exempt Status

Date: September 26, 2018

To: Barbara Bales, PhD
Dept: Curriculum and Instruction

CC: Rachel Dobrauc

IRB#: 19.053

Title: Student Connection with Global Learning in the Technical College Curriculum

Melody Harries
IRB Administrator
Institutional Review Board
Engelmann 270
P. O. Box 413
Milwaukee, WI 53201-0413
(414) 229-3182 phone
(414) 229-6729 fax

<http://www.irb.uwm.edu>
harries@uwm.edu

After review of your research protocol by the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee Institutional Review Board, your protocol has been granted Exempt Status under **Category 1** as governed by 45 CFR 46.101(b). Your protocol has also been granted approval to waive documentation of informed consent as governed by 45 CFR 46.117 (c).

This protocol has been approved as exempt for three years and IRB approval will expire on **September 25, 2021**. If you plan to continue any research related activities (e.g., enrollment of subjects, study interventions, data analysis, etc.) past the date of IRB expiration, please respond to the IRB's status request that will be sent by email approximately two weeks before the expiration date. If the study is closed or completed before the IRB expiration date, you may notify the IRB by sending an email to irbinfo@uwm.edu with the study number and the status, so we can keep our study records accurate.

Any proposed changes to the protocol must be reviewed by the IRB before implementation, unless the change is specifically necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. The principal investigator is responsible for adhering to the policies and guidelines set forth by the UWM IRB, maintaining proper documentation of study records and promptly reporting to the IRB any adverse events which require reporting. The principal investigator is also responsible for ensuring that all study staff receive appropriate training in the ethical guidelines of conducting human subjects research.

As Principal Investigator, it is also your responsibility to adhere to UWM and UW System Policies, and any applicable state and federal laws governing activities which are independent of IRB review/approval (e.g., [FERPA](#), [Radiation Safety](#), [UWM Data Security](#), [UW System policy on Prizes, Awards and Gifts](#), state gambling laws, etc.). When conducting research at institutions outside of UWM, be sure to obtain permission and/or approval as required by their policies.

Contact the IRB office if you have any further questions. Thank you for your cooperation, and best wishes for a successful project.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melody Harries".

Melody Harries
IRB Administrator

APPENDIX H: DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

1. What is your first and last name?
2. What program(s) are you currently enrolled in?
3. How many semesters have you completed at the college?
4. This semester, are you attending school:
Part-time Full-time Completed my degree
5. What is the day, month, and year you were born?
6. What is your gender?
Male Female Other
7. To which race/ethnicity do you identify?

Black or African American
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish
American Indian
Asian
White
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
Other(s) (please specify) _____
8. Is English your first language?
Yes No
9. Are you currently serving or have you completed service to the US military?
Yes No

**APPENDIX I: CODING ROOM USED TO SYNTHESIZE DATA, SAMPLE
TRANSCRIPT, CODING MANUAL**

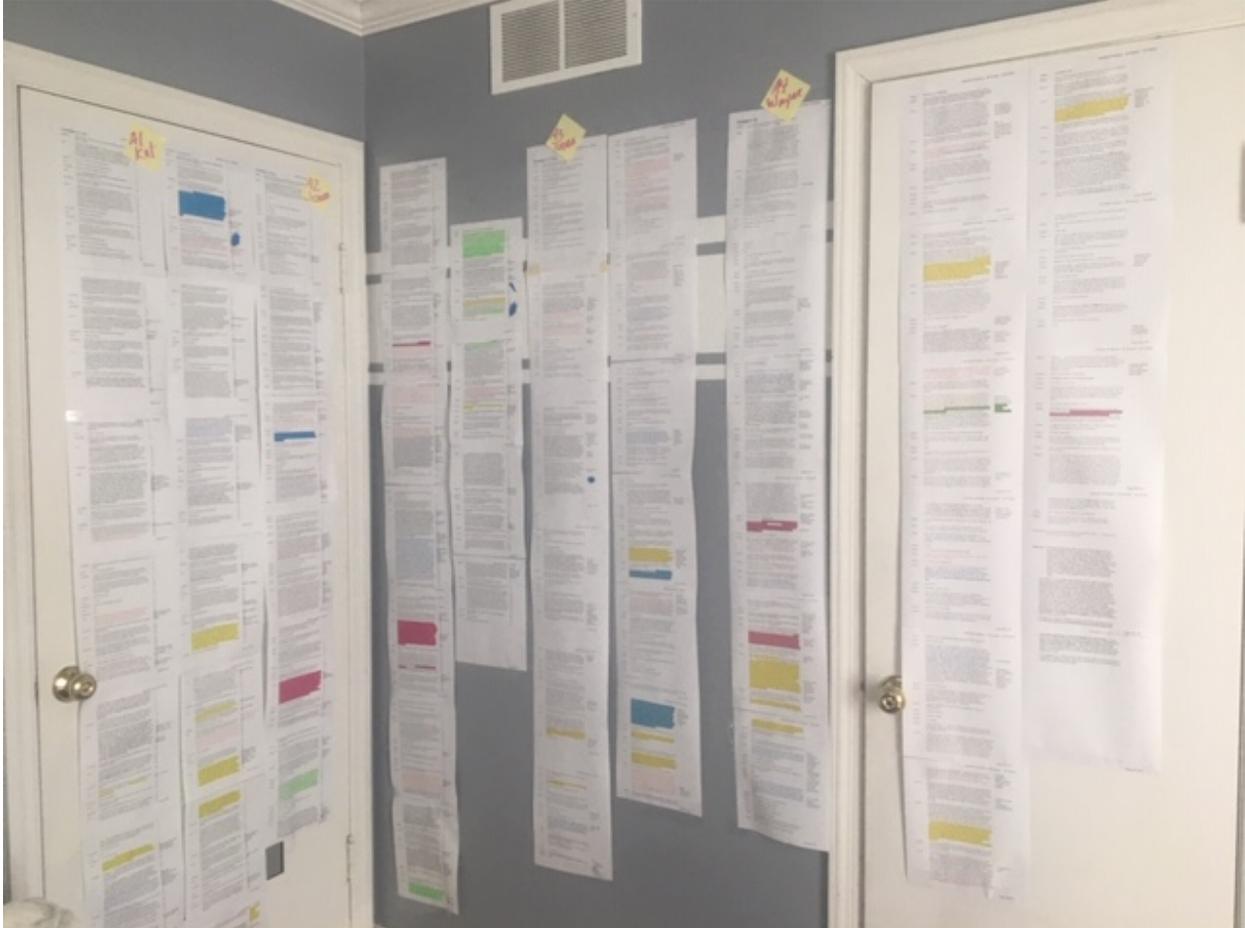


Figure I.1: First photo of the coding room used to synthesize data.



Figure I.2: Second sequential photo of the coding room used to synthesize data.

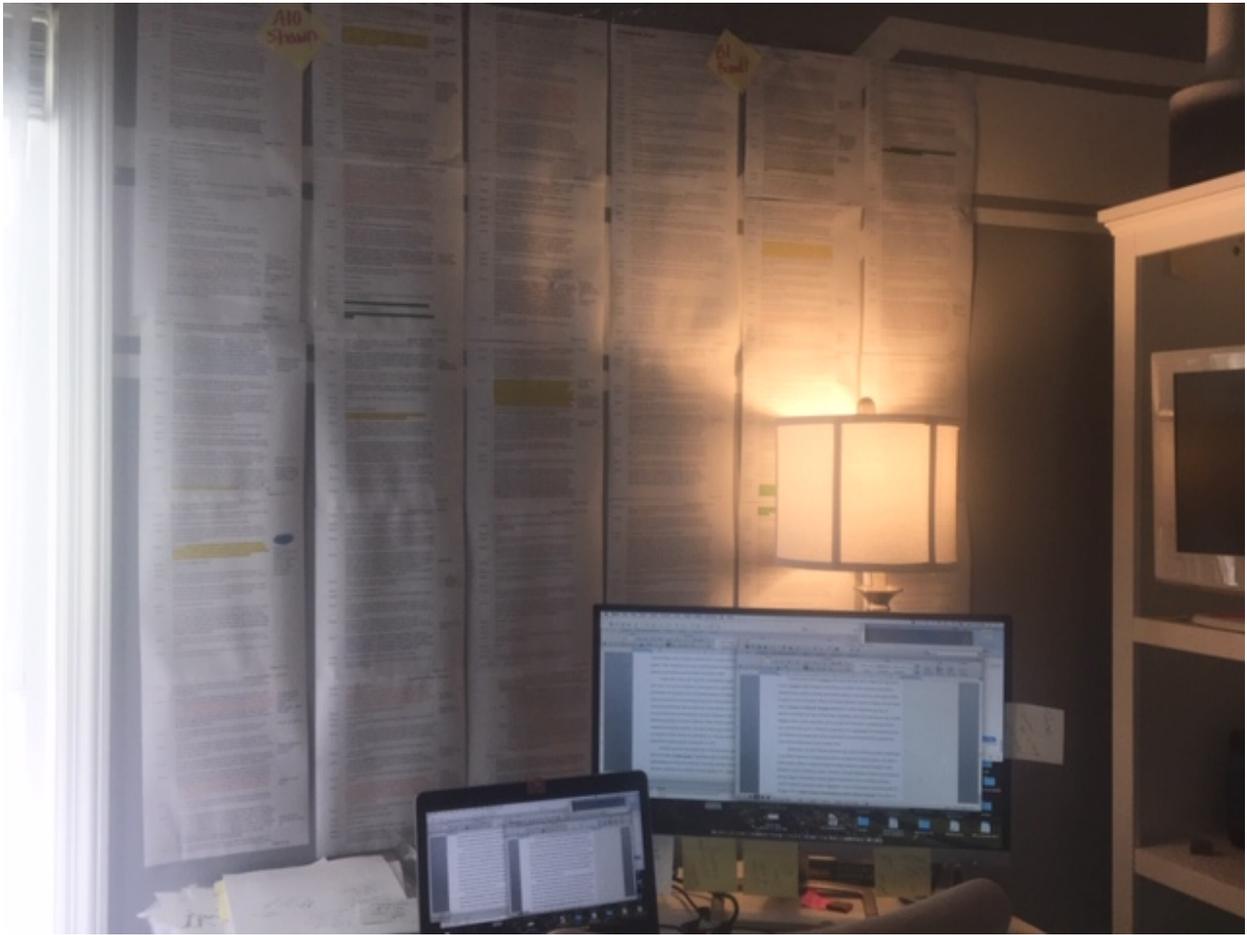


Figure I.3: Third sequential photo of the coding room used to synthesize data.

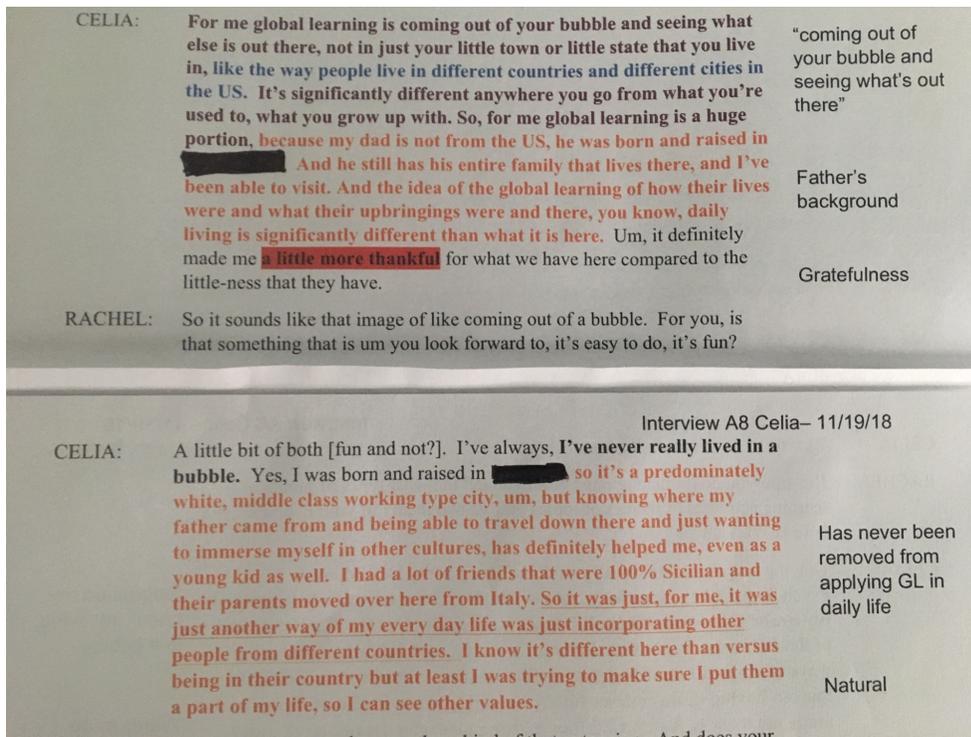


Figure I.4: First sample excerpt from coded transcript.

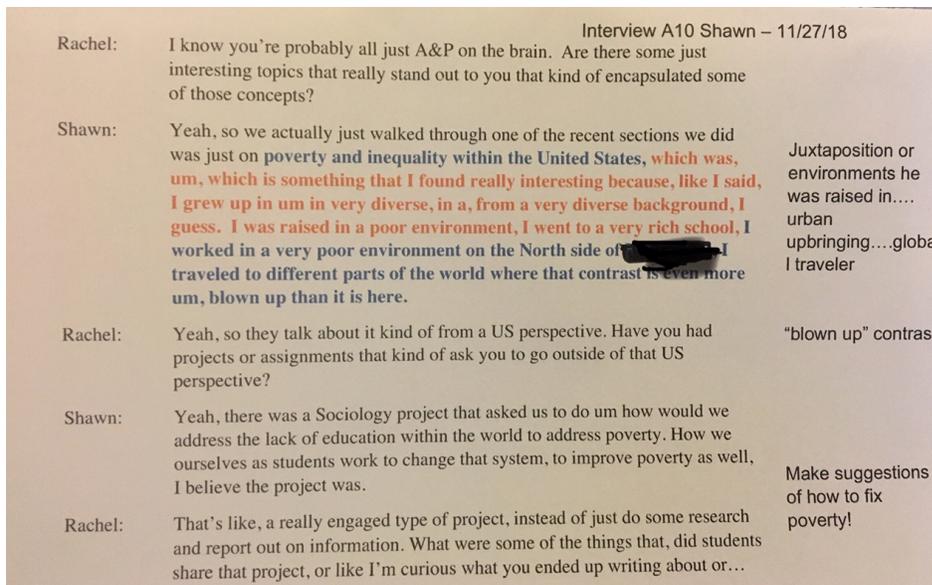


Figure I.5: Second sample excerpt from coded transcript.

CODING MANUAL

Geographic reference: Travel or work; urban-suburban-inner-city, regional, international

Background; previous occupational/work experiences

Multiple/changing perspectives: Vision, sight, lens; bigger picture; zooming out

People/influencers: Within classes, instructors

Personal life; relationships experiences or relationships

Field specific/career specific reference

Education: Two-year TC, four-year college/univ; ES/HS reference

Motivation/curiosity: Within oneself, within classes, outside stimulation

Emotive language/articulation

Language and communication: personal, educational, workplace expectation

Shared stories

APPENDIX J: THEMATIC TABLES WITH SAMPLE STUDENT QUOTES

Master Theme #1: People as Pavers, Shapers, and Weavers: Creators of the Bridge for Meaningful Connections to an Internationalized Curriculum

	<u>Sub Themes</u>	<u>Sub-claims</u>
<p>Claim 1: Individuals in the students’ personal and academic spaces present as opportunities to connect with an internationalized curriculum.</p>	<p>A: Familial and personal relationships</p>	<p>A1: Pavers created paths, early in life, which offered various entryways into connecting with an internationalized curriculum.</p> <p><i>“Growing up, I watched my mom be a caregiver for others, and it motivated me to understand why the life that I grew up with was the way it was and how it might be different in another setting” (Shawn at ATC, November 27, 2018).</i></p> <p>A2: The ability to make connections with content in the classroom to past, present or future personal relationships makes global learning meaningful.</p> <p><i>“I dated men from Africa prior to that and from Haiti, too, and I feel like those experiences maybe surfaced during that class. Then, I was also thinking about my other friends from Owasso that only grew up in Owasso who became adults and started traveling. They bring back their knowledge of traveling for work. And also, my dad worked at Universal Materials and traveled a ton when we were kids, and it was funny how much I remembered from my childhood that I didn’t remember before that. It all came back to me after some of my conversations my classmates outside of class” (Kelleigh at BTC, November 13, 2018).</i></p> <p>A3: Upbringing contributed to the ability to embrace diverse perspectives.</p> <p><i>“Really, I think it’s like my sister-in-law being married to my brother, and then also the classes that I’ve taken. It may sound bad, but they are the classes I have to take because I really did not think about taking Oral/ Interpersonal Communication for my degree. So, when we talked about it in class, I realized I’m so used to my norms that I haven’t really thought about that there could be another normal other” (Tonna at ATC, October 16, 2018).</i></p> <p>Close relationships impacted an interest in or need of a foreign language acquisition</p> <p><i>“I think that’s hard if you’re not in a language class because those opportunities get taken away, but I think that even if we went to like a law enforcement place in a different country and learned how they did theirs that would be so interesting” (Molly at BTC, November 9, 2018).</i></p>

Sub-claim is evidenced through participant stories at ATC only.

Sub-claims can be evidenced through participant stories at BTC only.

<p>Claim 1: Individuals in the students’ personal and academic spaces present as opportunities to connect with an internationalized curriculum.</p>	<p>Sub Themes</p> <p>B: Instructor experiences and impact of learning activities</p>	<p>Sub-claims</p> <p>B1: Instructors with an open classroom environment increased opportunities for learners to connect more meaningfully with global topics and allowed for more authentic, critical conversations.</p> <p><i>“Sometimes the classroom is the only place that people can still talk freely. I’ve been lucky enough to be in classes where there was open dialogue” (Chad at ATC, October 29, 2018).</i></p> <p><i>“I think it’s definitely helpful to create an open space for dialogue because there are certain instructors that just kind of lecture and don’t really leave room for that. And I think just pushing people to investigate further and like you know and talking about a topic or whatever and where did that come from” (Kat at ATC, October 11, 2018).</i></p> <p>B2: Learning activities in general education courses encouraged awareness of the life “beyond our bubble.”</p> <p><i>“It was interesting to see the other students and their responses to some of the assignments that we had about global learning opportunities. And I thought I lived in a bubble! Some of them were so much more in their bubble, but I’m very grateful that I’ve had at least the little bits of outside the bubble kind of living. (Celia at ATC, November 19, 2018)</i></p> <p>B3: Presenting international/cultural topics in breadth limited the ability for students to take a deeper dive in topics of interest.</p> <p><i>“I’m not sure exactly. I mean, it can’t be because it’s too high level because obviously, that couldn’t possibly be the case. We learned some in econ obviously, but I think it may have to do with the amount of time within a course and how long a semester runs. That’s the only reason I could think of that they would cut some of it out is because they don’t have enough time to cover enough of the topic. It would be nice if they made more classes that could cover more of it perhaps or more of the global topics in depth” (Felix at BTC, November 13, 2018).</i></p> <p><i>“The one thing I wish there was a baking class specifically about learning about other cultures’ desserts. Every once in a while, we would have these things but there never was a time for us to sit down for us to learn specifically about the other countries and what they eat” (Mary Ann at ATC, October 23, 2018).</i></p> <p>B4: Students looked to instructors to help them “find the truth” in media and other sources of information.</p> <p><i>“The most challenging aspect was trying to decipher what was true and what was not with the information we were finding online about Islam. I believe that a lot of media really does try to portray Muslims to be bad people” (Stephanie, written communication, November 12, 2018).</i></p> <p><i>“With the news, you don’t know what to believe from whom. So, I think if it were presented something in a non-biased part of the classroom like this is going on here, just give me the facts and let me make my own decision” (Sarah at BTC, November 13, 2018).</i></p>
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<p>Claim 1: Individuals in the students’ personal and academic spaces present as opportunities to connect with an internationalized curriculum.</p>	<p>Sub Themes</p> <p>C: Student demographic/diversity</p>	<p>Sub-claims</p> <p>C1: The diverse nature of classmates with regard to age, experience, race/ethnicity, and program enrollment helps replicate the multiple perspectives and practices in society.</p> <p><i>“I think it’s definitely helpful to create an open space for dialogue because there are certain instructors that just kind of lecture and don’t really leave room for that. And I think just pushing people to investigate further and like you know and talking about a topic or whatever and where did that come from. Even in Sociology we did a project on the eight or 10 largest media companies and learning that really, they’re all connected, and they’re mostly owned by the same six or seven people” (Kat at ATC, October 11, 2018).</i></p> <p><i>“I’m the kind of person that has to learn from different perspectives. I don’t want to hear business, business, and business perspectives over and over and over again. I want to hear something else. Maybe someone in the natural resources who have work experience outside; they have something else to share. Some people in the medical field, they might teach us something else like proper sanitation. It could really be anything” (Andwar/Steve at BTC, November 9, 2018).</i></p> <p>C2: Interaction with ESL or international students offered enriched, first-hand global learning.</p> <p><i>“Across the hall were foreign students learning English. So one day in class, I don’t know why, but my whole class went in their whole class and we were like partnered up and you just had to talk to them about life. For us, it was really good because then we could swap stories” (Stephanie at BTC, November 6, 2018).</i></p> <p>Military experience impacted students’ stories.</p> <p><i>“Before I had gone into the military, I had never really talked to a person of color or even any Hispanics . . . I learned through the military that just because you see somebody’s skin doesn’t mean that you know who they are or where they come from at all. So that was really cool, and now I have a very open mind when it comes to meeting new people like” (Molly at BTC, November 9, 2018).</i></p> <p><i>“I am a soldier, I do support. As medical in the military, you have to take care of both sides. You kind of start meeting these people, and they’re not always the bad guy. Sometimes they’re just civilians. Sometimes they’re just decent people” (Felicity at BTC, November 13, 2018).</i></p>
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Sub-claim is evidenced through participant stories at ATC only.

Sub-claims can be evidenced through participant stories at BTC only.

Master Theme #2: Place Matters but Doesn't Place Boundaries: Local, Regional and International Spaces Help Students Transcend Geographic Boundaries

	<u>Sub Themes</u>	<u>Sub-claims</u>
<p>Claim 2: Participants in this study identify local, regional, and international placements and experiences as place markers for connections with an internationalized curriculum.</p>	<p>A: Past, present, and future engagement in the local community</p>	<p>A1: Placement of a college in close proximity to a large, urban city provided early opportunities to develop an orientation to foundational elements in their internationalized courses.</p> <p><i>“In my class, one of the recent sections we did complete was on poverty and inequality within the United States, which was something that I found really interesting because I grew up in a very diverse background. I was raised in a poor environment, and I went to a very rich school. I also worked in a very poor environment in Centerville but traveled to different parts of the world where that contrast is even more blown up than it is here” (Shawn at ATC, November 27, 2018).</i></p> <p>A2: When classmates came from smaller towns or a homogenous cultural background, participants identified this as a need for expanding a global mindset in classmates.</p> <p><i>“I feel like we have a lot of students here that come from more isolated towns and places where diversity wasn’t necessarily something they have been around. I mean, I was lucky enough that I went to private school in Centerville” (Shawn at ATC, November 27, 2018).</i></p> <p>A3: There was interest to applying global learning skills and knowledge in the students’ program/field of study.</p> <p><i>“I’d like to find a small mom and pop shop that maybe is different from what you’d see in the U.S. I think it’d be really fun and interesting to look at Chinese food or something where people kind of take for granted that there is a unique culture to that food. Here, the food is all Americanized, but I’d like to find a store or restaurant that actually has real, unique Chinese food and figure out a way to market that authenticity to Americans” (Wayne at ATC, October 17, 2018).</i></p> <p>A4: Curriculum was meaningful when there were local references utilized in classroom content.</p> <p><i>“She talked about certain restaurants or certain stores that were very diverse. For example, she shared about a Hmong store that was owned by a first-generation Hmong. There was a coffee shop that’s very diversity based, and she would point to things outside of college as well like, there’s also this and there are these support groups, and there are these organizations, and this is what’s happening in school, or even outside school” (Felicity at BTC, November 13, 2018).</i></p>

Sub-claim is evidenced through participant stories at ATC only.

Sub-claims can be evidenced through participant stories at BTC only.

	<u>Sub Themes</u>	<u>Sub-claims</u>
<p>Claim 2: Participants in this study identify local, regional, and international placements and experiences as place markers for connections with an internationalized curriculum.</p>	<p>B: Regional travel and experiences</p>	<p>B1: Regional travel/experience within the United States was a factor in developing a global mindset.</p> <p><i>“We learned about their fire departments in Louisiana, and even though it’s the same job, they do it completely different down there. It’s kind of cool just to learn about and while it might not seem like it’s global, it’s still learning about different areas within the United States” (Tonna at ATC, October 16, 2018).</i></p>
	<p>C: International experiences abroad and international interest</p>	<p>C1: Volunteerism and travel aboard provided inroads to understanding issues of equity.</p> <p><i>“Slovakia was a really interesting country because they have poverty and wealth just like we have here in the United States. What I found in the capital was like going to Chicago or New York. There were fancy, busy shopping areas and housing, and then you go out to the countryside and there are people that live with no running water or electricity. There were single moms with 5, 6, 7 kids that lived in a one-bedroom apartment it’s a really different culture there. (Kat at ATC, October 11, 2018)</i></p> <p><i>“Five miles from town, where there were cars and motorcycles, it was really different. Outside of the city, in the smaller towns, there was a lot of drug abuse, so just having that experience, when I came back from both of my trips, I got really involved here with Centerville’s Project Home. I’ve also been to the Urban Abbey quite a few times to volunteer because I have to have an open mind about that and know that people do live a different life than I do” (Jenessa at ATC, October 15, 2018).</i></p> <p>C2: Geographic placement of students was irrelevant when interaction with international and transnational students offered first-hand global learning.</p> <p><i>“I would like to set up an activity where students would have to learn something about another person in the class and give them the opportunity to dialogue openly by using FaceTime or something that they could see each other to video chat. If people from all over are taking this class together, why not explore what can we learn from each other aside from the course content?” (Sarah at BTC, November 13, 2018)</i></p> <p>C3: Technology was used to bridge learning experiences of local students with those outside of the United States; effective pedagogy helped students make connections.</p> <p><i>“[My online instructor] was different than the others by interacting and reflecting alongside each student and putting in the effort that I didn’t experience with mostly all of the other teachers/courses” (Kelleigh at BTC, November 13, 2018).</i></p>

Sub-claim is evidenced through participant stories at ATC only.

Sub-claims can be evidenced through participant stories at BTC only.

Master Theme #3: Application Through Occupation: “We’re in an interconnected world, whether we like it or not”

	<u>Sub Themes</u>	<u>Sub-claims</u>
<p>Claim 3: Students envisioned their jobs and careers as part of an interconnected, global society regardless to their programs of study.</p>	<p>A: Program courses</p>	<p>A1: Program courses presented opportunities for students to make specific links to their disciplines.</p> <p><i>“I don’t want to be rude to anyone I’m in business with or people who I’m trying to connect with. So, the content in the course was a nice eye-opener in class because I haven’t ever personally gone to a different country or anything like that. However, to learn about it and to kind of be forced into that area is definitely needed for someone in business” (Wayne at ATC, October 17, 2018)</i></p> <p><i>“Hopefully I’ll work for a company with a global brand, and I hope it would be something that made a positive shift beyond just economic purposes. Perhaps if the company didn’t do things in the greenest way, I could help them leave a better print on a global scale” (Chad at ATC, October 29, 2018).</i></p> <p>A2: Students in business related programs identified program courses as critical in exposing them to necessary international topics.</p> <p><i>“In the field of business, I am going to have to think outside the box like to consider people in different countries; how do I reach out to them? How do I connect with them more? A market here in the United States might be more dedicated to friendship and honesty whereas a market somewhere else may not feel that way. So I have to figure out different cultural differences and norms and learn a way to connect with that. This is something I wouldn’t have understood if I didn’t take that class” (Wayne at ATC, October 17, 2018).</i></p> <p>A3: Students in patient-related fields viewed adequate global learning as critical to their roles in healthcare.</p> <p><i>“I don’t think we’d actually have a decent nursing program if we didn’t have global learning because we are dealing with so many different nationalities and ethnicities on a daily basis. To not have that background knowledge of there being more out there and that people are different, I think it would just really be poor healthcare in that regard. It would seem like that professional would not really want to get to know people. They would just looking at them like a body part. Yeah, and I don’t think that’s right” (Celia at ATC, November 19, 2018).</i></p>

<p>Claim 3: Students envisioned their jobs and careers as part of an interconnected, global society regardless to their programs of study.</p>	<p>Sub Themes</p> <p>B: Potential insufficiency of curriculum/school</p>	<p>Sub-claims</p> <p>B1: If topics or global learning concepts were not present in their programs of study, students felt it would be a disservice to their future work and interaction with others.</p> <p><i>“I think it comes back down to the theme of, we’re in an interconnected world whether we like it or not, and had I not gone to ATC without offerings like a global course or other global learning, we would be graduating and be kind of behind the eight ball; it would be inadequate” (Sam at ATC, October 22, 2018).</i></p> <p><i>“If I were a student that were coming here for a degree, and I had little experience outside college experience, I think it would be a disservice to me on the school’s part because it would be the school’s job to educate the student not only in a practical sense, but in a wider world sense. I think that’s what truly sets the college apart” (Shawn at ATC, November 27, 2018).</i></p> <p>B2: Students desired more depth in general classes and program-related topics.</p> <p><i>“I think a fun project would be global marketing outside the U.S. We take our advertisement project and brand it globally. If we picked three different countries like we did in global marketing, it would be neat to actually deliver that campaign” (Wayne at ATC, October 17, 2018).</i></p> <p><i>“I guess I feel a little short changed, only because I’d like to be able to see things with different currencies being used in classes. Maybe it could be incorporated in math with business apps or some other course like that. If we’re going to do a money-based unit, I would rather see something with different types of currencies, rather than just the US dollar. Perhaps it could well with accounting, too” (Felix at BTC, November 13, 2018).</i></p> <p><i>“If the instructor were to meld in some sort of outside study or how it’s prevalent to a global situation, I think that that’s how the students would soak it up. And I think that that would be a very positive spin on just the traditional practical setting that I’ve seen here so far. I think that it would be really important that it’s up to the instructor or the curriculum to expose the students because I don’t think the student population is going to be changing very much, whether I like it or not. So I think it’s very important that the instructor is the one to introduce this stuff” (Shawn at ATC, November 27, 2018).</i></p>
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CURRICULUM VITAE

Rachel A. Dobrauc

Education:

- University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee** Milwaukee, WI Summer 2019
Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Urban Education
Emphasis: Curriculum and Instruction Minor: Adult, Continuing, and Higher Education Leadership
Dissertation Title: *Students' Stories about Internationalization Efforts in Technical Colleges: Transcending Learning Theories and Institutional Supports*
- Mount Mary University** Milwaukee, WI December 2013
Master of Arts in English – Professional Writing
- Marquette University** Milwaukee, WI May 2007
Master of Arts in Educational Policy Leadership/Certification, License # 21/300
- University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee** Milwaukee, WI May 2003
Master of Public Administration
- Marquette University** Milwaukee, WI May 2001
Bachelor of Arts – Major in English

Relevant Teaching Experience:

- Communication Skills Faculty**
Waukesha County Technical College
Pewaukee, Wisconsin 2009 – present
- Writing Faculty**
Lakeland College
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 2010 – 2011
- Writing Faculty**
Kaplan University
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 2009 – 2010
- English, Journalism, and Literature Teacher**
Messmer High School
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 2005 – 2010

Presentations and Professional Conferences:

- Presenter:** “Engagement and Global Awareness for the College Writing Classroom”
Two-Year College English Association (TYCA) conference October 2017
- Presenter:** “Global Made Easy for the Gen Ed Curriculum”
Community Colleges for International Development (CCID) Conference February 2014

- Presenter:** “Internationalization of Writing Curriculum”
Wisconsin State Called International Education meeting September 2013
- Presenter:** “Global Theme-Based Writing: Aiding Student Engagement and Global Citizenship”
Minnesota Writing and English (MnWe) Conference April 2013
- Presenter:** “American Culture, Education, and Communication”
Landstede in Raalte, The Netherlands May 2012

Professional Memberships:

Member of Phi Lamda Theta Honor Society
National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
Two-Year College English Association – Midwest (TYCA)

Publication:

Dobrauc, R. A. (2016). Going global in the college writing classroom. *Wisconsin English Journal*, 58(1), 38-45. Retrieved from <http://journals.library.wisc.edu/index.php/wej/issue/view/69>