

CONTEXTUAL IDENTITIES: ETHNIC, NATIONAL, AND COSMOPOLITAN IDENTITIES  
IN INTERNATIONAL AND AMERICAN STUDENT ROOMMATES

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## ABSTRACT

Sherri Horner, Advisor

As the number of international students studying at American universities continues to grow (Institute of International Education, 2014), campuses are increasingly becoming social spaces where the local, national, and international meet. Even though students' identities may still be developing in college (Arnett, 2000) and their environment may influence their identity development (Erikson, 1968), little research has focused on the effects of this unique context on students' identity formation; therefore, this study investigated the change in international and American student roommates' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities over the course of one semester at three mid-Western universities. An explanatory mixed-method design was used. On-line pre- and post-test surveys that quantitatively measured students' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities were administered to international and American student roommates at the beginning and the end of the fall semester. Following the post-test survey, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews to qualitatively investigate students' identity development. 2 x 2 mixed-model repeated measures ANOVAs found no significant change in students' ethnic, national, or cosmopolitan identities; however, students demonstrated that they were still grappling with their identities in different ways as they acted as discoverers, ambassadors, and negotiators. Furthermore, international students changed their ethnic self-labels, suggesting change in their ethnic identities. These findings support a contextual approach to studying identity development in college students while also recognizing the importance of students' personalities and experiences on this process.

*“The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing.”*

– Albert Einstein

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background.....	1
Why Study International and American Student Roommates? .....	2
Why Study the Effects of Context on Ethnic, National, and Cosmopolitan Identities? .....	3
Purpose of the Study .....	4
Scope, Delimitations, and Limitations.....	5
Organization of the Chapters .....	7
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	8
Identity .....	8
International Environments at US Colleges and Universities .....	13
Student Identities in International Contexts.....	15
Acculturation.....	16
Interracial Roommates and Intergroup Friendships.....	18
International Student Mobility.....	20
Three Levels of Identity.....	22
Ethnic Identity.....	22
National Identity .....	27
Globalization and Cosmopolitan Identities.....	29
Conclusion .....	32

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY .....	33
The Method.....	33
Pre-Test and Post-Test Surveys .....	34
Participant selection.....	34
Participant recruitment.....	34
Procedure. ....	35
Participant description. ....	35
Survey instrument. ....	39
Data analysis. ....	40
Semi-Structured Interviews .....	41
Participant recruitment and description. ....	41
Procedure. ....	41
Semi-structured interviews. ....	41
Data analysis. ....	42
Role of the researcher. ....	42
Ethical Considerations .....	43
Steps Taken to Establish Validity.....	44
CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS .....	45
Survey Findings .....	45
Levels of Identity When Students Begin Living Together .....	45

Change in Students' Identities .....	49
Change in ethnic identity. ....	51
Change in national identity. ....	54
Change in cosmopolitan identity. ....	55
Interview Findings .....	57
Participant Profile .....	57
Students as Discoverers .....	60
Students as Ambassadors.....	64
Students as Negotiators.....	67
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION.....	72
Differences in International and American Student Roommates' Ethnic, National, and Cosmopolitan Identities at the Beginning of the Semester.....	72
American and International Students' Change in Ethnic Identity .....	75
American and International Students' Change in National Identity.....	79
American and International Students' Change in Cosmopolitan Identity .....	81
Other Considerations .....	82
Implications for International Educators .....	83
Limitations .....	85
Directions for Future Research .....	86
CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION .....	89



REFERENCES .....	92
APPENDIX A: PRE- AND POST-TEST SURVEY .....	101
APPENDIX B: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS .....	104
APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR SURVEYS .....	106
APPENDIX D: INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEWS .....	107

# LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1    Research design chronology .....	34

## LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Pre-and Post-Test Survey Demographics for International Students .....	37
2	Pre-and Post-Test Survey Demographics for American Students .....	38
3	<i>t</i> -Test Results Comparing International and American Students' Pre-Test .....	46
4	Pre-Test Survey Ethnic Self-Categorization .....	48
5	Chi-Square Test of Independence for Ethnic Self-Categorization .....	49
6	<i>t</i> -Test Results Comparing International Student Completers and Drop-outs .....	50
7	<i>t</i> -Test Results Comparing American Student Completers and Drop-outs .....	51
8	International and American Students' Mean Ethnic Identity Scores .....	52
9	Summary Table for the Mixed-Model ANOVA for American and International Students' Mean Ethnic Identity Scores .....	52
10	Summary Table of Ethnic Self-Categorization at Pre- and Post-Test Surveys .....	53
11	International and American Students' Mean National Identity Scores .....	55
12	Summary Table for the Mixed-Model ANOVA for American and International Students' Mean National Identity Scores .....	55
13	International and American Students' Mean Cosmopolitan Identity .....	56
14	Summary Table for the Mixed-Model ANOVA for American and International Students' Cosmopolitan Identity Scores .....	57

## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Identity is an incredibly difficult concept to define due to its complexity. It encompasses personal and social identities, and internal and external constructions of the self. Additionally, it is multifaceted and fluid, changing over space and time in response to different socio-historic contexts. Therefore, as globalization facilitates the interactions of diverse peoples around the world, it creates unique social spaces that affect identity (Arnett, 2002).

One such social setting is the American university campus. In the 2013/14 academic year, 886,052 international students studied in the United States, representing an 8 percent increase from the previous academic year (Institute of International Education, 2014). The growing presence of international students at American universities suggests that campuses are increasingly becoming social spaces where the local, national, and global intersect. Therefore, students who occupy these spaces may negotiate and reconstruct their identities (Gargano, 2009). Unfortunately, little research has addressed the effects of an internationalized campus environment on students' identity formation. In this study, I aim to begin filling this gap in the literature by investigating changes and developments in American and international college students' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities while living with a roommate of a different nationality for one semester.

**Background**

Since the 1960s, the literature on identity has increased exponentially, making it one of the most researched concepts in the social sciences (Vignoles, Schwartz, & Luyckx, 2011). The extensive research contains various frameworks with which to conceptualize identity. For example, developmental psychology currently tends to use a developmental contextualism approach (Kroger, 2004). This approach is grounded in Erikson's (1968) psychosocial theory of

identity development which emphasizes the interactions of biological and environmental factors as adolescents develop their identities (Kroger, 2004). On the other hand, in social psychology, many researchers utilize a social identity approach that investigates group identities, process, and relationships (Spears, 2011). This approach also incorporates the effects of context on identity (Tajfel, 1982; Turner, 1982). Considering the importance of context in both disciplines' approaches to identity, the increasingly international character of American universities may affect students' identities; however, few studies have directly addressed the effects of international environments on college students' identities.

Much of the research regarding identity formation in international and intercultural situations has dealt with acculturation of immigrants into the dominant society (Sassenberg, & Matschke, 2010), intergroup friendships and roommates (West, Pearson, Dovidio, Shelton, & Trail, 2009), and, to a limited extent, international student mobility (Prazeres, 2013). While this research provides important insights into the contextual factors that influence identity, it cannot serve as a substitute for international and American students' unique experiences with identity development in an international environment.

### **Why Study International and American Student Roommates?**

International and American student roommates provide an excellent population in which to study identity formation in an international context. As roommates, they participate in non-verbal communication (Erlanson, 2012), intimacy-building (Trail, Shelton, & West, 2009), and conflict resolution (Bresnahan, Guan, Shearman, Donohue, 2009) with individuals of a different nationality. Moreover, focusing on the experiences of international and American roommates controls for the lack of friendships (Sherry, Thomas, & Chui, 2010) and limited social interactions (Rose-Redwood & Rose-Redwood, 2013) between these two student groups across

university campuses and increases the likelihood of deep and meaningful intergroup interactions. Because international and American roommates continually negotiate an international social space, their experiences are informative for studying identity development in a naturally-occurring international environment.

International and American students' identity development also merits furthered investigation because it is understudied. Erikson (1968) stated that identity development is a life-long process, but he also theorized that identity development is especially characteristic of adolescence as young people attempt to synthesize childhood identifications with expectations for the future; therefore, much of the research related to identity development focuses on youth (ages 10-18; Arnett 2006). However, in most industrialized societies, adolescents' transitions into adult roles are delayed, creating a distinct developmental period called emerging adulthood in which 18-25 year-olds continue to explore their identities (Arnett, 2000). Yet, among the plethora of studies that examine identity in college students, few do so with a developmental perspective (Arnett, 2006b). Finally, an international student perspective on identity development is also lacking in the relevant literature. The majority of research regarding international student mobility has concentrated on the characteristics of students who chose to study abroad and their motivations for doing so, not on how the experience affects students' identities (Prazeres, 2013); therefore, there is still much to be learned about international and American students' relationships with their identities during their college years.

### **Why Study the Effects of Context on Ethnic, National, and Cosmopolitan Identities?**

Investigating students' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities in the same study provides insight into the interactions of these identities that reflects the complexity of identity. Identity is multifaceted (Vignoles et al., 2011). For instance, a woman can simultaneously define

herself as a doctor, mother, American, and avid reader. While these identities can coexist harmoniously, they can also conflict (Vignoles et al., 2011). For example, individuals from minority ethnic groups in the United States may experience difficulty reconciling their ethnic identity in the American majority culture (Phinney, 2006). Because of this relationship, Phinney and Ong (2007) have suggested that “for ethnic identity to be fully understood, it is best considered in relation to another prominent group identity” (p.273). The increasing intergroup contact due to globalization (Arnett, 2002) also warrants an examination of how local identities, both ethnic and national, interact with a more universal cosmopolitan identity. By studying students’ ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities in tandem, this research can explore the complexity of identity through exploring the relationships between students’ identities.

The complexity of students’ identities can also be further understood by studying the effects of context on identity. Many theorists cite the importance of individuals’ environment on their identity (Erikson, 1968; Turner, 1982; Phinney, 1990); however, few empirical studies have tested these theories for ethnic identity (Juang, Nguyen, & Lin, 2006). Since Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model of development suggests that human development occurs within an individual’s changing environment (Rogoff, 2003), one would expect that context would similarly affect identity development; therefore, more research should focus on how environmental factors influence identity development.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The existing gaps in the literature, American and international roommates’ occupation of a unique social space, and the complexity of identity have led to the development of this study which aims to investigate the changes of American and international student roommates’ ethnic,

national, and cosmopolitan identities during one semester. The research questions that guided this study were:

- Do international and American students have differing levels of ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identity when they begin living with each other?
- To what degree do international students' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities change while living with an American roommate for a semester?
- To what degree do American students' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities change while living with an international roommate for a semester?
- What factors influence the students' identities to change or not to change?

An explanatory mixed-methods design was used to explore the research questions. On-line pre- and post-test surveys that measured undergraduate students' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities were administered to international and American student roommates at the beginning ( $n = 46$ ) and the end ( $n = 20$ ) of the fall semester at three mid-Western universities. Following the post-test survey, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with four participants to further investigate students' identity development and explore possible factors that affected this development.

### **Scope, Delimitations, and Limitations**

International and American student roommates at three mid-Western universities participated in this study; however, the generalizability of the results to the larger international and American student roommate population in the United States is limited because of the sampling method. The researcher employed purposive and convenience sampling to recruit participants, so the sample is not representative of all American and international student roommates. Regional differences and university location (urban, suburban, or rural) and ethnic



concentration could affect American and international student roommates' experiences and identity development. Additionally, there could be a self-selection bias in the sample since the post-test survey and interview sample was drawn from participants who took the pre-test survey and volunteered to continue their participation in the research; therefore, individuals who found the research particularly interesting or relevant to their experiences might have chosen to continue with the post-test survey and interview portion of the research.

The sample size is also a limitation. A high attrition rate (61%) greatly decreased the number of participants who completed the pre-test survey and interviews. In addition to possibly creating the self-selection bias mentioned above, the small sample size reduced the representativeness of the sample (i.e., most American participants were women), and the ability of the researcher to explore extraneous variables that may have affected the results. Variables, such as student major or intention to stay in the United States, were not controlled and may have affected the results. Also, identity development can occur differently in men than in women (Macia, 1980) and among different ethnic groups (Phinney, 1996); however, with a small sample, the researcher was unable to further examine how the relationship between sex, ethnic group, and identity affected the results. Finally, the small sample size limited the statistical power of the data analysis.

Lastly, the instrumentation may have affected the study's results. The sub-scales used to measure ethnic and national identity in the pre- and post-test surveys were originally developed for native English speakers. Because many of the participants did not speak English as a first language, some participants may have experienced difficulty completing the surveys which may have affected their responses.

### **Organization of the Chapters**

This study is divided into six chapters. Chapter I served as an introduction to the research and presented the justifications, purpose, and limitations and delimitations of the study. Chapter II reviews the relevant literature. It develops a theoretical framework based on Erikson's (1968) theory of identity development, Arnett's (2000) emerging adulthood, Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of development (Rogoff, 2003), and social identity theory. In addition, the chapter provides an overview of research on student identities in international contexts and ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities. Chapter III describes the explanatory mixed-methods design, instrumentation, participants and data analysis utilized in this study. The quantitative and qualitative findings are presented in Chapter IV and are then analyzed in relation to the developed framework in Chapter V. Chapter VI offers a short conclusion of the study's results.

## CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Over the past ten years, the number of international undergraduate, graduate and non-degree students choosing to study at accredited universities and colleges in the United States has grown by 436,000 students, bringing the total of international students studying in the United States to 886,052 (Institute of International Education, 2014). In combination with efforts to internationalize curriculum, the presence of international students on American college and university campuses creates a multilayered social context in which the local, national, and global meet. While some students may remain on the cusp of this intersection, others comprise its center, especially international and American roommates who navigate this space daily. However, little research exists that focuses on this unique social space. Considering that identity development is still occurring in emerging adults (Arnett, 2000) and the important role of context in identity formation (Erikson, 1968), international and American roommates who live together during college may experience significant changes in their identity. Literature on identity in intercultural contexts suggests that this possibility may occur on ethnic, national, and global levels.

**Identity**

Identity is a historically situated concept that has gained importance in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (Kroger, 2004). In the past fifty years, research involving identity has increased exponentially, yet, conceptually, identity still remains unclear, partly due to the breadth and complexity of the term (Vignoles et al., 2011). Identity encompasses three types of selves: individual, relational, and collective (Sedikides & Brewer, 2001); is viewed as a singular, unifying construct (Erikson, 1968), a dialogue of different voices (Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007), and a narrative that one creates to make meaning of his or her life (Appiah, 2005). It can also be

both personally (Marcia, 1980) and socially constructed (Appiah, 2005). Although some of these aspects of the self seem contradictory, Vignoles et al. (2011) suggest that these conceptual differences are arbitrary, or “different aspects of the same phenomenon of identity” that help researchers explore the many possibilities to the answer of the seemingly simple question, ‘Who are you?’ (p. 8).

I will define identity in Vignoles et al.’s (2011) antireductionist fashion that accounts for the complexity of the term while focusing on particular aspects of identity that will lend clarity to this study. Due to the continuing development of identity in emerging adults (Arnett, 2000), this literature review will extend Erikson’s (1968) theory of identity formation in youth and Marcia’s (1980) identity statuses to university-aged students. Additionally, Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model will be used to emphasize Erikson’s (1968) co-constructivist approach to identity development and stress the importance of context during this process. Finally, an overview of social identity theory and social identities’ variance over time and space (Turner, 1982) will highlight the possible effects of living with an individual of a different nationality on a student’s identity.

Erikson (1968) conceptualized identity as an internal organization of personal abilities, characteristics, and experiences. Identity development is a life-long process but is especially characteristic of youth as they attempt to synthesize childhood identifications with expectations for the future (Erikson, 1968). The outcome, as Kroger (2004) states, is “a new configuration, which is based on but different from the sum of its individual parts” (p. 20). The process of identity formation involves confusion and uncertainty, but most individuals ultimately achieve identity synthesis and resolve their confusion (Kroger, 2004, p. 24).

Marcia (1980) expanded Erikson's (1968) theory of identity development and operationalized the concept for empirical testing. Marcia (1980) created four identity statuses that reflect the level of exploration or commitment an individual expresses in regard to occupation and ideology: achievement, foreclosure, diffusion, and moratorium. Identity achievement and foreclosure express connection to an occupation or ideology, but identity achievement occurs through exploration and decision making while foreclosure does not (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). Identity diffusion involves little commitment or exploration, and identity moratorium represents a confused exploration without being able to commit to anything (Kroger & Marcia, 2011).

During identity development, an individual's environment plays an important role. Erickson (1968) stated that one's environment creates the context in which an individual evaluates him or herself in relation to the members of his or her community and their judgments (p. 22). For that reason, Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of development can be used to frame identity formation. Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of development theorizes that human development occurs within an individual's changing environment (Rogoff, 2003). According to the model, a person's environment has four levels which influence a person's development: the microsystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and mesosystem. The microsystem consists of the day-to-day, lived experiences of an individual (Rogoff, 2003). The exosystem includes the settings in which the individual does not directly participate and is separated from the individual by two to three degrees. The macrosystem refers to the ideology and social institutions of the culture in which the individual exists. Finally, the interactions between these three levels form the fourth level, the mesosystem (Rogoff, 2003). At the center of all of these systems is the individual

because the individual ultimately interprets the influences from each level based on his or her personal experiences and personality.

College represents a macrosystem that is important for identity development. For most students in highly industrialized countries, college represents a period of extended identity development that Arnett (2000) has called emerging adulthood. Emerging adulthood is a distinct period of development for 18-25 year-olds marked by “not simply a brief period of transition into adult roles but a distinct period of the life course, characterized by change and exploration of possible life direction” (Arnett, 2000, p. 469). Identity is particularly affected during emerging adulthood as individuals experience prolonged change and exploration in “love, work, and worldviews” (Arnett, 2000, p. 473). Additionally, the lifting of normative roles and expectations, mobility, and diverse living situations can affect identity during this time period (Arnett, 2000). The key aspects of emerging adulthood are applicable to the experience of many university-enrolled students because, during this time, students are exposed to a variety of worldviews, have a variety of living situations, and are mobile. Although emerging adulthood as a developmental phase is culturally bound and typically observed in highly industrialized countries, international students who leave home and delay adult roles to study can also experience this phase.

Additionally, Erikson (1968) stated the individual receives a sense of collective identity, such as ethnic or national identity, from his or her surrounding social groups (p. 89). In the mid-1970s, social identity theory emerged to further investigate collective identities and intergroup behavior (Spears, 2011). One aspect of social identification theory is social identification, or the perception that individuals belong to the same category, which Turner (1982) stated is “both necessary and sufficient” for group formation (p. 22). Another aspect of social identity is the meaning that individuals apply to their social identification (Tajfel, 1982). Social identity is

comprised of “an individual’s knowledge of his or her membership in various social groups together with emotional significance of that knowledge” (Turner & Giles, 1981, p.24). These two characteristics provide the basis for social identity, which comprises a part of a person’s self-concept (Tajfel, 1982; Turner, 1982). As such, social identities provide one way in which individuals evaluate themselves; therefore, individuals may strive to positively assess their social group in order to increase their self-esteem (Turner, 1982).

Multiple social identities may exist within an individual and can be situation-dependent (Tajfel, 1982). Waters (1999) noticed this phenomenon in her study about West Indian immigrants in the United States. In different social situations, the immigrants’ identities fluctuated between African-American, Caribbean, West Indian, or Trinidadian. Turner (1982) has also stated that social identities are partially based on the internalization of identifications with an available social category. These identifications can be voluntary or externally imposed on a person, oftentimes on the basis of visible markers (Alcoff, 2006); therefore, social identities rely on the social groups available to an individual in society. For example, a Nigerian immigrant to the United States may develop a pan-African identity because society now recognizes her as African, not Nigerian. Similarly, history may alter definitions of group membership. For example, early Irish immigrants to the United States were not considered White, yet by defining themselves as not Black they gradually obtained entrance into the White racial group (Roediger, 1991). In conclusion, socio-historic context affects social identities because it provides the framework from which individuals can chose identities and impose identities on others.

The status of one’s group and contact with other groups can also affect social identities (Deschamps, 1982). Due to their privileged status in society, the majority rarely reflects on their identity because they are able to take it for granted (Deschamps, 1982; Kroger, 2004). The

minority, on the other hand, remains cognizant of their identity because they are forced to identify themselves both by the norms of the dominant group and the identity that the dominant group has assigned to them, neither of which are consistent (Deschamps, 1982). For example, Dolby (2004) observed that American students became cognizant of their national identities when they studied abroad in Australia. Therefore, if intergroup contact changes the status of an individual's social identity, his or her identity may be affected.

In summary, both personal and social identity depend highly on social context. The when and where of a situation affects how one reconciles personal abilities, skills, and characteristics with societal expectations (Erikson, 1968). Time and place also affect the available social identities and their salience (Turner, 1982). Therefore, due to a push to internationalize universities in the United States (Knight, 2004), college campuses have become unique social contexts in which international and American students' identities may be affected. Not only do international students encounter a new cultural context when they leave their home countries to study abroad, host-country students living with international students may also find themselves exposed to new cultural norms as both student groups inhabit a transnational social field where identity is negotiated and transformed (Gargano, 2009).

### **International Environments at US Colleges and Universities**

Globalization has affected college campuses as institutes of higher education strive to prepare students for success in an interconnected world. Globalization has increased the speed and volume by which finance, technology, images, ideology, and people move around the world, multiplying the interactions, whether directly or indirectly, among individuals (Appadurai, 1990; Arnett, 2002; Jensen, 2003). Higher education has responded to this proliferation of intercultural contact by questioning how to "best prepare their graduates to become global citizens and



professionals in today's complex world" (Jackson, 2008, p.350). Across many universities, the answer has been internationalization.

Internationalization is "the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education" (Knight, 2003, as cited in Knight, 2004, p. 11). It manifests itself in various strategies, policies and programs, such as study abroad programs, branch campuses in different countries, intercultural and global curriculum, and the increased presence of international students on campus. According to the Institute of International Education (2014), 886,052 international students studied in the US in 2013/14, comprising 4% of the total US enrollment in higher education, and constituting an 8% growth from the previous year.

The universities where research was conducted in this study differ slightly in how they have internationalized their campuses. All three universities have international dormitories, but at two of the universities, these dormitories are on-campus, university-sponsored housing options whereas at the other university, the international dormitory is off-campus and not directly affiliated with the university. Each university also offers a variety of short- and long-term study abroad programs for students wishing to study outside of the United States and international student services for prospective and current international students. Although all universities have international students studying on their campuses, international students at one university comprised a significantly higher percentage of total student enrollment, approximately 14 percent, than the other universities, about 10 and 4 percent. Still, all universities aim to increase global education on their campuses through international student enrollment, internationally-focused degrees and activities, and study abroad programs. These facts suggest that these three college campuses are increasingly becoming transnational social fields in which identity is

negotiated and reconstructed (Gargano, 2009), whether it be in more formal areas, like the classroom, or more intimate spaces, like the home.

Living situations in which international and American students co-habitate provide particularly fascinating examples of American and international student interaction. To begin, shared living spaces may increase the quantity of interactions between two student groups which may otherwise not interact on a social level (Rose-Redwood & Rose-Redwood, 2013; Sherry et al., 2010). Additionally, it can potentially increase the quality of interactions between the two groups. Living with another person involves sending nonverbal clues that can show liking for one another (Erlanson, 2012), intimacy-building (Trail et al., 2009), resolving conflicts (Bresnahan et al., 2009), and negotiating shared space. International and American roommates further complicate the deep meanings of these interactions as students may encounter cultural differences in communication, behaviors, attitudes, and values; therefore, the proximity of the relationships between American and international roommates provides students with a unique environment in which their identities can be contested and explored.

### **Student Identities in International Contexts**

Despite the complexity of the space in which international and American students live, no researcher has examined identity formation in this context, at least to my knowledge. Instead, research regarding identity formation in international and intercultural situations has dealt with acculturation of immigrants into the dominant society (Sassenberg, & Matschke, 2010), intergroup friendships and roommates (West et al., 2009), and, to a limited extent, international student mobility (Prazeres, 2013). Although the populations in the existing literature exhibit key differences from international and American roommates, they still provide important information

when considering the possible identity transformations among international and American student roommates.

### **Acculturation**

A rich body of literature that involves identity in multicultural contexts over time is acculturation. Matsumoto and Juang (2008) defined acculturation as, “the process by which people adopt a different cultural system” that involves the ways in which people adjust to a different cultural context and how they experience that adjustment (p.391). It can include changes in behaviors (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006), as well as cultural identities (Phinney, 1990). When individuals from a minority group come in contact with the majority group, they identify with both the majority group and their cultural group along a strong to weak continuum (Phinney, 1990). This bidimensional model results in a plethora of identity outcomes, from bicultural individuals who identify strongly with both groups, to marginal individuals who weakly identify with both groups (Phinney, 1990). Many contextual factors influence these outcomes.

One major factor that affects individuals’ identities in acculturation studies is the length of intercultural contact. Although, few studies have longitudinally explored changes in identity over time, they have used different generations of immigrants or time spent in the host society to show change (Berry et al., 2006). In general, researchers agree that the longer individuals have lived in the host country, the more their identification with their cultural or ethnic group will decrease (Phinney, 1990). Berry et al. (2006) observed this phenomenon in immigrant youth across multiple countries. As expected, youth who had spent a longer time in the new society demonstrated higher rates of integrated ethnic and national identities and higher assimilation than those who had been in the new country for shorter periods of time (Berry et al., 2006). However,

international students may not conform to outcomes predicted by acculturation scholars because their experiences differ significantly from immigrants and ethnic minorities. In contrast to the majority of populations studied in acculturation literature, international students' time in the host-country is limited (Sassenberg & Matschke, 2010). While their time is neither short nor superficial enough to identify themselves as tourists, neither is it long enough to define themselves as immigrants (Rizvi, 2005). Therefore, international students may have less of an impetus to incorporate the dominant culture into their behaviors, attitudes, and identities. However, if international students intend on staying in the host-country after graduation, they may feel more compelled to integrate into the dominant culture, so their identities may change in ways that are similar to the participants in acculturation studies. Another factor that may differentiate international students from the acculturation literature is their background. Many international students come from higher socioeconomic statuses than the immigrants researched for acculturation which affords them different opportunities and privileges in the new society (Sassenberg & Matschke, 2010). Finally, the purpose of their migration, to study, is distinct from many immigrants. This fact places them in a college or university environment that typically celebrates diversity as a policy of internationalization (Knight, 2004), thus, reducing the pressure to assimilate to the dominant culture.

Due to international students' distinctive migration experience, Marginson (2013) argues for a reconceptualization of international education away "from understanding international education as a process of 'adjustment' of foreign students to local requirements...to understanding international education as *self-formation*" (p. 7, italics in original). International students express agency as they navigate multiple identities and social contexts to improve themselves (Marginson, 2013). They experience self-formation through a multiplicity and

hybridity of identities that are managed and sustained through a “centering self” (Marginson, 2013, p.16). The idea of international education as self-formation challenges host-country normativity and allows for bi-directional flow of cultures and identities among international and American students (Marginson, 2013). This more dynamic approach to identity formation is further described by research on intergroup friendships and roommates.

### **Interracial Roommates and Intergroup Friendships**

Having a roommate who is a member of a different social group may affect students’ identities because they influence the social environment in which individuals develop their identities. Although not referring specifically to roommates, Erikson (1968) stated that community members affect identity development because individuals evaluate themselves in relation to how they believe others perceive them (p.22). In a more radical framing of identity that includes relations of power, Fanon (1967) expands on Erikson (1968) to argue that colonized Africans see themselves through the eyes of the colonizer. Although the power dynamics in student housing are far more equal than those of colonial Africa, roommates may influence the development of each other’s identities because the perception of oneself and one’s roommate influence the negotiation of identity in a shared living space (McNulty & Swann, Jr., 1994). Therefore, who comprises a roommate pair is important, especially in international and American roommates where cultural differences and societal discrimination may complicate perceptions of roommates.

For minority groups who suffer societal prejudice, roommates may impact their sense of belonging. For example, at a majority white institution, minority students with white roommates felt more accepted at the university than those who had roommates of the same race (Schook & Clay, 2012). This sense of belonging is important to identity formation because perceived

discrimination can result in strongly identifying with an ethnic group to serve as a buffer against the negative consequences of discrimination (Umaña-Taylor, 2011). In the case of international students, perceived hostilities have led to increased identification with other international students, not their national groups, because the local community homogenizes the differences between groups as international and American, not between separate national groups (Schmitt, Spears, & Branscome, 2003). However, differences in country of origin, race, and ethnicity are not the only ways to categorize students.

Everyone has multiple social identities (Tajfel, 1982). University students enter college as women or men, young adults, and students, not just as members of a particular ethnicity; therefore, they may bond over their shared group identity. In fact, with interracial roommates, perceptions of shared identity can affect the development of friendships between roommates, where weak perceptions of commonality between interracial roommates correlate to a decline in friendship (West et al., 2009). If American and international students view themselves as similar, they may have a higher chance of developing a friendship than if they do not.

Intercultural friendships pass through three stages: initial encounter, interaction, and involvement (Lee, 2008). During the initial encounter, individuals have general conversations with each other and discuss cultural differences (Lee, 2008). During the interaction stage, friends learn more about each other's culture through frequent interactions, understand the friend's cultural perspective, and tend not to view cultural differences as barriers to their relationship (Lee, 2008). Lastly, friends begin to better understand cultural differences in the involvement stage as trust and intimacy solidify the closeness of the friendship (Lee, 2008). Therefore, as intercultural friendships develop, friends discover their cultures together. For some individuals,

this search may mean exploring and committing to one's identity, or incorporating some of the friend's identity into one's own self-concept.

According to Aron, Aron, Tudor, and Nelson (1991), in close relationships, "a person acts as if some or all aspects of the partner are partially the person's own," incorporating others' resources, perspectives, and characteristics into his or her self (p. 242). For example, in a study of eighteen undergraduate students, participants more often confused traits that they had previously assigned to themselves and their romantic partner than traits that they had assigned themselves and familiar and non-familiar strangers (Mashek, Aron, & Boncimino, 2003).

Although romantic love and close friendships are not synonymous, friendships in what Lee (2008) described as the involvement stage possess a high degree of intimacy that may be sufficient to expand one's self-concept and incorporate aspects of close others into the "cognitive representation of the self" (Aron et al. 1991, p.114); therefore, international and American roommates may influence each other's identity if they become close friends.

### **International Student Mobility**

Researchers investigating the effects of international student mobility on identity have focused on short-term study abroad programs and longer-term programs for degree-seeking international students. This literature is still relatively sparse (Prazeres, 2013) and spans a limited geographical range, concentrating on Americans or Europeans studying abroad (i.e., Dolby, 2004; Sassenberg & Matschke, 2010), or a heterogeneous group of international students pursuing a degree in the United States or Australia (i.e., Rizvi, 2005; Schmitt et al., 2003). In almost all studies, students underwent transformations in their identity due to their international experience.

One area of literature regarding international student mobility and identity focuses on the effects of a study abroad experience on students' national identity. Most students participating in study abroad programs experience changes in national identities. For example, Dolby (2004) found that studying abroad in Australia for a group of American undergraduates activated their national identities and made them conscious that people outside the United States also constructed American identity; however, students did not respond uniformly to these discoveries. Some students perceived others' production of American identity as threatening and defensively asserted their right to exclusively define American identity, through such forms as uncritical patriotism. Other students responded by questioning the relationship between the American state and nation and created a "nascent form of cosmopolitanism" (Dolby, 2004, p.172). Yet reflections of one's national identity do not necessarily signify an incorporation of the host group into one's self-concept. After comparing Germans who had studied abroad with Germans who had no interest in studying abroad, Sassenberg and Matschke (2010) observed that students who go abroad already identify more strongly with the host-country, resulting in non-significant changes in identifications with the host-group due to studying abroad.

A longer period abroad for international students seeking higher education degrees outside of their home country also influences student identity, but in different ways. Due to the discrimination that international students may face when studying in the United States, Schmitt et al. (2003) quantitatively assessed the relationship between perceived discrimination and identification with international students' home country. Results indicated a positive correlation between perceived discrimination and identification as an international student but no correlation between perceived discrimination and the individual's national identity. Similar to Dolby's (2004) findings, Rizvi (2005) concluded that Chinese and Indian international students in



Australia negotiated their identities abroad and developed cosmopolitan identities rooted in the students' culture and perceptions of global opportunity.

Literature on acculturation, interracial roommates, intergroup friendships and student mobility demonstrate that changes in identity can occur at multiple levels. These findings support Marginson's (2013) statement that international students, and their American roommates, I would add, navigate "a world of plural identities" (p.18). However, three main forms of identity appear particularly salient for these students: ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan.

### **Three Levels of Identity**

#### **Ethnic Identity**

Ethnic identity is a form of social identity that is derived from an individual's ethnic group, or group of people with a shared cultural heritage (Phinney, 1996). Although self-identification may appear to be a substantial marker of ethnic identity, the concept is actually much more complex (Phinney, 1996). In addition to self-identification, it encompasses a sense of belonging, information-seeking about one's ethnic group, and attitudes toward and participation in one's ethnic group's activities and practices (Phinney, 1990; Phinney & Ong, 2007). Ethnic identity also varies in strength, salience, and meaning across different ethnic groups and within them (Phinney, 1996). For example, Phinney (1989) has found that minority ethnic groups are more cognizant of their ethnic identities than the ethnic majority. For these reasons, ethnic identity is complex, multifaceted, and extremely fluid, changing with variations in space and time.

Ethnic identity has roots in social identity theory and identity formation (Umaña-Taylor, 2011). Seeing that ethnic identity is a type of social identity, researchers have examined attitudes toward one's ethnic group using social identity theory's concept of affirmation, or an

individual's desire to positively evaluate one's social group (Turner, 1982; Umaña-Taylor, 2011). Additionally, ethnic identity involves the psychological process of identity formation (Pinney & Ong, 2007). Even though membership in an ethnic group can be ascribed, individuals still have some personal choice in how they identify with the group and the meanings they attach to group membership. Erikson's (1968) ego-identity and Marcia's (1980) identity statuses have provided the basis for understanding the developmental stages of ethnic identity (Phinney, 1990; Syed, Azmitia, & Phinney, 2007). Additionally, the development of ethnic identity is not confined to youth, but can change over one's lifetime as an individual has new experiences or encounters new social contexts (Phinney, 1996; Phinney, 2006).

During emerging adulthood, many individual and contextual factors, such as socioeconomic status, education, and time spent in the host-country, may influence ethnic identity development (Phinney, 2006). Individuals may continue to explore their ethnic identities if they move to an ethnically diverse environment or develop cognitive skills to investigate the meaning of ethnicity in the broader society (Phinney, 2006). For these reasons, Phinney (2006) has described the college experience for minority ethnic groups in the United States as "a moratorium period that allows young people time to resolve identity issues" (p. 123). Students may be the minority in their educational setting, which may increase the awareness of their ethnic identity, and may have the opportunity to take language and ethnic studies classes, which may provide students an opportunity to explore their ethnic identities (Phinney, 2006). Furthermore, students who major in ethnic or cultural studies, whether from majority or minority ethnic groups, may investigate the construction of ethnic identity and its meanings and implications within and across societal contexts.

Researchers who have examined ethnic identity development during college have reported changes in ethnic identity development during this period that both support and complicate Phinney (2006). In contrast to the ethnic identity exploration that may be expected in college, Tsai and Fuligni (2012) observed an overall decrease in ethnic identity exploration in students from a variety of ethnic backgrounds over three years. In addition, there were no changes in ethnic labeling or sense of belonging to ethnic groups. However, Ethier and Deaux (1994) observed changes in ethnic identity among Hispanic students in Anglo-majority universities during the first year of college, as well as changes in how these students maintained their ethnic identities. Students who went to college with low levels of ethnic identity decreased their identification with their group during their first year if they perceived threats to their group identity and reported decreased collective self-esteem. Students who entered school with strong ethnic identities maintained the strength of their ethnic identities; however, how they negotiated their identity changed. Family background, high school friends and neighborhood involvement supported students' Hispanic identity before college, but in college, students used Hispanic on-campus activities to maintain a strong ethnic identity. Ethier and Deaux (1994) have named this process "remoooring" (p.249).

The limited empirical studies suggest college students may continue to explore or commit to their ethnic identities during college, which supports Arnett's (2000) conceptualization of emerging adulthood as a period of identity development; however, the effects of context on ethnic identity are less clear. Although the empirical research on contexts' effects on ethnic identity remains limited (Juang et al., 2006), current studies in the field are inconclusive (Syed et al., 2007), but this may be due to their focus on macro-level contextual factors, like a university's ethnic concentration. Umaña-Taylor's (2004) and Tsai and Fuligni's (2012) studies have found

significant differences in ethnic identity between contexts. Although Umaña-Taylor (2004) focused on high school students, her results speak to the importance of context on ethnic identity development. In her study, Mexican-origin youth in three different contexts displayed different levels of ethnic identity. Students in the majority Latino school had lower levels of ethnic identity than students in the minority Latino school and half-Latino school. Students in the minority Latino school had the highest levels of ethnic identity. The significant effect of context on ethnic identity might be multiplied because of the importance of identity development during adolescence (Erikson, 1968), but Tsai and Fuligni (2012) noticed changes in ethnic identity in college students across contexts, too.

Tsai and Fuligni (2012) examined how college type (2- versus 4-year colleges) with differences in availability of extracurricular activities, ethnic composition, and residential status affected the ethnic identity of students transitioning to college until two years after they began college. Even though there was an overall decrease in ethnic exploration during the time period, there was a greater decrease in 2-year colleges than 4-year colleges. Higher participation in extracurricular activities at 4-year colleges, not ethnic composition of college or residence type moderated the decreases seen in ethnic identity. Interestingly, these extracurricular activities were not limited to ethnic student groups, so mere engagement on campus with a multicultural group may increase ethnic exploration, leading Tsai and Fuligni (2012) to suggest that more personal measures, like friendships, may be stronger predictors of ethnic identity than the ethnic composition of the college.

Similarly, when focusing on larger-scale environmental context, some studies have not observed difference in students' ethnic identities. For example, Syed et al. (2007) measured ethnic identity development among Latinos in Latino majority and minority universities in

California. Using an ANCOVA, Syed et al. (2007) found no “differences in mean levels of exploration or commitment between the two contexts” (p.166), but, using cluster analysis found individual shifts in identity statuses. Therefore, Syed et al. (2007) concluded that ethnic concentration of a school did not affect the strength of ethnic identity, but recognized that students could have achieved their level of ethnic identity in different ways, much like Ethier and Deaux’s (1994) study. Similarly, Juang et al. (2006) found no difference in average levels of Asian American ethnic identity scores in two different university contexts: a predominantly White university with few Asians and a diverse university with a significant Asian community.

Instead of confirming the role of context on ethnic identity, the above mentioned studies highlight the need for further research in this area. Although ethnic concentration of a university does not appear to significantly affect ethnic identity, there are still too few studies to exclude it as a factor. Additionally, there are many layers of one’s social environment that could affect identity development, and more proximal measures, like involvement with a multicultural campus group (Tsai, & Fuligni, 2012) or friendships (Kiang & Fuligni, 2009), may have a greater influence on ethnic identity than a university’s ethnic concentration. Therefore, international and American roommates may experience changes in their ethnic identity due to their intimate relationship and close contact with one another. Additionally, the literature demonstrates that students’ conceptions of their own ethnicity in high school can affect ethnic identity development during college (Ethier & Deaux, 1994). Because of the diverse socio-historic ideas of ethnicity in students’ countries of origin, responses to ethnic identity change may vary among individuals.

### **National Identity**

A national identity is a type of social identity that an individual derives from a sense of belonging and attachment to a nation. The most well-known definition of a nation comes from Anderson (1991) who states that it "...is an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (p.6). Members of a nation may never see each other but imagine themselves as connected due to historical narratives and cultural symbols that create a sense of national homogeneity and continuity (Anderson, 1991; McCrone, 1998; Poole, 1999). In addition to narratives and symbols, states, institutional apparatuses that provide services for its citizens, create national identities by defining others as "foreign" to gain legitimacy (Compton, 2009, p. 187). Therefore, national identities are socially constructed identities that maintain mythical borders responsible for separating groups of people into nation-states (Dolby, 2004).

Even though nation states are 'imagined,' national identities may play an important role in people's lives. McCrone (1998) states that "imagined" should not be confused with "imaginary" (p.6). Nations, and therefore national identities, have real significance and produce real attitudes and behaviors. For example, feelings of commitment to nations have resulted in conflict, wars, discrimination, and prejudice. According to Dolby (2004), "...the nation-state is the fundamental political unit," making national identities particularly salient (p.156).

Furthermore, the abundance of cultural resources that the state produces and individuals encounter daily creates a taken-for-granted, transcendental national identity that can be extremely strong (Poole, 1999). However, the strength of national identities does not imply that they exist harmoniously with other forms of social identities. In fact, the creation of national identities oftentimes consists of "historical amnesia" of violent acts against other groups in order to create a homologous nation (Behad, 2005, p.xii).

For many years, nation-states have viewed ethnic groups as the principle challenge to the creation of unified, national identities. In multiple instances, minority ethnic groups have questioned their sense of belonging to the nation. Some groups have succeeded in withdrawing from the nation and creating their own, like in the case of South Sudan. Other groups, like Mexican Americans, remain part of their nation but experience an exclusionary national identity that constantly questions how best to incorporate them (Rivera, 2006). Over the past decades, the tension between ethnic and national identity has been the focus of acculturation studies (Phinney & Ong, 2007). Early studies conceptualized the two identities as mutually exclusive, but more recent scholarship has presented a more nuanced understanding of their relationship (Phinney & Ong, 2007).

Current research on the correlation between ethnic and national identity reveals multiple relationships between the two constructs. For example, in a study of high school ethnic minorities, Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1997) found that there were three national-ethnic identification patterns: blended biculturals who identified equally with their ethnic group and American identity, alternating biculturals who identified with being American but more strongly identified with their ethnicity, and separated adolescents who possessed strong ethnic identities and weak national identities. Still, some studies have shown a negative correlation between ethnic identity and feeling like a “typical American” (Weisskirch, 2005, p.52), while others have suggested an increase in national identity in minority ethnic groups as a function of time (Barlow, Taylor, & Lambert, 2000). These results suggest a complex relationship between ethnic identity and national identity that may also include differences in meaning attached to national identities.

Just like with other forms of identity, the meaning associated with one's national identity varies across individuals, groups, and time, and the strength of one's national identity depends on multiple contextual factors. In the United States, Tsai, Mortensen, Wong, and Hess (2002) have explored individuals' perceptions of national identity as an effect of ethnic group membership, finding significant differences across Asian and European Americans. National identity also depends on a variety of contextual variables, such as origin, language, ideology, and the community's demographics (Barceló, 2014). Additionally, a student's major could affect their national identity. Students who study political science, for example, may critically examine national identity and challenge the discourse surrounding what it means to be "American," "British," "Ghanaian," or "Chinese." In contrast, a student who studies engineering may not contemplate national identity as often or in the same way as a political science major. The fluidity of national identity as a factor of space and time suggests that the larger, macro-level social environment, like globalization, may also affect its meaning, strength, and importance in a person's life.

### **Globalization and Cosmopolitan Identities**

Globalization poses a threat to the nation-state in multiple ways. Increased economic and financial interdependence limit nation-states' sovereignty (Poole, 1999, p.143-154). Immigration, in combination with improved technology, allows individuals to maintain strong ties with their homeland that may challenge assimilation of a different national identity, and new, transnational cultural forms continue to emerge (Poole, 1999, p.143-154). In short, social, political, economic, and cultural events commonly occur on a global level that resist national classification (Poole, 1999, p.143-154).



Some scholars, however, have argued for the continuing importance of the nation-state in a globalized world. Behad (2005) has claimed that increased movement of people actually strengthens the power of the nation-state as it increases mechanisms to monitor people's mobility. Other authors challenge the uniform fate of national decline in the face of globalization. Globalization affects nation-states differently, so it logically follows that nation-states will similarly undergo unique transformations and continue to exist (Lechner, 2008, p.44). Any reconstruction of the nation-state involves a reconceptualization of national identity, making globalization's effect on identity particularly important.

Due to an increased interaction with multiple groups and individuals, globalization may cause an expansion of voices within the self (Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007). For example, an Indian woman working in an international corporation may have a local and international conception of womanhood within herself. Therefore, Hermans and Dimaggio (2007) argue that globalization and localization are different sides of the same coin. As a response to the seemingly endless identities that globalization presents, localization seeks to limit those voices and seek stability (Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007). In support of this global-local nexus, van Meijl (2012) observed that Maori and Tongan youth create hybrid identities in which global and local voices existed. Similarly, Indian adolescents demonstrated a cultural identity "remix" that merged traditional and "Western" beliefs (Rao, Berry, Gonsalves, Hastak, Shah, & Roeser, 2013). However, the authors of these studies (Rao et al., 2013; van Meijl, 2012) noted instances of identity confusion where individuals were unable to reconcile the global-local dichotomy and develop a unified self. Still, globalization does not necessarily destroy local identities. Instead, global and local identities can simultaneously exist within oneself.

One such global identity is cosmopolitanism. Scholars have defined cosmopolitanism in many different ways and debated its relationship to local forms of identity, like ethnic and national identity. The word emerged from Stoicism (334-262 BCE) to mean a rejection of local customs and traditions (Appiah, 2005, p. 217-218). More recent conceptions of cosmopolitanism have also proposed a denial of local belonging for a connection between all human beings (Nussbaum, 1996; Friedman, 1999); however, other scholars have challenged this dichotomy. Appiah (2005) has argued for a form of cosmopolitanism that recognizes the universal and the local, and Lechner (2008) promotes a “cosmopolitan nationalism” that acknowledges the importance of the nation-state in a global world (p.281).

Since empirical evidence (Rao et al., 2013; van Meijl, 2012) supports the conceptualization of a locally-inclusive cosmopolitanism (Appiah, 2005; Lechner, 2008), this study will define cosmopolitan identity according to Appiah’s (1996) “cosmopolitan patriotism” (p.22). As such, a cosmopolitan is an individual who possesses a sense of unity with humankind, and who also:

...can entertain the possibility of a world in which everyone is a rooted cosmopolitan, attached to a home of his or her own, with its own cultural particularities, but taking pleasure from the presence of other, different, places that are home to other, different, people (p.22)

This form of cosmopolitanism recognizes and celebrates the diversity of individuals’ local attachments and their shared unity; therefore, identification as a cosmopolitan is the identification with a group of individuals who simultaneously espouse the values of human diversity and unity. The fact that Appiah’s (1996) view of cosmopolitanism aligns with Herman and Dimaggio’s (2007) theory of identity and globalization suggests that international and

American students may develop a cosmopolitan identity while maintaining strong ethnic and or national identities.

### **Conclusion**

The studies and theories discussed in this chapter show the multifaceted and dynamic nature of identity (Norton, 1997). In multiple settings, spaces, and times, individuals continually negotiate and transform their ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities, whether it be from the development of a cosmopolitan (Rizvi, 2005) or hybrid identity (van Meijl, 2012). The literature also highlights the importance of situating identity development within a specific context. Different situations can influence one's identification with social groups (Waters, 1999) and identity development (Tsai and Fuligni, 2012). Therefore, living with an individual from a different country is one context that might affect students' identities. International and American roommates provide a complex and fascinating population that exemplify prolonged, intimate, intergroup relations that are becoming more common as colleges and universities attempt to prepare their students for a globalized world. However, the existing literature lacks scholarly investigation into the effects that sharing a living space can have on international and American students' development of ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities. This study hopes to address this gap in the literature.

### CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

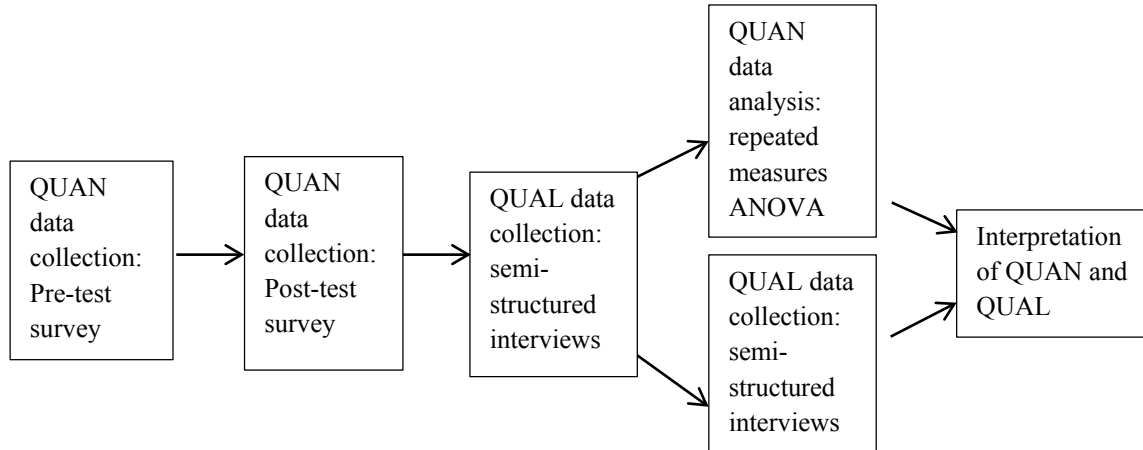
This mixed methods study was designed to explore the degree to which students' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities changed and developed while living with a student of a different nationality for one semester. The specific research questions that guided this study were:

- Do international and American students have differing levels of ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identity when they begin living with each other?
- To what degree do international students' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities change while living with an American roommate for a semester?
- To what degree do American students' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities change while living with an international roommate for a semester?
- What factors influence the students' identities to change or not to change?

#### **The Method**

This study followed an explanatory mixed methods design. A mixed methods approach combines both quantitative and qualitative data in the same study and, according to Fraenkel, Wallen and Hyun (2012), "provides a more complete understanding of research problems than does the use of either approach alone" (p.557). An explanatory mixed methods design is characterized by three sequential steps: collect and analyze quantitative data, collect and analyze qualitative data, and interpret the two methods (Creswell, 2003). This design is primarily used to explain the relationships between the variables found in the quantitative part of the study (Creswell, 2003); therefore, the researcher chose an explanatory mixed methods design to identify the development of American and international students' identities over time through pre- and post-test surveys and investigate the possible reasons for this relationship through semi-

structured interviews. Additionally, the interview portion of the mixed methods design allowed participants to express a multiplicity and hybridity of identities as well as to project their voice into the research (Marginson, 2013). A visual of this study's methodology is pictured in Figure 1.



*Figure 1.* Research design chronology

### **Pre-Test and Post-Test Surveys**

**Participant selection.** Participants were selected from three Midwestern universities (University A, B, and C) in the beginning of the fall semester. Using convenience and purposive sampling, the researcher chose universities close to her residence that also had international dormitories. The sample consisted of American and international undergraduate students living together in international dormitories and other off-campus housing.

**Participant recruitment.** For the pre-test survey, students were invited to participate via an email sent out through the dormitories' listservs during the first four weeks of the semester. The email included an invitation to participate as well as the link to the consent form and survey. At University A, the researcher also went to a required class for students living in an international dormitory and undergraduate English as a Second Language (ESL) classes to explain the study and ask for interested participants.

For the post-test survey, participants were contacted to continue their participation in the study through the email address they had provided in the pre-test survey. The email also included

a link to the consent form and survey. Additionally, at University A, the researcher visited the same required class for students living in an international dormitory and undergraduate ESL classes that were visited for the pre-test survey recruitment to explain the post-test survey.

**Procedure.** Data was collected at two time points: the beginning and the end of the semester. The pre- and post-test surveys were open for approximately four weeks and, on average, participants completed the post-test survey two months after they completed the pre-test survey. Both surveys were taken electronically. If students took the survey after their class, the researcher was present and answered questions about the survey. Reminder emails to complete the survey were sent out three days before the surveys closed.

**Participant description.** The total number of participants for the pre-test survey ( $N = 46$ ) was comprised of 24 international students and 22 American students. For international students, there were approximately the same number of men ( $n = 13$ ) and women ( $n = 11$ ); however, for American students, the sample had more women ( $n = 18$ ) than men ( $n = 4$ ). On an open-ended question asking for ethnicity (see Table 1), international students described their ethnicities as Asian ( $n = 7$ ), Brazilian ( $n = 3$ ), Chinese ( $n = 3$ ), Japanese ( $n = 6$ ), Latino ( $n = 1$ ), white ( $n = 1$ ), French ( $n = 1$ ), none ( $n = 1$ ), or not-specified (e.g., left blank;  $n = 1$ ). Most American students (see Table 2) self-categorized as white or Caucasian ( $n = 13$ ), with other students describing their ethnicity as multiracial ( $n = 1$ ), black or African American ( $n = 4$ ), Asian ( $n = 2$ ), Hispanic ( $n = 1$ ), and other ( $n = 1$ ). The majority of international students were not freshman ( $n=18$ ) and had reported more time spent outside of their home country than the American students, who were majority freshman ( $n = 13$ ).

Roughly 39 percent of students ( $N=20$ ) completed the post-test survey. International ( $n = 12$ ) and American ( $n = 8$ ) students were relatively equal in representation. International students

(see Table 1) identified their ethnicities as Latino or Hispanic ( $n = 2$ ), Brazilian ( $n = 1$ ), Japanese ( $n = 2$ ), Chinese ( $n = 2$ ), Asian ( $n = 3$ ), and not-specified ( $n = 1$ ) and were comprised of both men ( $n = 5$ ) and women ( $n = 7$ ). The majority of international students were not freshman ( $n = 8$ ) and had traveled outside of their home country. American students (see Table 2) identified as white or Caucasian ( $n = 4$ ), African American or black ( $n = 2$ ), Asian ( $n = 1$ ), and not specified ( $n = 1$ ). Women ( $n = 7$ ) heavily outnumbered men ( $n = 1$ ). Half of the American students were freshman ( $n = 4$ ) and a little more than half had never left the United States ( $n = 5$ ).

Table 1.

*Pre- and Post-Test Survey Demographics for International Students*

Pre-test Survey ( <i>n</i> = 24)			Post-test survey ( <i>n</i> = 12)		
Characteristic	Number of Students	%	Characteristic	Number of Students	%
Self-identity			Self-identity		
Asian	7	29	Asian	3	25
Brazilian	3	13	Brazilian	1	8
Chinese	3	13	Chinese	2	17
Japanese	6	25	Japanese	2	17
Latino	1	4	Latino/Hispanic	2	17
White	1	4	White	0	0
French	1	4	French	0	0
Not specified	1	4	Not specified	0	0
None	1	4	none	2	17
Sex			Sex		
Male	13	54	Male	5	42
Female	11	46	Female	7	58
Grade			Grade		
Freshman	6	25	Freshman	4	33
Sophomore	7	29	Sophomore	4	33
Junior	7	29	Junior	3	25
Senior	4	17	Senior	1	8
Times traveled outside of home country			Times traveled outside of home country		
0	0	0	0	0	0
1-3	12	50	1-3	3	25
4-6	4	17	4-6	4	33
7-10	4	17	7-10	4	33
>10	4	17	>10	1	8

*Note:* Some of the total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding



Table 2.

*Pre-and Post-Test Survey Demographics for American Students*

Pre-test ( <i>n</i> = 22)			Post-test ( <i>n</i> = 8)		
Characteristic	Number of students	%	Characteristic	Number of students	%
Ethnicity			Ethnic self-identity		
White/Caucasian	13	59	White	4	50
Multiracial	1	5	Multiracial	0	0
Black/African			Black/African		
American	4	18	American	2	25
Asian	2	9	Asian	1	13
Hispanic	1	5	Hispanic	0	0
Other	1	5	Other	1	13
Sex			Sex		
Male	4	18	Male	1	13
Female	18	82	Female	7	88
Grade			Grade		
Freshman	13	59	Freshman	4	50
Sophomore	6	27	Sophomore	2	25
Junior	2	9	Junior	2	25
Senior	1	5	Senior	0	0
Times traveled outside of home country			Times traveled outside of home country		
0	10	45	0	4	50
1-3	11	50	1-3	3	38
4-6	0	0	4-6	0	0
7-10	0	0	7-10	0	0
>10	1	5	>10	1	13

*Note:* Some of the total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**Survey instrument.** The pre-test and post-test surveys were the same, except the post-test survey had an extra question that asked if participants would be interested in participating in in-person interviews at a mutually-agreed upon location. The survey (see Appendix A) had four parts: demographics, ethnic identity, national identity, and cosmopolitan identity. All items except the demographics were answered on a 5-point Likert scale. For ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identity sub-scales, a high total identity score represented a strong identification with an ethnic, national, or cosmopolitan group.

The demographics section consisted of eleven items that asked for information about student status (domestic or international), dormitory type, gender, frequency of interaction with people from other cultures, number of times that the student had left his or her home country, year in school, year in dormitory, whether or not the student had an international roommate or a roommate from a different cultural background, and an open question asking students to define their ethnicity. Degree or international students' intent to stay in the United States after graduation was not measured.

The Ethnic identity sub-scale was Phinney and Ong's (2007) MEIM—R. This scale measures ethnic identity as a dynamic construct. It has one open-ended question that asks participants to identify their ethnic identity (included in the demographic section) and six items that measure individuals' exploration of and commitment to their self-identified ethnic group. In ethnically diverse populations, the MEIM-R scale has been shown to have a Cronbach's alpha of 0.81 (Phinney & Ong, 2007).

The National identity sub-scale consisted of ten items adapted from the National Identity (NATID; Keillor, Hult, Erffmeyer, & Babakus, 1996) scale which was "designed to empirically measure how strongly individuals in a given nation identify with religious, historical, cultural,

and social aspects of their national identity” (p.59). I omitted the consumer ethnocentrism sub-scale, adapted the other items so that they applied to a larger international audience (i.e., religious belief system was changed to philosophical belief system), and changed the survey responses from a 7-point to a 5-point Likert scale to match the other subscales in the survey. Finally, the Cosmopolitan identity sub-scale had five items. Two of these items (numbers 17 and 18) were adapted from the Majority Integration Efforts Scale (Phelps, Eilertsen, Türken, & Ommundsen, 2011) to measure openness to diversity as part of a cosmopolitan identity. Item 18 was re-worded to make it applicable to students of all nationalities. The researcher developed three more items for the sub-scale that measured cultural openness and participants’ level of identification with being a cosmopolitan.

**Data analysis.** For the first data collection point, the researcher compared the means of international and American students’ ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identity scores using independent t-tests to examine whether significant differences existed between the groups when they began living with each other. Their ethnic self-identities were also compared using a Chi-square test of independence. Next, using data collected from both time points, the researcher performed a 2 x 2 mixed-model repeated measures of analysis of variance (ANOVA) for each dependent variable: ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identity, with student group (American, international) as the between-group factor and time (pre-test, post-test) as the within-group factor. The 2 x 2 mixed-model repeated measures ANOVA tested the effect of student group on identity scores, effect of time on identity scores, and interaction between student group and time. Students’ answers to the open-ended ethnicity question from the pre- and post-test surveys were also compared as an additional measurement of change in ethnic identity. Only participants who

had complete data for the pre-test and post-test survey were included in the 2 x 2 mixed-model repeated measures ANOVA and comparison of ethnic labels.

### **Semi-Structured Interviews**

**Participant recruitment and description.** If students indicated that they were interested in being interviewed on the post-test survey, the researcher contacted them via email to arrange a meeting. The researcher asked students when and where they would like to meet and met students at the location of their choice.

Only a few ( $n = 4$ ) students expressed interest in participating in the interview portion, so all these students were contacted and interviewed. The American students were both women ( $n = 2$ ). One was an African American sophomore, Keaira (names have been changed), and the other was an Asian American freshman, Lijuan. Keaira had never left the United States while Lijuan had been outside the United States. The international students were both males and sophomores ( $n=2$ ). One was from Saudi Arabia, Ali, and one was from Japan, Takeshi. Takeshi had been in the United States for almost four years, and Ali had arrived about a year ago.

**Procedure.** All participants were contacted within three days of completing the post-test survey and interviews were conducted within a week after the researcher contacted the participants. The researcher conducted the interviews in-person at on-campus locations chosen by the participants, and the interviews lasted approximately 25 minutes to an hour. All interviews were recorded with the participants' consent and later transcribed by the researcher.

**Semi-structured interviews.** The interviews, consisting of 12 semi-structured questions (see Appendix B), were developed to triangulate the relationships between the variables in the pre- and post-test surveys and to investigate possible reasons behind these relationships (i.e., Do you believe that how you identify with your ethnic group has changed since living with your

roommate? Why, or why not?). These 12 questions served as a guide for the researcher during the interview while also allowing the researcher and participant to explore themes that emerged. Because some participants did not speak English as a native language, common definitions of ethnic, national, cosmopolitan identity were provided. The researcher also asked clarifying and follow-up questions, such as ‘Have you learned a lot about different countries since you have been here?’, ‘Are perceptions that others have about your group true?’, and ‘Has living with your roommate given you an international experience without going abroad?’ Participants were also encouraged to ask questions and to discuss any topics related to interactions among American and international students and identity.

**Data analysis.** The researcher followed Creswell’s (2003) generic steps for qualitative data analysis. First, the researcher transcribed the interviews. Next, the researcher read through the data to “obtain a *general sense* of the information and to reflect on its overall meaning” (Creswell, 2003, p. 191; italics in original). Then, the researcher began the coding process by highlighting participants’ responses that addressed the themes of the research and categorizing the highlighted material into codes. The researcher then re-read the data and looked for unexpected or surprising themes that emerged from the interview data. New codes were created from these themes and the data was re-coded. Finally, all codes were used to produce themes that were later interpreted to answer the research questions.

**Role of the researcher.** Because qualitative research relies heavily on the researcher’s interpretation of the data, it is important to address researcher bias (Fraenkel et al., 2012). As Creswell (2003) has stated, “the personal-self becomes inseparable from the researcher-self,” therefore my own personal experiences may have affected data collection and analysis (p. 182). In fact, I chose this research topic due to my familiarity with living with international

roommates. I am an American woman who has traveled abroad for work and study, and both times, I have lived with individuals of different nationalities, first with a host family in Peru and then with a colleague while teaching in Mozambique. When attending graduate school in the United States, I also roomed with a Chinese graduate student. The transformations of my own identities throughout these living experiences propelled me to further investigate it for my thesis.

Recognition of my own bias allowed me to attempt to control for researcher bias during the interview process. Just like a bad font in a survey elicits a certain response from participants, the researcher as an instrument also influences participants' responses. Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) have warned that during interviews, the interviewer "might unknowingly affect the responses through gestures, mannerism, or verbal feedback... there is a danger of showing subtle signs of agreement with statements and/or responses that are anticipated" (p. 102). Because of my history with the subject matter, I had to be careful to keep the focus on the participant and not tell personal stories or show agreement through nonverbal communication when participants' experience aligned with mine. Additionally, during data analysis, I remained mindful to interpret participants' data from their perspective and not my own.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical research protects participants from harm during the research process. Accordingly, all research should address participant physical and psychological safety, confidentiality, and participant deception (Fraenkel et al., 2012). As a first step to achieve ethical research, the researcher obtained HSRB approval. Electronic informed consent for pre- and post-test surveys (see Appendix C) informed participants of the level of risk they would encounter by participating in the study, their ability to withdraw from the study at any point, and the confidentiality of their responses. To protect students' confidentiality, email addresses that were

collected to compare pre- and post-test survey responses were coded when data was stored, so their emails were not attached to the data. Students who participated in the interviews were provided with a hard-copy informed consent (see Appendix D) that advised students that they may be quoted directly in the research but that their names would be changed and no identifying information would be used. Students were asked to read the consent form and verbally consent before the interviews began.

### **Steps Taken to Establish Validity**

The main source of validity for this study occurs through the integration of qualitative and quantitative data. By triangulating data sources, mixed methods research offsets weaknesses of both methods by combining their strengths (Fraenkel et al., 2012). In this case, interview questions served as a means to validate statistical relationships while exploring why these relationships exist. Additionally, pre-established scales were used for the surveys when applicable. Finally, member-checking was performed as I emailed each participant his or her interview transcription and asked him or her to review the transcription and confirm its accuracy.

## CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

As previously stated, this study explores the degree to which American and international students experience a change in their ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities while living together as roommates by using both quantitative (online survey) and qualitative (semi-structured interviews) methods. This chapter presents the findings of the independent *t*-tests, Chi-square analysis, 2 x 2 mixed-model repeated measures ANOVA for each dependent variable, and semi-structured interviews.

**Survey Findings****Levels of Identity When Students Begin Living Together**

The first research question addressed with the online survey was whether international and American students had different ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities when they began living with each other. I hypothesized that American and international students would differ in their identity scores and labels; however, how the scores and labels would differ was not predicted. Only data from students with complete ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identity scores was used. Independent *t*-tests were performed to compare total ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identity scores from the pre-test survey. Students' total identity scores for each sub-scale were used to find the average ethnic (range 1-30), national (range 1-50), and cosmopolitan identity scores (range 1-25) for each student group. To compare international and American students' ethnic self-labels, a Chi-squared analysis was performed. An alpha level of 0.05 was used for both tests to determine if the results were significant.

Using the identity scores from the pre-test survey, international students ( $n = 22$ ) and American students ( $n = 14$ ) were compared in terms of their average total ethnic identity score ( $M_{Int} = 20.00$ ,  $SD_{Int} = 5.07$ ;  $M_{Am} = 16.21$ ,  $SD_{Am} = 4.98$ ), average total national identity score ( $M_{Int}$



= 37.50,  $SD_{Int} = 5.11$ ;  $M_{Am} = 28.43$ ,  $SD_{Am} = 8.48$ ), and average total cosmopolitan identity score ( $M_{Int} = 19.91$ ,  $SD_{Int} = 2.69$ ;  $M_{Am} = 21.50$ ,  $SD_{Am} = 3.06$ ; see Table 3). Group means were compared using an independent samples t-test, where student status (international or American) was the between group variable. Results indicated a significant effect of student status, with international students scoring higher on the average ethnic identity score ( $t_{\alpha=0.05} = 2.20$ ,  $df = 34$ ,  $p = .04$ ) and average national identity score ( $t_{\alpha=0.05} = 4.02$ ,  $df = 34$ ,  $p < .001$ ). However, no significant effect was found for average cosmopolitan identity score ( $t_{\alpha=0.05} = -1.64$ ,  $df = 34$ ,  $p = .11$ ).

Table 3.

*t-Test Results Comparing International and American Students' Pre-Test Mean Total Identity Scores*

	American		International		<i>t</i>
	M	SD	M	SD	
Ethnic Identity	16.21	4.98	20.00	5.07	2.20*
National Identity	28.43	8.48	37.50	5.11	4.02**
Cosmopolitan Identity	21.50	3.06	19.91	2.69	-1.64

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .001$

To further investigate how students differed along their ethnic identities, ethnic self-categorizations were also compared (see Table 4). The majority of international students self-identified with an ethno-national label: Brazilian ( $n = 3$ ), Chinese ( $n = 3$ ), Japanese ( $n = 6$ ), French ( $n = 1$ ). However, many international students also identified with a regional, pan-ethnic group by describing themselves as Asian ( $n = 7$ ) and Latino ( $n = 1$ ). Only one ( $n = 1$ ) student used an ethno-racial label of White. One ( $n = 1$ ) student answered “none,” and one ( $n = 1$ ) student left the question blank. On the other hand, the majority of Americans self-identified with an ethno-racial label: White / Caucasian ( $n = 13$ ), Black / African American ( $n = 4$ ), and

multiracial ( $n = 1$ ). Only a few students identified with a regional, pan-ethnic group, such as Asian ( $n = 2$ ) and Hispanic ( $n = 1$ ). Lastly, one ( $n = 1$ ) American student described his or her ethnicity as “other.”

Table 4.

*Pre-Test Survey Ethnic Self-Categorization for International and American Students*

Ethnic self-categorization	American ( <i>n</i> =22)		International ( <i>n</i> =24)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Asian	2	9	7	29
Brazilian	0	0	3	13
Chinese	0	0	3	13
Japanese	0	0	6	25
Latino	0	0	1	4
French	0	0	1	4
White / Caucasian	13	59	1	4
Black / African American	4	18	0	0
Multiracial	1	5	0	0
Hispanic	1	5	0	0
Other	1	5	0	0
None	0	0	1	4
Not specified	0	0	1	4

A Chi-square test of independence was performed to determine whether the type of ethnic self-categorization was associated with student group. Regional, pan-ethnic identifications were grouped with ethno-racial labels into one category because both types of labels signify an identification with a broader, more general ethnic group than nation-specific ethnic labels (Fisher & Model, 2012). The labels “none,” not specified, and “other” were excluded from the analysis. As Table 5 shows, the Chi-square analysis indicated that student group was significantly associated with type of ethnic self-label ( $\chi^2 = 18.05$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p < .001$ ), with international students being more likely to define their ethnicity in terms of their nationality and American students being more likely to define their ethnicity in terms of race or regional ethnic group. Because of the significant differences between international and American student identity scores and frequency of ethnic labels, the continued comparison of these groups was justified.

Table 5.

*Chi-Square Test of Independence for Ethnic Self-Categorization among International and American Students*

Type of self-categorization	American ( $n=20$ )		International ( $n=23$ )		$\chi^2$
	$n$	%	$n$	%	
Ethno-national	0	0	14	61	18.05**
Ethno-racial/regional	20	100	9	39	

\*\*  $p < .001$

### **Change in Students' Identities**

The researcher predicted that American and international students' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identity scores would increase from the pre-test to the post-test survey. To measure

change in American and international students' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities, the researcher performed a 2 x 2 mixed-model repeated measures ANOVA for each identity type. To test for a self-selection bias in the students who completed the post-test survey, the researcher compared the mean ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities of American and international students who completed the post-test survey and American and international students who dropped out after the pre-test survey. As Tables 6 and 7 demonstrate, independent *t*-tests indicated no significant difference in ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identity scores between international and American student drop-out and completers, which suggests that the sample of students who completed the post-test survey may be representative of the students who completed just the pre-test survey. However, self-selection bias is still possible as other factors besides individuals' identity scores may have influenced participants to continue their participation in the research.

Table 6.

*t-Test Results Comparing International Student Completers' and Drop-Outs' Pre-Test Mean Total Identity Scores*

	Drop-outs (n=9)		Completers (n=5)		<i>t</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Ethnic Identity	21.33	4.54	18.4	5.44	1.38
National Identity	39.42	4.19	35.2	5.37	2.07
Cosmopolitan Identity	20.25	3.02	19.5	2.32	0.64

Table 7.

*t-Test Results Comparing American Student Completers' and Drop-Outs' Pre-Test Mean Total Identity Scores*

	Drop-outs ( <i>n</i> =9)		Completers ( <i>n</i> =5)		<i>t</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Ethnic Identity	17.22	5.12	14.4	4.67	1.08
National Identity	29.33	10.15	26.8	4.76	0.52
Cosmopolitan Identity	21.11	3.59	22.2	1.92	-0.62

**Change in ethnic identity.** The mean ethnic identity score for international students increased slightly from 18.40 (*SD* = 1.65) at the pre-test survey to 20.40 (*SD*=1.92) at the post-test survey (see Table 8). The mean ethnic identity score for American students was 14.40 (*SD* = 2.33) for the pre-test survey and 16.20 (*SD* = 2.72) for the post-test survey. However, results from a 2 x 2 mixed-model repeated measures ANOVA (see Table 9) demonstrated no main effect for time,  $F(1,13) = 1.56$ ,  $MS$  (within) = 15.26,  $p = .23$ . Additionally, there was no main effect for student group,  $F(1,13) = 2.29$ ,  $MS$  (between) = 48.95,  $p = .15$ . The interaction between student group and time was also not significant,  $F(1,13) = 0.00$ ,  $MS$  (within) = 15.26,  $p = .95$ . Because Box's test of equality of covariance matrices was not significant ( $p = 0.09$ ), no corrections were applied to the repeated measures. These results suggest that the overall mean ethnic identity scores for American students were not significantly lower than the overall mean scores of international students and that there was not a significant increase in overall mean ethnic identity scores over the semester. Student group did not affect the non-significant change in ethnic identity scores.

Table 8.

*International and American Students' Mean Ethnic Identity Scores and Standard Deviations*

Student group	Pre-test survey		Post-test survey	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
American ( <i>n</i> =5)	14.40	2.33	16.20	2.72
International ( <i>n</i> =10)	18.40	1.65	20.40	1.92

Table 9.

*Summary Table for the Mixed-Model ANOVA for American and International Students' Mean Ethnic Identity Scores*

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	Partial $\eta^2$
Between-group effects					
Student group	112.07	1	112.07	2.29	0.15
Error	636.40	13	48.95		
Within-group effects					
Time	24.07	1	24.07	1.56	0.11
Time x student group	0.07	1	0.07	0.00	0.00
Error (within)	198.40	13	15.26		

Another aspect of ethnic identity includes labeling oneself as a member of an ethnic group, which is measured with the MEIM-R by using an open-ended question that asks individuals for their ethnicity (Phinny & Ong, 2007). To measure change in students' ethnic identification, American and international students' ethnic self-categorizations from the pre-test survey were compared with their self-categorizations from the post-test survey. Differences existed between the two student groups, with international students changing their ethnic self-labels more than American students (see Table 10).

Table 10.

*Summary Table of Ethnic Self-Categorization at Pre-Test and Post-Test Surveys*

Student group	Ethnic self-categorization	
	Pre-test survey	Post-test survey
International	Brazilian	Latino/ Hispanic*
	Brazilian	Brazilian
	Not specified	Not specified
	Asian	Japanese*
	None	Chinese*
	Chinese	Asian*
	China	China
	Japanese	Japan
	Asian	Asian
	Asian	Asian
	Brazilian	Latin*
	Japanese	Japanese
American	White	White
	African American	African American
	Asian	Asian
	White	White
	Caucasian	White*
	Other	Other
	African American	Black*
	White	White

\*= change in self-categorization



Excluding one change that was likely due to a grammatical error, a switch from “Japanese” to “Japan,” five international students changed their ethnic identifications from the pre-test to post-test survey. All of these changes represented a major shift in students’ ethnic identification because students switched the type of ethnic categorization, ethno-national or ethno-racial/regional, that they used to describe themselves. For example, two Brazilian students who categorized themselves on the pre-test survey as “Brazilian” defined themselves as “Latino/Hispanic” and “Latin” on the post-test survey. One student switched from the regional “Asian” to the country-specific “Japanese” while another student moved in the opposite direction, switching from “Chinese” to “Asian.” Also, one student who wrote “none” for his or her ethnicity in the pre-test survey described his or her ethnicity as “Chinese” in the post-test survey.

Changes to the American students’ ethnic self-labels were not as common as in international students and did not contain the same level of meaningful change as in international students either. To begin, only two participants changed their ethnic self-labels over time. One student changed from “Caucasian” to “White” and the other student changed from “African American” to “Black.” While both students changed the label associated with their ethnic group, these changes did not represent a deeper change in ethnic self-label because both students retained their ethno-racial/regional labels.

**Change in national identity.** International students had marginally lower mean national identity scores at the post-test survey ( $M = 34.50$ ,  $SD = 5.40$ ) than at the pre-test survey ( $M = 35.20$ ,  $SD = 5.37$ ). American students’ mean national identity score, on the other hand, increased from the pre-test survey ( $M = 26.80$ ,  $SD = 4.76$ ) to the post-test survey ( $M = 32.40$ ,  $SD = 13.35$ ; see Table 11). Using a Geisser-Greenhouse correction, results from the 2 x 2 mixed-model

repeated measures ANOVA (see Table 12) demonstrated no significant effect of student group,  $F(1,13) = 2.31$ ,  $MS$  (between) = 79.50,  $p = .15$ , or time,  $F(1,13) = 1.78$ ,  $MS$  (within) = 22.51,  $p = .21$ . The interaction between student group and time was also not significant,  $F(1,13) = 2.94$ ,  $MS$  (within) = 22.51,  $p = .11$ . Results indicate that the overall mean national identity scores for American and international students are not significantly different. In addition, mean national identity scores did not significantly change from the pre-test to the post-test survey. Student group did not affect this non-significant change.

Table 11.

*International and American Students' Mean National Identity Scores and Standard Deviations*

Student group	Pre-test survey		Post-test survey	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
American ( $n=5$ )	26.80	4.76	32.40	13.35
International ( $n=10$ )	34.50	5.40	35.20	5.37

Table 12.

*Summary Table for the Mixed-Model ANOVA for American and International Students' Mean National Identity Scores*

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	Partial $\eta^2$
Between-group effects					
Student group	183.75	1	183.75	2.31	0.15
Error	1033.45	13	79.50		
Within-group effects					
Time	40.02	1	40.02	1.78	1.78
Time x student group	66.15	1	66.15	2.94	0.18
Error (within)	292.65	13	22.51		

**Change in cosmopolitan identity.** As Table 13 demonstrates, the mean international student cosmopolitan identity score for the pre-test survey was 19.50 ( $SD = 2.32$ ). For the post-test survey, the score remained relatively the same ( $M = 19.20$ ,  $SD = 2.04$ ). Similarly, American

students' mean cosmopolitan identity score remained fairly stable. Their mean cosmopolitan score for the pre-test survey was 22.20 ( $SD = 1.92$ ), and for the post-test survey was 21.60 ( $SD = 1.14$ ). Results from the 2 x 2 mixed-model repeated measures ANOVA (see Table 14) indicated that the effect of time,  $F(1,13) = 1.35$ ,  $MS$  (within) = 1.35,  $p = .42$ , and the interaction effect between student group and time,  $F(1,13) = 0.15$ ,  $MS$  (within) = 0.15,  $p = .79$  were not significant. However, the analysis demonstrated a main effect of student group,  $F(1,13) = 7.01$ ,  $MS$  (between) = 6.19,  $p = .02$ . Because Box's test of equality of covariance matrices did not find a significant result ( $p = .62$ ), no corrections were applied to the repeated measures. Group means were compared using an independent samples  $t$ -test to evaluate the significant effect of student group. Results (see Table 13) indicated a significant effect of student group on the mean cosmopolitan identity score at the pre-test survey ( $t_{\alpha=0.05} = -2.23$ ,  $df = 13$ ,  $p = .04$ ) and the post-test survey ( $t_{\alpha=0.05} = -2.42$ ,  $df = 13$ ,  $p = .03$ ). Results suggest that American students had higher cosmopolitan identity scores than international students at both time points, but that there was no significant change in overall mean cosmopolitan identity scores over time. In addition, there was no interaction between student group and change in cosmopolitan identity scores over time.

Table 13.

*International and American Students' Mean Cosmopolitan Identity Scores and Standard Deviations*

Student group	Pre-test survey				Post-test survey			
	$M$	$SD$	$t$	$df$	$M$	$SD$	$t$	$df$
American ( $n=5$ )	22.20	1.92	-2.23*	13	21.60	1.14	-2.42*	13
International ( $n=10$ )	19.50	2.32			19.20	2.04		

\* =  $p < .05$

Table 14.

*Summary Table for the Mixed-Model ANOVA for American and International Students' Mean Cosmopolitan Identity Scores*

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	Partial $\eta^2$
Between-group effects					
Student group	43.35	1	4.35	7.01*	0.35
Error	80.45	13	6.19		
Within-group effects					
Time	1.35	1	1.35	0.68	0.05
Time x student group	0.15	1	0.15	0.08	0.01
Error (within)	25.65	13	1.97		

\* =  $p < .05$

### Interview Findings

Four students were interviewed after completing the post-test survey. The semi-structured interviews revealed three themes that serve as possible factors that influence international and American student roommates' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities: students as discoverers, students as ambassadors, and students as negotiators. These themes demonstrate that international and American students are struggling with their identities in different ways over the course of the semester. Before delving into the themes, I believe it beneficial to provide short participant profiles. These profiles do not adequately describe the rich experience, nor do they provide an all-inclusive description of each individual; however, they do serve to understand how the participants acquired a roommate from a different nationality and their relationship.

### Participant Profile

Lijuan (all names have been changed) was a freshman in her first semester at a public university at the time of the interview. She was born in China, but grew up in the United States and is not attending school on an international student visa. She actively pursued the opportunity to live with an international roommate in order to learn about other countries and cultures and

lives in an international dormitory on-campus with a Chinese roommate. Lijuan described her relationship with her roommate as “okay,” saying that they were “friendly” but “not close” because her roommate “spends time at her friends’ house” and “doesn’t want to get to know other people.” Although Lijuan wished for a more intimate relationship with her roommate, she expressed that she had other international friends who she has met through her dormitory.

Keaira also resides in an on-campus international dormitory. Keaira is an African American woman from Ohio and has never left the country or even the mid-West. She is a sophomore and chose to live in the international dormitory after having a positive experience living with an international student over the summer, stating “it was just like really interesting to like see all the different things and see how she lived and everything, so I’m just like I’d like to do that when I go back to school.” She currently lives with a Japanese roommate and describes the experience as “good” but sometimes “weird” and “awkward” because her roommate does not always understand her due to language difficulties. However, Keaira and her roommate normally work together to understand each other through other means: “I try to explain it differently or use a lot of hand movements...we’ll go on Google or something and we’ll show each other pictures.” They spend time together and “talk and watch videos and listen to music and watch movies and stuff.”

Ali is a sophomore and an international student from Saudi Arabia. When I interviewed him, he had been living in the United States for a little over a year. Originally, Ali had no intentions of studying in the United States, but he could not find a university where he could complete a bachelor’s degree in Saudi Arabia, so he moved to the United States. Ali spent one year at a community college before transferring to a four-year institution where he began living with one American and one Colombian roommate. Ali chose to live with an American citizen to

improve his English: “If you still live with people like from my country, the people say I will not improve my language. I will not do anything. I will always speak like Arabic Arabic [*sic*], so I will not improve anything.” He said that the three months that he has lived with his roommates have been good so far and that his roommates and him “have, I can say it, like every day a conversation for like a half-hour.”

Takeshi’s experience differs from the other participants because he did not choose to live with an American roommate. Takeshi is a sophomore and a Japanese international student who has lived in the United States for approximately three and a half years. When he first arrived in the United States, he lived in southern California and enjoyed the diversity of the area. Then, he moved to the mid-West where he found the “white culture...kind but...not welcome to the others.” He currently lives with three roommates: two Americans and one Saudi Arabian, and he did not know who they were until he moved in. After three months of living with his roommates, he describes his experience as largely negative. He likes one American, but the other American is “quiet” and he states that the Saudi Arabian “has a totally different background, so, I mean, I cannot adjust to his life.” However, with the one American he feels a connection based on their similar experiences: “He went to a California university so that’s why he knows about California and diversity and culture.” They talk “a lot” about “history,” “social issues,” “human rights,” and more commonplace topics, like “vegetarians,” and frame these discussions as enjoyable debates: “We always try to go against each other. If he goes this way, I go against his argument. It’s kinda fun.”

The brief descriptions of the participants and their interpretations of their relationship with their roommate(s) demonstrate the similar and different aspects of each participant’s living situation. While most participants consciously chose to live with a student from a different

country, Takeshi did not. Participants also varied in how much time they spent with their roommates and on whether they viewed their living situation positively, negatively, or mixed. These differences and commonalities among the participants' experiences provide a better understanding of the context in which the participants navigate their identities which is valuable when investigating the themes that emerged from the interviews.

### **Students as Discoverers**

All participants encountered different ethnic and national groups on a daily basis due to their living situation, and most students discovered something about a different group of people from this experience. Lijuan and Keaira mentioned that they gained a greater understanding of a different group of individuals as a result of living with students of different nationalities. Ali also learned about a different national group. On the other hand, Takeshi's experience reinforced preexisting conceptions of different national groups. As students discovered, or failed to discover, information about other groups, their identities were affected in different ways.

Lijuan highly values learning from other cultures. In her interview, she mentioned that she had just attended an international dinner and is "involved in a bunch of like different groups and people and cultures." She stated that cross-cultural learning is important to create an inclusive society in a country as diverse as the United States:

Like you need to learn different cultures to understand because the United States has been more for international people to come in and learn and see not only the culture here but the different cultures coming in here. After we graduate, we need to understand their culture, too, so we can make them feel at home here.

Learning from other cultures confirms her appreciation of the similarities and differences she shares with other individuals. She explained, "It's like kinda nice to have a little bit similar but

not a whole lot similar.” Her cosmopolitan attitude assists her in discovering about other national groups.

Lijuan describes herself as a “big-heart person” who “accept[s] people no matter what.” Still, living in an international dormitory “opened [her] mind a lot.” For example, Lijuan gained a greater understanding of Japanese people who her grandmother had previously denigrated:

It’s [international dormitory] change like different view of different culture. Like growing up my grandma talking about how certain Japan’s [*sic*] bad because of the war. The fighting part and like kinda changed a lot. Like there is certain parts bad, but it’s part of the world how every country is fighting over certain stuff like power...

Lijuan’s exposure to students of different nationalities through the international dormitory helped her critically examine preconceived notions of the Japanese and recognize the universality of power struggles that cause all people, not just Japanese, to engage in harmful acts.

Keaira also changed her opinion of different group members based on her living situation. Before Keaira began living in the international dormitory, she had noted self-segregation among international students on campus and “thought it was always because they were better than everyone else.” However, after living in the international dormitory, she realized “that it’s because they feel like no one can understand that they’re saying, and it’s hard for them to voice their opinions when everyone’s always like what?” She specifically references her roommate to explain why her perception changed:

I know when I talk to my roommate a lot, she’s always like asking me for help on our homework because she can’t understand the wording, and she’s like, oh my gosh, I’m so stupid, and I’m like, you’re not stupid. It’s just this is English, and English isn’t your first language...



Through understanding her roommate's difficulty with attending a university in her non-native language, Keaira discovers possible reasons for international student self-segregation that allow her to empathize with them.

In her interactions with diverse groups of peoples, Keaira also discovered that everyone was both similar and unique. When talking about hanging out with people from different nationalities, Keaira concluded, "We're together one, but we're still different." However, this belief creates difficulty for her when she identifies herself in a diverse group. She said:

Like if I were to be in a group of diverse people...but they were to say well I'm this and I'm this and I'm this and I'm just like what'd that make me? Would that make me one of them, or would that make me separate?

Keaira appears to struggle with the meaning of her identity in a diverse group of people. She seems unsure whether her identity would separate or unify her with the group; therefore, her belief that people are both similar and different leads her to question the function of her identity in a socially diverse environment.

Like Lijuan, Ali expressed a strong desire to learn from other cultures. As previously stated, his primary reason for wanting to live with an American was to learn English, but he also wanted to "...get, uh, information from the right person, from the good source." He views his experience in the United States as a "good opportunity to know about other culture" and, therefore, decided to go to different churches with his friends, despite questions from his own religious group:

Many people told me, cus I'm a Muslim, so to me, why you want to [sic]? I told them, look, let me see how the other people worshipping God. Let me see, and many my friends invite me to go there and I went.

Ali discovered different types of congregations by visiting the churches, and was surprised by what he saw. Of one church, he said, “The majority, believe me, I saw the old people, and I was shocked. I say, how about the other?” A different church provided a different view of religion in the United States. Ali commented, “I see that all them young people and I was shocked. I guess because the preacher is like young and in the same age, so he can engage the people to come to church.” Ali engaged with friends outside of his home to explore their culture and further his understanding about different cultural groups; however, he also discovered similarities with different cultures because of his living situation. Through conversations with his roommates, Ali discovered similarities between Americans and Saudi Arabians. He stated, “I think we have a lot in common between back home, my country, and here, but I think the difference is just in school.” Ali’s interactions with his roommates and friends led him to not only discover new information about Americans, but also to recognize the similarities that exist between two different national groups.

Takeshi’s experience differs from the other participants in that he did not mention learning something new about a different ethnic or national group from his interactions with diverse peoples. Takeshi described the majority of his interactions with a diverse group of individuals as occurring in California. There, he said, international students and “Black people, like uh, Latins, like Mexicans, or South Americans, like Brazil, Asian and Europeans, we mix all the time....” While these interactions may have changed his mind about certain groups, Takeshi stated that being in America has not changed his negative view of Asians:

...I came over to the United States, and I see so many Asians culture. Asians, you know what I mean? I feel like that’s why I don’t like them. I see a lot of persons, a lot of

behavior that I don't like, so I think that if I come to the United States, Japanese get more stronger, like nationalist.

Takeshi's dislike of Asian behavior in the United States causes him to more strongly identify with his national identity, which Takeshi stated, already includes negative perceptions of Chinese and South Koreans: "We don't like the China, South Korea. We don't like its culture, so like always we go against them." Instead of changing his attitude, intergroup contact in the United States reinforced Takeshi's perceptions of Chinese and South Koreans.

### **Students as Ambassadors**

All participants were aware of external perceptions of their national and/or ethnic groups. These perceptions were not specifically associated with the participants' roommates; instead, participants noted perceptions of their national and ethnic groups from their community members. Most students used inter-cultural contact to serve as an ambassador for their national and/or ethnic group and correct inaccurate, and oftentimes negative, assumptions about their group. However, Takeshi did not conform to this pattern, and instead, he used perceptions of his group to guide his behavior. Although almost all students acted as ambassadors, this role affected each student's identities differently.

Lijuan exemplifies the role of the students as an ambassador as she recognizes views of her ethnic group and enlightens others in regard to the misconceptions of her group. When speaking of a site of intergroup contact, the international dormitory, she mentioned that she enjoyed having Americans in the international dorm and appreciated learning about other groups' perception of her group:

It's really nice to have them in our group [international dormitory] because like it will let us like share our culture with them and also like have their view on us and it's like learning from each other and helps us grow a lot.

Lijuan is not considering herself an "American" in this statement even though she grew up in the United States and is most likely identifying more with her Chinese than American heritage. She is aware of "American" views of Chinese and uses the shared, international space to learn from others as well as share her own culture with them. Additionally, Lijuan takes advantage of this opportunity to dispel stereotypes about her group. When asked whether she believed others' perceptions were correct, she responded:

Some of the stuff they say isn't true. Like some people think that we go to school 365 days a year but we don't. We do take off summer days like what American schools do...It's like some parts awkward, some parts not awkward like telling them what's right and what's wrong.

Lijuan is cognizant of the perceptions of her group and is not afraid to correct these stereotypes, however awkward the situation might be. In this sense, she is an active participant in dispelling myths about her ethnic group and serves as an ambassador to educate other groups about her own.

Similarly, Keaira acknowledges others' attitudes toward African Americans; however, she highlights the negative perceptions of others and purposefully identifies with her group to improve its image. Keaira stated:

I've felt like I've had to identify with African Americans mostly at the beginning of the semester when I signed up for all these different organizations, and they were talking about all these things that were happening in African American communities and stuff

like that...There were so many problems. As a strong African American woman, it would be important for me to identify as that to at least make it look better than what people normally think of it as.

As Keira joined organizations that introduced her to various and, assumedly, diverse individuals, she felt compelled to identify more strongly with her ethnic group to improve negative ideas of African Americans purported by her socio-historic context. Instead of explaining to other groups why attitudes toward her group are unfounded, she serves by example, emulating strength and poise to teach others about her ethnic group.

Ali embodies a comparable style of cultural diplomacy as Keaira in his interactions with diverse individuals. At the university's orientation for international students, Ali realized that no Saudi Arabians were participating: "Nobody participated from Saudi Arabia. Nobody participate for different activity, join different group," so he volunteered to help with the orientation and was confronted with a negative stereotype of his group. The woman reacted to Ali's offer to assist as so: "She look at me. She told me, where I'm from. Saudi Arabia. She was shocked. She told me, believe me, nobody from Saudi Arabia they want to [volunteer]. She told me she didn't know one." Ali recognizes the administration's negative perception that Saudi Arabians do not participate in the international student orientation, and actively attempts to change it: "I'm trying to change the thought about Saudi Arabia." He decides to become an international ambassador on-campus and join a group geared toward providing services to international students. His efforts are an obvious attempt to improve the view of Saudi Arabians as he repeats, "I'm trying to change the thought about Saudi Arabia as a different thought" and again, "I'm proud of that—to change the thought."

Not all participants designate themselves as ambassadors for their ethnic and/or national groups. Takeshi knows that Americans have opinions of Japanese and wants to learn them through his international experience: “If I come to the outside of Japan, I can see, I can understand how Americans think about Japanese.” He believes this information is valuable, stating, “It’s very important how they look me;” however, he does not actively challenge American’s perceptions of Japanese. This fact may stem from his belief that most perceptions of Japanese are correct. When asked if perceptions about Japanese are true, he responded, “Sometimes it’s not, but most of the case, I think so.” Takeshi does not identify with his national group to transform negative stereotypes into positive ones, like Ali and Keaira. Neither does he explain Japanese culture to others, like Lijuan does for Chinese or Chinese-American culture. Instead, he values American’s perceptions of Japanese to guide his behavior. He believes “international students or people are supposed to try to adjust to American society” and American perceptions of Japanese provide him “feedback” for “how [he’s] supposed to behave,” yet he does not lose his Japanese identity in the process of adapting to life in America, which is addressed in the next section.

### **Students as Negotiators**

When encountering diversity, most participants negotiated their ethnic and national identities as they were contested within an international social space, whether it be in the dormitory or in the classroom. These experiences affected each individual differently: Lijuan finds a sense of belonging in her diverse group of friends, Keaira critically examines her national and ethnic identities, and Takeshi becomes more nationalistic while adopting American behavior depending on the situation. Still, each participant negotiates his or her identity in a context in which multiple identities exist.

Lijuan often noted a complex and fluid relationship between her American and Chinese identities. When I asked her how she would define her national identity, she responded:

That's so hard. That's like, it's hard for me to answer cus like I kinda grew up here [United States], but at the same time, I was born in China. I have mixed feelings. What I say to people sometimes, like I don't know what to say when people ask me that.

She vacillates between her two identities and sometimes does not know how to define her nationality. To her, the two identities are exclusionary, "I'm kinda American, but at the same time, I'm not because I'm not really technically American person. I'm Chinese," yet at the same time capable of being mixed, "I guess like having different cultures and having my cultures combined make me who I am today." She identifies with both countries; however, sometimes she has difficulty resolving these two exclusionary identities, but living in an international dormitory ameliorates the perception of her conflicting identities.

According to Lijuan, the international dormitory helps her deal with the difficulty she faces in identifying with a nation because "it's like open-minded and to see like what you really come from and who you really are." Lijuan states that it is "easy" for students in her dormitory to be open-minded because "we were born in different countries, but also we are here in America to learn." Students in the international dormitory share a similar experience of being born in a different country but also living in the United States; therefore, they are welcoming to her bi-cultural background and help her discover her heritage. For Lijuan, living in the international dormitory provides her with a sense of belonging with other students born outside of the United States and creates a safe space where she can explore her bi-cultural identity.

Living in an international dormitory has also prompted Keaira to explore her ethnic and national identities but in a more critical way. For Keaira, living in an international dormitory has exposed her to students who identify with a group and are able to explain why:

Being in [the international dormitory] and seeing like how people are like, I'm this, and I'm proud of it, I'm just like I don't know if I can say something like that...because when you ask someone what they identify as they can usually say why it is or attach something to it.

These students cause her to reflect on her own identity and question what constitutes her own identity. If she cannot define why she identifies with a group, should she identify with it? She specifically uses her roommate's identity to frame her internal debate:

For instance, my roommate, she's like ok, I'm from Japan, and I eat this kind of food and all that, but if I say like, I'm African American, but it's like I don't really know what I'm supposed to eat as an African American...Since I feel like I don't have anything to attach to it, it's like I don't think I want to identify with it.

Her roommate provides her with a criterion for identifying with a group: food, yet she cannot think of a food that is characteristic of her ethnic group. Therefore, she doubts her identification with African Americans and exposes the problematic categorization of individuals based on race.

In addition to questioning her ethnic identity, Keaira also uses her roommate as a foil to critically explore her American identity. When comparing American national identity to other national identities, she states that American identity is:

Weaker...because there's so many different branches off of America. I guess like because they want you to say you're Mexican American or Asian American or African American, that makes it harder to say ok, we're all together, whereas like in Japan,



they're not saying ok I'm eastern Japanese or something silly like that. They're just all Japanese and that's it.

Keaira uses her roommate's Japanese identity to explain the "silly" nature of American national identity caused by a societal context that urges ethnic and/or racial categorization that fragments and undermines a solitary national identity. This other identity facilitates Keaira's reflection of her own identity and serves as a comparison as she negotiates the meaning of her own identity.

Takeshi does not mention his living situation when he describes his experience with negotiating his identity. Instead, he situates his experience in the larger societal context of living in the United States. As previously stated, Takeshi believes that "international students or people are supposed to try to adjust to American society;" therefore, he says, "I think I changed to American society. I mean to like American behavior." He states that his culture is incompatible with American culture, so he must adjust his behavior and learn when using his Japanese culture is appropriate: "My background, my, like our culture cannot share to the American culture, so that's why I think we have to adjust first, and then I'm gonna find which part I can share." For Takeshi, the culture he uses "depends on the situation." For example, when he drinks alcohol, he does not feel Japanese: "If I go out drink alcohol, I cannot be Japanese Japanese [*sic*]. I have to be American behavior cus it's easy to get friends or easy to enjoy in the United States." However, Takeshi does not lose his Japanese identity: "In the classroom...we don't say opinion too much. We don't tell any opinion in class. At least that's Japanese culture...I think my way it's like a Japanese culture, but I can use in the American class too." Takeshi characterizes his less vocal, classroom behavior as a Japanese trait that he can still use in the American classroom, verifying his statement, "I keep having my culture." He maintains his Japanese identity while incorporating aspects of American identity depending on the situation. In this sense, Takeshi

negotiates his identity as he moves through diverse social contexts that provide him an opportunity to identify with both American and Japanese behavior.

Takeshi also negotiates his cosmopolitan identity in his new regional environment. As already stated, Takeshi lived in California before coming to the mid-West. In California, he stated that different types of people “mixed” together; therefore he says, “I think I get a cosmopolitan more in California, not here” because “in California, it’s mixing.” Takeshi demonstrates that his cosmopolitan identity changes with his social context. When Takeshi felt that he interacted with individuals from diverse backgrounds, he identified more strongly with being a cosmopolitan, but when he believed he was in a majority “White” culture, he identified less strongly with a cosmopolitan identity.

Ali similarly navigates his Muslim identity in a new social context. Even though he had explored different churches, Ali still retains his own religious practices:

...Back at home, I went to the mosque like five times a days, but here mosque is far away, so I went to the mosque once a week...I also want to participate on Friday, but I have class, unfortunately. So just once a week here.

Ali goes to Mosque, but he has to negotiate what being a Muslim means in a majority Christian social context. He can no longer go to Friday prayer because of class and the mosque is far away, so he modifies his religious practices without losing his Muslim identity.

## CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

The goal of this study was to investigate the change and development of international and American student roommates' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities, and the possible factors that influenced this development. By doing so, the author explored an underdeveloped area of research in the existing literature: the effect of the students' context, a shared living space with students of different nationalities, on their identity development. An explanatory mixed-methods design explored the research questions through on-line pre- and post-test surveys and semi-structured interviews. The quantitative results showed no changes in ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan mean identity scores in both student groups; however, the qualitative results showed changes in students' identities depending on their social context. In this chapter, I will interpret the findings from Chapter IV in relation to the literature, ultimately concluding that these results suggest that American and international college student roommates are still undergoing identity development characteristic of Arnett's (2000) emerging adulthood stage. Additionally, students' experiences reflect Vignoles et al.'s (2011) definition of identity as complex and seemingly contradictory due to the multiple factors that influence identity which supports Bronfenbrenner's conceptualization of human development as affected by both social and personal factors (Rogoff, 2003).

**Differences in International and American Student Roommates' Ethnic, National, and****Cosmopolitan Identities at the Beginning of the Semester**

International and American students showed significant differences in their ethnic and national identities when they began living with each other according to the pre-test survey. American students had lower ethnic and national identity scores than international students, signifying that they identified less strongly with their ethnic and national identity than the

international students. This finding does not fully support the research that has shown that individuals in minority ethnic groups are more cognizant of their ethnic identity (Phinney, 1989). Although one might expect international students to develop a strong ethnic identity as they become members of ethnic minority groups in the United States, it is unclear whether their ethnic identity is stronger than all American students' ethnic identities or just the ethnic identity of the majority ethnic group members in the United States because the American student sample contained ethnic majority and minority group members. It is possible that if the Americans were separated by ethnic group, the ethnic minority groups may have had an ethnic identity score that was closer to the international students than the white Americans, thereby supporting Phinney (1989). However, it is also possible that international students could be more cognizant of their ethnic identities than American minority ethnic group members because of the novelty of American racial and ethnic social classifications for international students, which would complicate Phinney (1989).

The strength of students' national identities is more easily interpreted because all American students could claim, at least in theory, membership into the majority national group in their social context. In contrast, international students' national identities marked them as members of a minority national group; therefore, in accordance with Phinney (1989), international students would be more aware of their national identities while studying at an American university. Additionally, this study's results support Dobby's (2004) findings that students' national identities can be activated when studying outside of the students' home country (Dolby, 2004). As such, international students are more likely to be aware of and identify with their national identities than their American peers.

The pre-test survey also found no significant difference in cosmopolitan identity between the two student groups. The sample most likely influenced this result. All of the American students and most of the international students were residents of on- or off-campus international dormitories whose purpose was to create an international living space to further understanding between people of different countries. Students self-selected to be in these dorms, so they may have already identified with being a cosmopolitan before they began living with their international or American roommate. International and American students' mean cosmopolitan identity scores at the pre-test support this speculation. Both groups had high mean cosmopolitan identity scores ( $M_{Int} = 19.91$ ,  $SD_{Int} = 2.69$ ;  $M_{Am} = 21.50$ ,  $SD_{Am} = 3.06$ ). The maximum score for the cosmopolitan sub-scale was 25. Furthermore, Ali, Keaira, and Lijuan's the interview data demonstrate students' cosmopolitan attitudes before they began living with their roommates as they all actively pursued living with a foreign national and expressed interest in learning about diverse peoples.

International and American students also differed in how they defined their ethnic identity. The  $\chi^2$  analysis indicated that student status was associated with type of ethnic identity label with international students more frequently using ethno-national descriptors than American students who used ethno-racial / regional descriptors more frequently. The difference in self-identifications between international and American students supports the socio-historic nature of social identities, specifically ethnic identity (Phinney, 1996; Turner, 1982). Different social contexts may have different social categories and emphasize the importance of different group identifications. For example, in the United States, race is the predominant narrative that drives the categorization of American people (Waters, 1999). Therefore, the American students' social context may have influenced them to choose "white", "African American", "Hispanic", or

“Asian” instead of an ethno-national label. Because different countries may have different meanings associated with ethnic identities (Phinney, 1996), international students may have been unfamiliar with the term ‘ethnicity’ or may have attached a different meaning to the term ‘ethnicity’ than their American counterparts, therefore, opting to merge their ethnicity and nationality.

### **American and International Students’ Change in Ethnic Identity**

The mixed-model repeated measures ANOVA did not find a significant change in ethnic identity scores in international and American student roommates which suggests that the strength of their ethnic identity remained the same. However, this fact does not imply that students’ ethnic identities remained stagnant. International and American students showed a simultaneous commitment to and exploration of their ethnic identity by acting as ambassadors and discoverers throughout the semester. Additionally, half of the international students changed in their ethnic identification at the end of the semester, reflecting the influence of individuals’ environment on their social identities (Turner, 1982). As a whole, these results paint a complex picture of students’ ethnic identity as both fluid and unchanging after having lived with a roommate of a different nationality for one semester.

Contrary to Tsai and Fuligni’s (2012) suggestion that personal measures, like friendships, may affect the strength of students’ ethnic identity, the intimate relationship between American and international student roommates appeared to not change the strength of their ethnic identity. One possible reason for this finding could be that living with an American student may have increased international students’ sense of belonging in the community, much like the interracial roommates in Shook and Clay (2012). For example, both Takeshi and Ali had a positive relationship with at least one of their American roommates and were able to converse with their

roommates about many things, so they may not have developed a stronger ethnic identity in order to compensate for feelings of perceived discrimination (Umaña-Taylor, 2011). However, both of their ethnic identity scores increased from the pre- to post-test. Ali's total ethnic identity score increased from 22 to 29, and Takeshi's score increased from 16 to 24, suggesting that other factors besides sense of belonging may have influenced the growth in their ethnic identities. On the other hand, Lijuan felt accepted while living in an international dormitory, but her ethnic identity remained relatively the same, changing from 16 at the pre-test survey to 18 at the post-test survey. She believes international students can understand her unique identity because they were born in other countries, too; therefore, the acceptance she feels from international students may have allowed her to maintain the same level of ethnic identity.

Although students' micro-level interactions with their roommates may have increased their sense of belonging, it did not insulate them from stereotypes that existed against their ethnic group at the macro-level, much like the students in Dolby's (2004) study who realized that non-Americans also participated in constructing an American identity. These stereotypes affected students' identities in different ways. For Ali, Keaira, and Lijuan, serving as an ambassador for their ethnic groups strengthened their ethnic identities as they purposefully identified with their group, at least temporarily, and actively worked to change what they viewed as inaccurate stereotypes. However, Takeshi's reaction differed. While he did not dissociate from his Japanese identity to protect himself against potentially negative stereotypes, he also did not attempt to increase the status of his group by addressing stereotypes of his group. These findings problematize Turner's (1982) theory that individuals' tend to positively assess their social groups to increase their self-esteem. Takeshi's personal belief that "international students or people are supposed to try to adjust to American society" may have influenced him to learn how others

perceive his group and adjust his behavior accordingly instead of challenging stereotypical images of his group, suggesting that how students react to negative portrayals of their group may depend on the personality of the individual.

Ali, Keaira, and Takeshi's reaction to their exposure to other ethnicities also complicates the non-significant change in ethnic identity found in the statistical analysis. In contrast to Keaira's identification as a "strong African American woman" to improve the image of her ethnic group and an overall increase in ethnic identity score ( $M_{pre} = 21$ ,  $M_{post} = 30$ ), she also embodied Phinney's (2006) description of college as a stage of ethnic identity moratorium. Keaira used her roommate's ethnic identity to explore her own and questioned whether she wanted to identify as an African American. While this fact could suggest that Keaira's ethnic identity score should decrease, it could also signify a greater awareness of the construction of her ethnic identity that does not change her overall African American identity. Ali on the other hand, never questioned his ethnic identity. He utilized his inter-ethnic friends to explore different religions, but he still remained committed to his own ethnic identity.

The students also negotiated their identities as they navigated new social contexts that challenged their ethnic identities; however, they differed in their attempts to reconcile their contested identities. All participants can be described using Phinney's (1990) conceptualization of individuals' identification with their ethnic group and the majority group. Takeshi, Keaira, and Lijaun exemplify bicultural individuals (strong identification with ethnic and majority group) and Ali exemplifies an ethnically embedded individual (strong identification with ethnic group and weak identification with majority group). Still, these identifications had different meanings for each individual. Takeshi viewed his Japanese and American characteristics as incompatible and commented that in certain instances, like partying, he behaved like an American, but under



other circumstances, like in the classroom, he was Japanese. On the other hand, Keaira and Lijuan struggled to merge their ethnic identity with what they viewed as an exclusionary American national identity. Ali differed from the others in that he included his religion as part of his ethnic identity and interchanged the terms Saudi Arabian and Muslim; therefore, his identity negotiation was framed by a social context that differed not only in nationality but also in religion. Although Ali explored the new religious context, he did not identify with Christianity; instead, he adapted his own religious practices to the new social space.

In addition to the interview data that suggest that students experienced a change in their ethnic identity at certain times, the change in international students' ethnic self-labels supports Phinney's (2006) claim that students' social context can affect their ethnic identity. Because socio-historic context affects ethnic identities (Phinney, 1996; Turner, 1982), international students who study in the United States encounter a new social context in which the meanings attached to ethnicity and society's categorization of ethnic groups may be different than in their home country. For example, the Brazilian students who changed their labels from "Brazilian" to "Latino/Hispanic" and "Latin" may have changed their ethnic identity as a result of the social context in the United States that categorizes South and Central Americans as Latinos or Hispanics. Interestingly, American society also defines Latinos and Hispanics as Spanish speakers, but the Portuguese-speaking Brazilians still identified with them. Also, the pervasiveness of race and ethnicity in the United States as social categorizations may have influenced the one international student to define him or herself as "Chinese" where before s/he described his or her ethnicity as "none." Therefore, the international students may be internalizing the ethnic groups available to them in their new society (Turner, 1982). However, students who switched from pan-ethnic to country specific ethnic self-labels may suggest a

rejection of pan-ethnic groupings in the United States that tend to homogenize difference within ethnic groups. Either way, international students negotiated their ethnic identities as they navigated a new social context in which social categories and their meanings changed.

### **American and International Students' Change in National Identity**

The results for changes in national identity were similar to the results for ethnic identity in that the quantitative findings showed no significant change, but the qualitative results suggested that students' identities were developing in unique ways as they acted as discoverers, ambassadors and negotiators in different social contexts. Since most international student participants, like Ali and Takeshi, described their ethnic identity using ethno-national labels, it was difficult to separate their ethnic and national identities; therefore, much of the analysis from the ethnic identity section is also applicable to international students' national identity and will not be repeated in this section. However, their national identities will be discussed when relevant to the literature on national identity and when serving as a comparison to American students' national identity.

Surprisingly, international and American students showed no statistically significant change in national identity after having lived with a roommate of a different nationality for a semester. According to Dolby (2004), American students studying abroad in Australia became more cognizant of their national identities; therefore, the researcher expected international students' national identities to become stronger while living with an American roommate and studying in a foreign country. In support of Deschamp (1982), the researcher also predicted that American students' national identities would increase because their international student roommates would challenge the majority status of their American identities, but these hypotheses were not observed. One possible reason for these findings may be that awareness of one's

identity may not signify a change in the strength in one's identity; therefore, the subscale for national identity, which measured the strength of national identity, may not have noted any changes in national identity. Also, the sample size for international and American students was extremely small, and the power of the test to find significant changes in identity may have been limited. Finally, the repeated measures ANOVA measured for changes in mean total national identity score, so individual changes in national identity scores (like that of Lijuan whose national identity score increased from 29 to 36) may not be captured when measuring the group's (international or American) change in mean national identity score over time.

The qualitative findings support these propositions. Ali, Keaira, Takeshi, and Lijuan expressed awareness of their national identities as they struggled to make meaning of their national identities in their social context; however, each individual uniquely negotiated his or her national identity. Lijuan's confusion about how to define her nationality, as Chinese or American, appeared to be a continual struggle for her because she was born in China but immigrated to the United States at a young age. Living in the international dormitory may have created an empathetic environment where she had the opportunity to explore and share her Chinese heritage while attempting to merge it with her American identity. Keaira differed from Lijuan in that Keaira's roommate appeared to influence her awareness of her American identity. Keaira's experience supports Dolby's (2004) findings in that, by living in a social context in which her nationality no longer constituted the majority, she actively instead of passively constructed her identity. Furthermore, Keaira's experience mirrored the students in Dolby's (2004) study who, after becoming aware of their national identities, critically examined them. Keaira questioned how her identities are made and why American identity can be fragmented. On the other hand, Takeshi's experience reflected the blind patriotism observed in Dolby's

(2004) study as challenges to his Japanese identity influenced him to identify more strongly with his national identity without critical reflection. By more strongly identifying as Japanese, he may have been attempting to separate himself from the homogeneous and pan-ethnic term, Asian, that is commonly used in the United States. Finally, Ali was aware of his Saudi Arabian, Muslim identity, but he appeared to easily adjust his religious practices to the majority American, Christian context while also learning about his peers' religious practices.

### **American and International Students' Change in Cosmopolitan Identity**

The mixed-model ANOVA did not find a significant change in international and American student roommates' cosmopolitan identity over the semester. One possible explanation for this result is the high levels of cosmopolitan identity that students had at the beginning of the semester, creating a possible ceiling effect. The maximum score for the cosmopolitan sub-scale was 25. American students' had a mean score of 22.20 and international students' had a mean score of 19.50 at the pre-test survey, so increases in students' cosmopolitan identities may have been difficult to observe.

The qualitative data support the non-significant change in cosmopolitan identity. Ali, Keaira, and Lijuan all expressed a desire to live in an international environment and to learn about various cultures before they began living with their roommate; therefore, they already possessed one aspect of Appiah's (1996) definition of a cosmopolitan: a love and appreciation of diversity. Lijuan also represented another Appiah's (1996) definition of a cosmopolitan by recognizing that she is similar yet different from the students living in the international dormitory. However, the qualitative results also demonstrate change in cosmopolitan identity as students discovered similarities between themselves and diverse groups of people and negotiated their cosmopolitan identities in different social contexts.

Both American and international students' cosmopolitan identities grew as they acted as discoverers and explorers, supporting Rizvi's (2005) finding that students developed cosmopolitan identities in an international context. Keaira discovered the reason behind international students' self-segregation from her roommate's struggle with English, and Lijuan discovered that not all Japanese were "bad" like her grandmother had told her. Also, Keaira and Ali discovered that the characteristics they shared with others could supersede national differences. Finally, the students explored different cultures through interactions with their roommates or American friends. Therefore, Ali, Keaira, and Lijuan developed a stronger cosmopolitan identity as they deepened their appreciation for diversity, recognized the similarities between diverse groups of individuals, and furthered their recognition of the historical and/or social contexts that shape human differences (Appiah, 2005).

Not every participant's cosmopolitan identity increased. Takeshi provides a unique foil to Ali, Keaira, and Lijuan. While he did express an appreciation of other cultures, specifically citing his affinity toward "Latin" culture, he also disliked certain "Asian" cultures, and his experience in the United States reaffirmed his aversion towards Chinese and Koreans. The development of his cosmopolitan identity, therefore, may be moderated by his personal experiences and interpretation of the historical relationship between Japan, China, and Korea. In this sense, Takeshi's experience reflects Rizvi's (2005) conclusion that students' culture, and interpretation of that culture, I would add, influence the development of students' cosmopolitan identity.

### **Other Considerations**

Despite the non-significant results of the mixed-model repeated measures ANOVAs, the qualitative findings support using Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of development to frame identity development (Rogoff, 2003). Students' microsystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and

mesosystem influenced their identity development. At the microsystem and exosystem levels, students acted as discoverers, ambassadors, and negotiators with a variety of actors, from roommates to university staff, and in a variety of social contexts, from the dormitory to the community. The difference in ethnic self-labels between international and American students and the change in international students' ethnic self-labels over time best represents the effect of the macrosystem on students' identity development. For example, as international students adjusted to a new social context, some of their ethnic self-labels changed to reflect the United States' ethno-racial / regional categorizations. Moreover, each of these systems interacted to create a unique social context that participants interpreted differently depending on their personalities and personal experiences. Therefore, these findings support a contextual study of students' identities as a means to more fully understand emerging adults' identity development.

While it is difficult to determine which environmental level affected students' identities the most, one pattern did appear. The American students, Keaira and Lijuan, framed their changes in ethnic and national identities with their roommates or residents of the international dormitory while the international students, Ali and Takeshi, did not. Therefore, living with a roommate of a different nationality may not affect international students as strongly as American students because international students interact with individuals from different nationalities daily in the broader society, regardless of their living situation. However, for American students, living with an international roommate may provide them with an otherwise rare opportunity to interact with international students and, thus, more strongly influence their identities.

### **Implications for International Educators**

The results suggest that international and American student roommates' ethnic, national and cosmopolitan identity development continues to occur past adolescence (Erikson, 1968) and

into emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000). Students' environments affect this development in different ways as students interpret and respond to their social context in varying ways (Rogoff, 2003). These findings have implications for international educators.

As universities push to internationalize their campuses (Knight, 2004), students increasingly come in contact with individuals from different nationalities. Unfortunately, these interactions may be largely superficial as few international and American students form friendships (Sherry et al., 2010). International dormitories provide an opportunity for American and international students to deepen their understanding of other national groups as well as examine their own identities through increased contact, and hopefully friendships, with individuals from diverse backgrounds. Especially for American students with little experience of traveling abroad, an international dormitory may provide students with some of the benefits of studying abroad without actually leaving the country.

Because students may respond differently to social contexts with high levels of ethnic and national diversity, it is important to create a college atmosphere in which students feel safe to explore, discover, and negotiate their identities and the identities of others. Achieving this environment may involve creating an international dormitory on campus or it may involve sponsoring educational events or workshops for the university and its surrounding community that address cross-cultural communication and understanding and promote cultural exchange and friendship. These events or workshops are important because students' experiences with diversity may reinforce or create prejudice toward certain national or ethnic groups. Therefore, any activity that critically examines stereotypes and intercultural contact may be beneficial for students as universities aim to increase the diversity of their student body.

### **Limitations**

The pre-test and post-test surveys contain threats to instrument and internal validity. Although the ethnic and national identity subscales were either used or adapted from previous research, they were not originally designed for non-native English speakers; therefore, they may not be valid for international students with low levels of English competence. In fact, when the researcher was administering the surveys in person, she received questions about the definition of ethnicity and cosmopolitan. Additionally, students' majors and international students' intent on staying in the United States after graduate were extraneous variables that may have affected student responses. Students' areas of study may have influenced how and the degree to which they thought about ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities, and international students who planned on staying in the United States after graduation may have more readily integrated the dominant culture's behaviors and attitudes into their identities. Furthermore, year in school and gender were not controlled; thus, the differences in participant characteristics may have influenced the outcomes of identity scores. The largest limitation of this study was its sample size. A high rate of attrition (61%) contributed to the small sample size used to compare pre- and post-test survey identity scores and gather interview participants. The small sample size limits the generalizability of the results because it is not representative of the larger international and American student roommate population. For example, no American men and no international women were interviewed. Additionally, the small sample size limits the statistical the power of the mixed-model repeated measures ANOVA to find significant relationships between variables.

The methodology further limits the generalizability of the study's results. The researcher purposively chose a sample of students from three mid-Western universities and is, therefore, not representative of all international and American student roommates studying in the United



States. The pre-test, post-test design may have also encouraged a greater number of students who were undergoing changes in their identity to continue their participation in the research whereas students who had no interest in the study may have dropped out, creating a bias in the sample that was used in the interviews and the mixed-model repeated measures ANOVAs. Finally, no control group was used, thus, one cannot conclude whether the effects on students' identities are due to their living situation, their enrollment at public, mid-Western universities, or another unidentified factor.

The time frame was also a limitation. The time elapsed between the pre- and post-test survey was approximately two months. This short time period between the pre- and post tests might not have been long enough to observe a significant change in ethnic, national, or cosmopolitan identity especially since the qualitative findings suggest that the students were grappling with their identities and in the throes of developing their ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities. Therefore, if this study had been for a year or longer, the change might have been more readily denoted through the Likert-type scales.

### **Directions for Future Research**

Despite its limitations, this study offers a glimpse into the experiences of international and American student roommates and the unique social space in which their identities are negotiated that researchers can explore in the future. Even though the quantitative results did not find a significant change in ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities, the qualitative results showed that students' identities were developing as they explored, discovered, and negotiated their identities and the identities of others. These findings suggest that identity development in international and American student roommates merits further exploration to fill the gap in the literature surrounding this area.

The non-significant results from the quantitative analysis were likely due to the limited power of the statistical analyses because of the small sample size; therefore, future studies should have a larger sample size. A larger sample size will also allow researchers to determine the relationship between students' identities and other variables, like gender and time spent outside of one's home country.

Future research should also include more contextual and longitudinal studies of students' identities even though no statistically significant changes in students' identities were observed. It is possible that more time is needed to observe a statistical change in ethnic, national, or cosmopolitan identity. It is also possible that quantitative methods are not able to measure for the nuanced changes in students' identities that occur in response to different social contexts; therefore, further use of mixed-methods designs are encouraged. A longitudinal, concurrent mixed-methods research design might provide the best understanding of students' identity development in this context which would allow researchers to simultaneously collect quantitative and qualitative data at multiple time points throughout a year or more.

The results from this study also suggest that researchers should investigate the interactions of different types of identities, reflecting Phinney and Ong's (2007) suggestion to study ethnic identity in relation other identities. Students' identities did not develop in isolation. International students oftentimes merged their ethnic and national identities, and all students' ethnic and national identities developed alongside a cosmopolitan identity. Although this research did not statistically investigate the relationship between these types of identities, it would be an interesting area for future research.

Finally, researchers could develop a scale that measures cosmopolitan identity as a construct that does not exclude local forms of identity. Most of the students in this study

developed a cosmopolitan identity that did not exclude their ethnic or national identity. Instead, students' cosmopolitan identity included recognition of human similarity and diversity. A scale could be developed that reflects this attitude.

## CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

Through the use of an explanatory mixed-methods design, this study explored the international and American students' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities while living with a roommate of a different nationality for one semester. The specific research questions were:

- Do international and American students have differing levels of ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identity when they begin living with each other?
- To what degree do international students' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities change while living with an American roommate for a semester?
- To what degree do American students' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities change while living with an international roommate for a semester?
- What factors influence the students' identities to change or not to change?

Quantitative data that measured students' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities were collected at the beginning and end of the semester using pre- and post-test on-line surveys to determine students' levels of ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities and their change over time. To develop a deeper understanding of students' identities as well as to identify factors that affected possible changes in students' identities, the researcher interviewed four participants following the post-test survey.

The investigation of the research questions demonstrated that American and international students' identities were complex and changing. International and American student roommates demonstrated differing levels of ethnic and national identities at the beginning of the semester, with international students having significantly higher ethnic and national identity scores than the American students. Although the mixed-model repeated measures ANOVAs showed no

significant change in American and international students' ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities, the qualitative data provide evidence of students' identities as changing in various ways as students acted as discoverers, ambassadors, and negotiators.

The results of this study support the conceptualization of emerging adulthood as a period of identity exploration and development (Arnett, 2000) that is mediated by personal interpretation of the social context (Rogoff, 2003). Both American and international students explored their own identities as well as the identities of others as they negotiated a social context occupied by diverse peoples; however, responses to this exploration varied. Some international students changed their ethnic self-labels while others did not. Similarly, some participants critically examined their own identities while others became uncritically nationalistic. The results suggest, therefore, that contextual changes affect students' identity development in various ways depending on how individuals interpret the context.

In addition to the varying ways in which students' identities changed between participants, the results also support viewing identity as changing within participants. In accordance with Turner's (1982) theory that social identities are dependent on the social situation, qualitative data showed that within the same individual, ethnic, national, and cosmopolitan identities could coexist and conflict, and be questioned and reaffirmed. For example, most participants were aware of external perceptions of their groups and acted as ambassadors to buoy their group's image while still negotiating and exploring their identities. However, not all students adhered to this pattern, further suggesting that, while context may affect international and American students' identities, it does not do so in uniform ways.

Despite its scope and limitations, this study highlights the need for longitudinal research that examines international and American students' identity development in an international

context. A review of the literature revealed a gap in the literature that this study hoped to fill. Still, more research is needed to better understand international and American students' identity development as American universities push to internationalize their campuses (Knight, 2004). Further research could provide international educators with ideas to promote Appiah's (1996) cosmopolitan identity that celebrates diversity while fostering a sense of human solidarity and respect. Doing so requires the development of a safe environment where students feel comfortable questioning, committing, exploring, and discovering others' identities as well as their own.

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## APPENDIX A: PRE- AND POST-TEST SURVEY

**I. Demographic information**

1. What is your email? Your email will be used only to compare your pre and post-test scores (open)
2. Is this your first year living in a dormitory on a college campus? (yes/no)
3. What type of dormitory are you living in? (International, regular)
4. Are you an international student?
5. Do you have an international roommate? (yes/no)
6. Do you have a roommate from a different cultural background? (yes/no)
7. What year in school are you? (Freshman, sophomore, junior, senior)
8. What is your gender? (male/female)
9. How many times have you traveled outside of your home country? (0, 1-3, 4-6, 7-10, greater than 10)
10. How often do you interact with people from other cultures daily (never, rarely, sometimes, often, always)
11. What is your ethnicity? (open)



**II. Ethnic Identity (Phinney & Ong, 2007)**

Listed below (1-21) are questions related to ethnic identity. Answer each question with a number from 1-5 with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither disagree or agree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.

1. I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions and customs.
2. I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.
3. I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.
4. I have often done things that will help me understand my ethnic background better.
5. I have often talked to other people in order to learn more about my ethnic group.
6. I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.

**III. National Identity (adapted from Keillor, 1996)**

7. I admire important people from my country's past.
8. One of my country's strengths is that it emphasizes events of historical importance.
9. My country has a strong historical heritage.
10. A person from my country possesses certain cultural attributes that other people do not possess.
11. I feel that I come from a common historical background with other people from my country.
12. I am proud of my nationality.
13. I frequently engage in activities that identify me as a person from my country.
14. A specific philosophy is what makes a person uniquely from my country.
15. Certain philosophical beliefs are essential to preserve the cohesiveness of my country's society.
16. I take part in a particular belief system that is unique to my country.

**IV. Global Identity (item 17 and 18 from Phelps, 2011)**

17. It is positive having a multicultural society where all groups can keep as much of their cultural traditions as possible. (GIS)
18. People with other cultural backgrounds enrich society. (GIS)
19. I am accepting of different cultural traditions.
20. I appreciate learning about other cultures.
21. I am cosmopolitan.

**V. Voluntary participation in a follow-up interview (for the post-survey only)**

In order to better understand the results of this survey, the researcher will be conducting short, in-person interviews at a location that is mutually agreed upon by the researcher and the participant. The interview should take about 30 minutes. Participation in the interview is voluntary and in no way affects the results of the online survey.

1. Would you be interested in participating in the interview portion of this study? (yes/no)
2. If yes, please provide your email address, and the researcher may contact you to arrange an interview time.

## APPENDIX B: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Do you have an international or American roommate?
2. How long have you been living with your roommate?
3. Did you choose to live with an American/International roommate? If yes, why?
4. Has living with your roommate been a good experience? Why or why not?
5. Has living with an international/American roommate increased the amount of things you do with people from different countries? If so, what type of things do you do together?
6. A common definition of ethnic identity is a person's identification with a segment of a larger society whose members are thought of by themselves or others to have a common origin, a shared cultural experience, and to participate in communal activities. Do you believe that how you self-identity with your ethnic group has changed since living with your roommate? If yes, how has it changed? What experiences have caused this change?
7. A common definition of national identity is a person's identification with other people from their country. Do you believe that how you self-identity with your nationality has changed since living with your roommate? If yes, how has it changed? What experiences have caused this change?
8. A common definition of a cosmopolitan is a person who a person who is well traveled, speaks many languages, and is accepting of all cultures. Do you believe that how you self-identity with being cosmopolitan has changed since living with your roommate? If yes, how has it changed? What experiences have caused this change?
9. When do you feel the most strongly a member of your ethnic or national group?  
Cosmopolitan?

10. After living with your roommate, do you identify with other ethnic or national groups?

Which ones? Why?

11. Do you believe that your experience living with your roommate would be different if you were from a different ethnicity or nationality? If yes, how so?

12. Have you ever felt confused about your identity since living with your roommate?

## APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR SURVEYS



BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY  
School of Leadership and Policy Studies  
Educational Foundations and Inquiry Program

## Informed Consent

**Identity formation in an international environment: A comparison of international and U.S. students' experiences with globalization**

Jessica Batterton, a graduate student at Bowling Green State University, invites you to participate in a study on students' identity formation while living in a dormitory. You are being invited because you are living in an on-campus dormitory.

This survey aims to study the effects of globalization on students' identities. There are no direct benefits for participating in this study. However, the information will help people understand globalization and identity in college students. Also, knowledge from this study could help people create better dormitories and study abroad programs.

Only students 18 years and older may participate. Since this is an on-line survey, you will give informed consent by reading the information and clicking the next button. You will answer questions about your background and identity. It should take about 15-20 minutes to do. At the end of the semester, you will get another email asking you to take a post-test that has similar questions to the first survey. The reason for the second survey is to see if there has been a change in self-identity. This survey will also take about 15-20 minutes to complete.

Participation in this research project is voluntary. Whether you participate will not impact your relationship with your department, university, housing, or Bowling Green State University. You may decide to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. The risk of participation is no greater than that experienced in daily life.

Your identity as a participant in this study will be kept confidential. The survey will not ask for your name or birthdate. It will ask for your email address to compare pre-test and post-test answers. The researcher will code your email address when entering data, so your email will not be linked with your survey results. No identifying information will be used in the publication of the results. The material will be kept for up to 7 years. Only my graduate advisors and I will have access to the survey data. The data will be kept on our hard drives and online storage, which have passwords.

This is an on-line survey, so please note that some employers may use tracking software so you may want to do your survey on your own computer. You may not want to leave the survey open if using a public computer or a computer others may have access to. You may want to clear your browser cache and page history after completing the survey.

If you have any questions about this research or want to discuss any possible study-related injuries or concerns, please contact me at (571) 287-9291/ [jbatter@bgsu.edu](mailto:jbatter@bgsu.edu) or my advisor, Dr. Sherri Homer, at (419) 372-7343/ [shorner@bgsu.edu](mailto:shorner@bgsu.edu). You may also contact the Chair, Human Subjects Review Board at 419-372-7716/ [hsrb@bgsu.edu](mailto:hsrb@bgsu.edu), if you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research.

Thank you for your time. If you consent, please press the next button.

## APPENDIX D: INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEWS



BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY  
School of Leadership and Policy Studies  
Educational Foundations and Inquiry Program

## Informed Consent

**Identity formation in an international environment: A comparison of international and U.S. students' experiences with globalization**

Jessica Batterton, a graduate student at Bowling Green State University, invites you to participate in a study on students' identity formation while living in a dormitory. You are receiving this letter because you completed the survey and said I could contact you for an interview.

This research studies the effects of globalization on students' identities. There are no direct benefits for participating in this study. However, the information will help people understand globalization and identity in college students. Also, knowledge from this study could help people create better dormitories and study abroad programs.

Only students 18 years and older may participate. Interviews will be held in-person with the researcher. The researcher and you will agree on a location. You will answer questions about your background and why you live in a dormitory. You will discuss your time in the dormitory and its effect on your identity. The interview should take about 30 minutes.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Whether you participate will not impact your relationship with your department, university, housing, or Bowling Green State University. You may decide to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. The risk of participation is no greater than that experienced in daily life.

Answers to the interview questions are confidential. You may be directly quoted in the research, but no identifying information will be used in any publication of the results. The material will be kept for up to 7 years. Only my graduate advisors and I will have access to the data. The data will be kept on our hard drives and online storage, which have passwords.

If you have any questions about this research or want to discuss any possible study-related injuries or concerns, please contact me at (571) 287-9291/ [jbatter@bgsu.edu](mailto:jbatter@bgsu.edu) or my advisor, Dr. Sherri Horner, at (419) 372-7343/ [shorner@bgsu.edu](mailto:shorner@bgsu.edu). You may also contact the Human Subjects Review Board at 419-372-7716/ [hsrb@bgsu.edu](mailto:hsrb@bgsu.edu), if you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research.

Thank you for your time. If you consent, say, "Yes, I consent."